

**Luke 15: 1-7; “The Parable of the Lost Sheep”, Session # 4 – “Jesus Seeking & Ministering”,
Presented by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 17th, 2023,
in the Adult Sunday School.**

Luke 15: 1-7 – “Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, ‘This Man receives sinners and eats with them.’ “So He spoke this parable to them, saying: ‘What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?’ “And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.” “And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’” “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”

1. Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd who seeks the Sheep. And when He finds them, He knows how to minister to them.

a. He seeks them to deliver them from false shepherds.

Ezekiel 34: 1-12 – “And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves!’” “Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.” “So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.” “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ‘As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock”— therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD!’” “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.’” “For thus says the Lord GOD: Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.” “As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.”

Question # 1 – What were some of the real sinful problems of the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day according to this prophetic passage? (verses 2-8)

Question # 2 – What would the Lord Jesus do about these shepherds? (verse 10)

Question # 3 – What would He do for His sheep? (verses 11-16)

Answer: The real problem with these scribes and Pharisees who were complaining about Jesus receiving and eating with sinners was that they themselves were not good spiritual shepherds of God’s sheep, in their ministry. They were very selfish people who were guilty of not feeding the flock good spiritual food. (verses 2 & 3) They would dominate them in force and severity. (verse 4) The flock of the people of Israel was scattered because they had no true shepherd to lead them. They would never try to seek for the sinful men and women in the nation of Israel to share with them the gospel. (verse 6)

And yet their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ was standing right in front of them, here, as He spoke this parable to them. Jesus was saying to them that if they would go looking for one lost sheep of theirs that had left the fold, and was lost physically, then why couldn't they see their need to go searching to help lost sinners among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to bring them back into the fold spiritually? He is appealing to their common sense. He was saying to them that they were actually derelict in regard to their duty as the spiritual shepherds of Israel. But He would seek them and find them. He would deliver them, feed them and protect them.

b. The Lord Jesus would watch over His flock. He would carry them and gently lead them.

Isaiah 40: 10 & 11 – “Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.” “He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.”

Question # 4 – When it says that His arm will rule for Him, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him, what does He mean by these things?

Answer: His coming with a strong hand, and His having an arm ruling for Him means that He has the power and authority of God in Himself and backed up by the power and authority of the Father and the Holy Spirit, to engage in the work of a Divine Shepherd King. His reward is the purchase of the redemption of all of God's elect sheep; His people whom He will save by His laboring for their salvation. He will accomplish His finished work of righteousness in His perfect obedience to God's holy law, and then by His sufferings on behalf of all the sinners trusting in Him for salvation; all those who God will call to Himself, He would lay down His life for His sheep.

Question # 5 – What does it mean when it says that He will feed, He will gather, and He will carry His sheep in His bosom; gently leading those who are young?

Answer: It means His fulfilling of the law of God on our behalf, dealing with our enemies of the world, and sin, and death, and Satan. His reward is with Him, not only to purchase redemption, but to apply it to the sheep. He will give of the water of life to all who will believe in Him. He will feed His flock with the good word of Life. He does this in every generation through His undershepherds; His apostles and His pastor-teachers. He says to Peter in John 21: 15 – “Peter, feed My lambs”. He watches over all of His sheep in the way that He cares for all their spiritual needs.

He carries all of His lambs in His bosom. That is, He carries us spiritually close to His heart. He has great love and affection for us. He desires to have intimate communion and fellowship with us. He will gently lead us on the path of righteousness for His name's sake. He gently leads all those who are with young. That is, He is gentle and humble of heart, to be able to lead us who are full of desires to live to God's glory and do His good will, into all the truth of His word, for our good. He gently leads those who are young in the faith, or young people or children who have faith in Him.

He is also gentle in his leading of those mothers who are going to have children, or who have children who desire to come to know Him and learn from Him. He is careful to watch over all such. Jesus is the Shepherd-King of all of His people. But He is very tender and gentle towards those who desire to follow Him and learn from Him.