

SERMON FOR MARCH 27, 2022

TEXT: LUKE 15: 1-3, 11-32

THEME: LOST AND FOUND

**32** It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.”

In the name of Jesus:

Remember the time when you had lost something that you valued greatly? Remember the sorrow and worry that burdened your heart because of that lost item, and the joy you had in finding it?

It happened to me at the church conference I was at about a month ago in Arizona. I had a pair of sunglasses that I wear regularly. I really needed those sunglasses, because the sun was bright and the weather warm in Phoenix that week. I wore them on the plane into Phoenix, and at the beginning of the conference. I wore them on my head during the worship service on Thursday evening. And when Friday rolled around, and it came time to put on those glasses, well, I couldn't find them. I was heartbroken. Luann suggested that I go to the lost and found at the church where the conference was held. Perhaps they would be there.

Well, when I arrived at the church Friday morning I did go to the lost and found. Yes, the secretary said, that had found some sun glasses. She pointed me in the direction of the lost and found items. I looked, but they weren't there. Sunglasses lost, forever lost. No where to be found.

I had a flashback to another time I lost sunglasses, it was at the beach. I wore these sunglasses while swimming in the ocean. A wave hit me and off went the sunglasses. Never to be found again. My wife and kids teased me that Flipper the Dolphin was now enjoying my sunglasses. As much as I tried to picture a dolphin wearing my sunglasses, it didn't make me feel any better. And now losing this pair of sunglasses didn't make me feel better either.

I met my sister for lunch that day at the Conference, but before I met her I decided to take a chance and see if my sunglasses were in the auditorium where we held worship. Sure enough, there they were, placed on a chair where I had been sitting. I was surprised and overjoyed! That which was lost had now been found.

That's the point of the Gospel lesson today. Three things are lost, a lamb, a coin, and a son. And all the while, in the state of being lost, the One who has lost that which is valuable kept looking until the lost was found. A lamb lost, ninety nine were counted for, one left unaccounted for. What's

one lost lamb when you have 99 others? But the shepherd with the lost lamb kept looking until the lost was found.

A woman loses a coin. There are plenty of other coins of value that the woman can find joy in. But no, the woman won't rest and won't be satisfied until she finds that exact same coin that she is looking for. She keeps looking until the lost is found.

A father loses a son. He has another son he can take pride in and find joy, but this father loves both sons. He loves the son who has remained faithful to the father, and the father loves the son who has gone astray. The father loves them both, equally, and keeps searching until both sons are home safely. It is important that the lost be found.

The Bible says that God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, so that whoever believes will not be damned but saved. Everyone is born in a state of being lost. No one is right with God, not anyone. Everyone is lost, in need of being found by God.

So God does the finding. Why? Because God loves everyone. He sent Jesus to die on the cross for each and every person. There isn't a person that God does not love. He loves those who love Him. . He even loves those who

don't love Him, who reject Him, who ridicule Him, who don't believe in Him. No matter your race, no matter your tribe, no matter your sex, no matter who you are God loves you! Jesus died for you. He died for all.

So Jesus is just like that shepherd who is seeking the lost lamb, because He wants that one found. Jesus is just like that woman who lost a coin, sure He has other coins but He want to find that lost one. And Jesus is just like that Father who seeks His lost son, yes, He has a faithful son whom He loves, but He also wants that lost son found as well.

Jesus came to save sinners. He came to save you. And He came to save those around you. And Jesus won't rest until the lost is found. And when the lost is found, heaven rejoices! Angels dance and the saints sing for joy!

So as we leave here from this time and going forward, let's help with heaven's celebration. There are many lost among us. We know Jesus wants to find them. Let's ask God to use us to help find the lost who don't know Jesus. And when God uses us to find His own, the hosts of heaven will party, because the lost has been found.

Amen