

The Parable of the Diligent Homemaker

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We're going through the gospel of Luke. Go with me this morning over to Luke 15 if you would. Some have said that homemaking is a lost art. The quintessential essence of being a homemaker is that you get your blessing by being a blessing to others. The godly homemaker is an indispensable treasure to all. You know, you don't build a home, you build a house. You don't decorate and furnish a home, you decorate and furnish a house. You don't remodel a home, you remodel a house. To have a home, you must have a homemaker. A homemaker has to have a heart of selfless love. It takes diligence, discipline and devotion. She rises up early and she stays up late so that the family feels loved and feels secure and feels welcome.

In a very real sense, you can't really describe the blessings of a homemaker. She cooks and cleans and organizes and fixes hurts and comforts hearts and finds dozens of ways to extend the family budget but there is something more. I mean, you can hire someone to do a lot of those tasks but that doesn't make them a homemaker. Perhaps this very indispensable quality of love and care and service, it's something but it's something you just can't put your finger on but the godly homemaker, she's got it. Let her leave the home and you'll realize it. She's a treasure and too often, she's an unappreciated treasure. When one considers the inestimable value of the godly homemaker and one considers the love, the sacrifice and the service combined with the great joy she gets in blessing and serving others, it's no wonder that Jesus in describing his ministry on this occasion uses a homemaker to give an example of his own ministry.

I've entitled this section of Luke, "The Parable of the Diligent Homemaker." Now, traditionally it's called the parable of the missing coin and that's okay but I think really this title gets more to the essence of what the text is teaching us because like the sheep in the earlier parable, the coin doesn't do anything but get lost. It's the diligent homemaker that saves the day and like all godly, faithful and diligent homemakers she, in time, reaps great reward and great joy. So in this parable today, of course, the homemaker represents Jesus and the coin represents the lost elect of God. Let's look at it together. Luke 15, beginning in verse 8, Jesus responding to his critics because he was eating and fellowshiping with "sinners" says,

"8 Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9

When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!' 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

I. Let's talk about the fallen, lost coin. The text says she had ten silver coins. They're a drachma; they're worth about 16 cents apiece. She has nine coins still safely in her money pouch but one is gone. You know, the nine coins I think, again, represents those that are safe in God's fold. There's a great part of creation that didn't fall and a great number who are already converted and in the fold of God but some of God's sheep are still not there and this coin represents those. The coins in this day were usually stamped with the image of the ruler. It makes us think of the fact that God stamped man in a unique way. Man is made in the image of God. We have been stamped with his image. Fallen, yes. Sin polluted and corrupted, yes. But nevertheless, we hold and unswervingly hold and must always hold that there is a sanctity to human life. Human life is different from other life forms. God made it that way.

But here the coin is lost. It's fallen. The text says she's going to sweep to try to find it and in these days, these ancient homes had dirt floors, sometimes straw mixed with the dirt and what a picture that is of lost humanity. The coin, at this time, has lost all usefulness for the woman and that's the way it is with sinners: we lose our usefulness for our Creator. But not only is it lost, it has fallen. What a picture that is of how man is fallen from God. First of all, we're fallen and we mar God's image. God meant for us to be a beautiful reflection of his holiness, his perfection and his glory but we've fallen greatly from that status marring the image of God, falling from the high and holy place the Creator gave us in creation. Now instead of reflecting him and bringing him glory, we bring defilement and offensiveness to God. Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." We are so fallen, our very nature causes the good and holy God to yearn to crush us in wrath.

The coin is fallen, marring the image. The coin also is fallen into the earth, her earthen floor of her ancient home. These floors, again, were just dirt and straw and now the coin that was bearing the image of the king is fallen into the dirt and the debris of this world. You know, truth and wisdom and holiness only comes from above, from heaven. That which arises out of the earth, the fallen earth according to James 3:15, is that which is earthly and natural and demonic and that's the realm we are now associated with as fallen mankind. Being fallen and polluted by this evil world, the lost and fallen coin has become altogether unworthy of an useless to its owner. Now, it's profitable only to display the glory of his justice in pouring just wrath upon these fallen corrupt ones. However, God is not only just in wrath and the punishment of evildoers, he is also just in his love and grace and in his power can redeem and restore the completely unworthy and the completely useless. That's why I think this parable needs to focus on the homemaker, not

the coin. The coin in itself cannot clean itself; it can't find itself; it cannot right itself; it cannot restore itself. It takes someone greater than the coin.

