

Lost To Be Found

(Part 1)

“Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." (Luke 15:1-3)

God, the Creator of heaven and earth, He is revealing and sharing what is in His heart and in His mind to us. He is doing that in order for us to have proper understanding of what God wants us to know, to do and to be. The people that God had created and loved, for certain reason, they had gone astray and far away from Him. And now He is searching for them to bring them back to Himself. He wants us to cooperate with Him, agree with Him in heart and thought, and understand His plans and His ways in order for us to serve Him wholeheartedly and effectively.

The Lord God had sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to search and to bring the lost, as He declared, ***“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” (Luke 19:10)*** Jesus came from heaven, He left His comfort zone, in order to make the way for us clear to reach God. Jesus preached the Kingdom of God; He healed the sick, drove out demons, set the captives free and raised people from the death. Finally Jesus gave His life for us; He died on the cross for our sins to bring us back to God.

Jesus went around searching for the lost. He went to the sinners to bring them back to God. He went to the tax collectors and to the sinners and sat down and spent time with them to convince them to come back to God. But He was criticized by the Pharisees and the teachers of the law for that. They did not understand that He came to the sinners to save them. We need to understand that, and carry the same ministry of Jesus and move to the sinners to win them back to God. Jesus sat down with the sinners to show them the love of God and to convince them to follow the ways of the Lord in their lives. We need to have the same mind and do the same. We need to move around and reach the sinners and to preach to them the gospel, the good news, as Jesus did.

But one important point needs to be mentioned here. When we go to the sinners we need to pull them out from darkness into the Kingdom of God. But we should not do and practice what they are doing. We go to the sinners but we don't live the sinful life they live. Some they go to the sinners not because they want to bring them out of darkness but because they want to be involved in the sinful life that the sinners live. That is not acceptable, we should be the one to pull them out of darkness and not that they are the one to bring us down. If you are weak and cannot overcome temptation, then better not to go to such places where sinners gather and might entice you to sin. But as we commit ourselves to God and willingly we commit our lives to live according to His ways then we will find the Holy Spirit would empower us and leads us and uses us to bring the lost back to God. Jesus explained the methods of how the lost to be found in three parables:-

1- The Parable of the Lost Sheep: *“³Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in*

the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” (Luke 15:3-7) The lost sheep is a person who had gone astray from God but he is willing to come back to God and repent from his sin if some body would reach him and speak to him the good news of Jesus. Originally there is a sin in his life, but the lost sheep is the person who is willing to repent if somebody would explain to him the way of true life. The lost sheep was led astray by false teaching, deception of devil, or overwhelmed by trials and hardships of life. Therefore for such kind of people we need to go out and search for them. We need to pray and ask God to lead us to such kind of people who are willing to listen and come back to the truth and the right way of life. God had given us feet in order for us to move around and search for the lost sheep.

In the parable we found Jesus telling that the shepherd will leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it. Jesus did the same; He left His comfortable place in heaven at the right hand of God the Father and went down to search for the lost, ***“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:9)*** And that what we need to do and what God commanded us to be. We need to leave our comfort zone and move out to the field to seek and search for the lost. Moving out to search for the lost sheep it will not be an easy journey; we have to move around, walk under the sun, travel long distance, enjoy less sleep, more physical strength, spend more money and even labouring with all our energy to reach the lost sheep. The journey might be risky, moving to new areas, and not all the time with out threat. But our love to God energizes us to be more faithful to His will and plan to reach and save the lost.

Worthy to mention here that the ninety-nine who left in the open country must be so organized that they need to be at high level of commitment so that those who go out to search for the lost they will be well backed up with those who remain in the open country.

My Dear and Beloved: The shepherd who found the lost sheep, out of his joy, he carried it at once at his shoulders. Also another reason that the shepherd carried the lost sheep because most of the time the lost sheep is injured and he cannot move unless somebody would help him and carry him and bring him back to the flock, the church, the family of God. Like that is what we have in the parable of the good Samaritan; we find him after he found the victim and bandaged his wounds he carried him on his donkey and brought and kept him in a safe place. In the same way searching for the lost it required compassion, sense of responsibility, willingness to suffer, and enthusiasm to give, support and carry the burden. All that we do for the sake of the lost, for the sake of even one who would repent and come back to God. This is all for the glory of God as we agree to pray.

My Prayer: *Father God, thank you for Your Son the Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross for my sins to give eternal life. Lord I thank you for your calling to me today to go and search for the lost. Lord equips me and directs me and empowers me with your Holy Spirit to reach those sheep that have gone astray from you. Lord I commit myself and all what I have for the mission of going out and searching for the lost. Protect me and provide for me, this is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.*