

Sermon Starter – Searching for the Lost

Luke 15:1-10

Prior to these parables Jesus was criticized for welcoming and eating with sinners. In response, Jesus tells two stories: the Good Shepherd and the woman who lost her coin. Both of these parables are considered “parables of the lost.”

In these parables, Jesus responds to the criticisms by the church authorities. The parables build toward a climax that extends an invitation to Jesus’ critics to recognize and participate in the divine celebration of repentance. There is a progression in terms of importance of the lost item from one sheep of one hundred, to one coin of ten. Each parable highlights a main character who experiences loss, engages in search and recovery, and invites friends and neighbors to rejoice over the recovery of the lost. These parables are punctuated with a connection to the heavenly joy that occurs when a sinner repents.

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