So here she is, having lost her coin, and it's a fallen lost coin. II. The diligent search. What a beautiful and glorious picture our Lord paints of himself in this parable of this diligent homemaker searching for this coin. In verse 8, the Scripture tells us that she had ten silver coins, she loses the one and she, first of all, lights a lamp to try to find it. Now, that speaks of the means she's going to use. She lights a lamp. Now, a lamp in this day didn't mean what a lamp does in our day. It's probably most likely just a candle on a little stand. We've seen those in movies in olden days when they just carried around a candle and tried to find their way down some dark corridor. The Scripture says in Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." I believe this speaks of the word of God. Certainly, Jesus is the light of the world but Jesus reveals himself through his word, the word of God. Psalm 43:3, "Send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your dwelling places."

Be reminded, the candle does not light Jesus' way to us, it lights our way to Jesus. He has no vision problems but we're blinded in our sins until the Spirit, through the word of God, illumines and opens our minds. You know, before modern navigation, sea captains would rely on lighthouses to guide them through the stormy nights and safely into the harbor. Do you remember that old gospel song, "The Lighthouse."

"Everybody that lives around us
Says tear the lighthouse down
You know the big ships
They don't sail by this way no more
So what's the use of it standing 'round?
Ahh, but then my mind goes way on back
To that stormy night,
When just in time, I saw the light
T'was the light from that old lighthouse
That still stands up there on a hill.

"Oh I thank God for the lighthouse
I owe my life to Him
King Jesus is the lighthouse
Upon the rocks of sin
He has shone a light around me
That I could clearly see
If it wasn't for the lighthouse
Then where would this ship be?"

Amen? She lights a lamp. She's looking for the coin and the whole thing about this is about the way that she's diligent in this effort, she's not going to be deterred. Secondly, the text tells us in verse 8 that she sweeps. Verse 8 says, "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search

carefully?” Sweeping, I don't want to go too far with everything meaning something in the parable, I know you've got to be careful there but when you preach 34 years, you can take some liberties. If you're 20 and under, be careful. But your conclusions must harmonize with overall systematic truth, amen? The balance of Scripture must support it. When you think about this sweeping of the house, I think it's a picture of the ministry of the Spirit of God. It parallels the persevering shepherd that we saw in the earlier chapter as he goes sweeping through the wilderness to find his lost sheep. She's sweeping through the house looking for her lost coin.

One earlier writer says this makes us think on the fact that there needs to be a sweeping in the church so that we might find the lost coins. A purging in the church. There is the necessities of a purging of the local church of its errors and its worldliness and its man-centeredness so that we might effectively, successfully find the lost coins. There is an axiomatic truth about the church and evangelism. I want you to etch this in the marrow of your bones and never get over it. You can say, “Our wild pastor used to tell us this all the time.” Don't ever forget this axiomatic truth, this is it: the purity of the church affects the power of the gospel. Don't ever forget that: the purity of the church affects the power of the gospel. That's why our churches are packed with the unregenerate and the unconverted because we've got weak impure churches and we're going through the motions and we're getting decisions but we're not getting converts. The Spirit of God is not going to bless with genuine conversions if the church is willfully impure.

Now, the enemy lies to us. The enemy lies and tells the church, “Well, if you can just get the gospel right. If you just get your pulpit right,” and by the way, that's foundational, you can't go anywhere until that's right but if you can just get that much right, you don't have to trouble yourself very much over the health and purity of the church family. That's a lie. This needful cleansing occurs in every generation and in every generation this needful cleansing is met with resistance and with scorn. What do you think our Lord is doing continually as over and over and over he has the confrontations with the religious establishment of his day. Why? He's trying to clean it up and he will, by the way. Check that: there's a time when it can become so corrupt that he discards it and starts over. You'd better be thankful if you're in a church that God is interested in cleaning up. Most of them, he's just left them and they keep going on without any power and without any authority, without any real effectiveness for the kingdom of God.

There will always be that outcry in every generation: how unwelcome are the reformers? And how unwelcome they are to those who only want to “build the numbers” in the congregation and have no interest in finding the lost coin? There will always be an outcry against Christians as “the troublers in Israel.” In 1 Kings 18:17, you remember the story, King Ahab was about as vile, sinful and ungodly as you could possibly be and he had the whole country in wickedness and ungodliness and God raised up a prophet, Elijah. Elijah begins to preach the truth and he starts to stir things up. He upset the apple cart, if you will. He upset the status quo and wicked Ahab didn't like what was going on because as Elijah would preach, Ahab would be exposed. They met one day and immediately wicked Ahab speaks first and points at Elijah and says, “It's you, the troubler of Israel.”

But I love what Elijah did. He just didn't go cower down and say, "Well, maybe I wasn't sweet enough in the way I talked about Ahab's sin? I don't know. Maybe I wasn't kind enough in the way..." No, do you know what Elijah did? He shot right back and said, "No, you are the troubler of Israel and your fathers for all your idolatry and your wickedness you've brought into the land." Bless God, I like men of God like that. Listen: the next time the enemy rises up and says, "Well you Christians, you're not sweet enough, you're not kind enough." Look, they know God's truth condemns them. They just want to switch the subject from themselves to you. That's what they're trying to do. It's always been that way. We live in a day when I've never seen such cowering down, such mealy-mouths, such wimpy stuff in the kingdom of God. The abhorrent wickedness of homosexuality is rampant in our land and all we can think about is are we sweet enough when we confront them. Give me a break. God says in Romans 1 that they are already convicted in their conscience that it's wicked, they're convicted by nature that it's wicked and they're convicted by the word of God that it's wicked because there's enough of it around that they know it, they don't need to be sweet treated, they need to be confronted with the truth.

There will always be resistance against purification and certainly in the church there's a resistance. This sweeping of the house that needs to happen, this sweeping of the house includes the removal of the dust and the clutter of man: man-made doctrine and all these worldly sentiments in the church. This sweeping of the house must occur so there will be the unearthing of true preaching that cuttingly exposes and confronts sin and this must happen if the lost coin is to be found. Why do you think it is? How many times have I already told you, here Jesus goes again, publicly, powerfully, cuttingly rebuking and embarrassing the Pharisees? Over and over and over he does it. I mean, I would have to work for weeks to find ways to cuttingly and publicly embarrass sinners as much as Jesus does. Why does he do it? Because that's the only way to find the lost coins. There must be the stark brilliant light of exposure, the shaking and rattling of men to see the wickedness of their hearts in sin and then they can turn to a Savior. Sweeping of the house so that the coin that's lost might be found.

God has ordained that the church is his primary means of proclaiming the gospel and he is now and will continue to sweep the house until the last coin is found. You just play games in your church, you just be a little man-centered sissy church led by women where men are just little old wimps, men aren't men of God, men don't stand on doctrine, men do not discipline one another, men don't hold each other accountable and here's what God will do: he'll say, "Okay, I'm bypassing you. I'll raise me up a church though that will go after my lost coins." You say, "Pastor, that's strong." It's been strong for 34 years somehow in God's grace.

Verse 8 continues, she lights a lamp, she sweeps diligently, these are her means, these speak of the word, these speak of the work of the Spirit, speaks of the purification that God brings so that his gospel can go forth in power. But verse continues and it says she "searches carefully" or you could translate it "diligently until she find it." This is what I love the most and I think this is what Jesus wants us to see the most: her heart is set on this task. Boys, I'm going to tell you one time, you listen to your pastor and look this way

or I'll call your names out, alright? She looks diligently and carefully until she finds it. She's just not going to be deterred. She's just not going to put her interest anywhere else. She's not going to be distracted; she's not going to be deterred; and she's not going to be defeated until she finds her lost coin.

Luke 9:51 tells us of Jesus, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. That's Jesus, the diligent homemaker who sets his heart to the task. Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem for there he will fulfill his Father's will and die on a cross and redeem his children. Healing of the sick, that may have to wait. Feeding of the hungry, that has to be set aside. Teaching the multitude, that might have to be put on hold. Even socializing with his own family, the Bible says he pushed them aside and said, "You're not my priority right now." Meeting with the downcast, that's secondary. Encouraging the oppressed, that's no longer top priority. He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem and all the temporal blessing he might give man are not to be compared to the eternal value of the souls he will win at Calvary. The souls of men are lost, fallen and condemned and only his death at Calvary can redeem them. He will not be distracted, not even by the many good things and the many needs of the people. He will not be deterred and he will not be defeated. He will persevere through and make it to the cross and there he will be nailed and he will hang in humiliation and in shame. There he will become sin, the vicarious substitution for his children, the guilt offering in our place. There our guilt and our sin will be placed upon him and there the divine wrath against us will fall upon him and be completely burned out and satisfied. And there he will cry, "It is finished." For there he will find his lost coin. He looked for it. He swept until he found it. His persevering diligence. Once again, that's why we hold to the perseverance of the saints. That's why we hold to the eternal security of the believer. That's why we hold that if you're genuinely converted, you will always be God's and he will get you all the way home to glorification. Why? Because he's like the persevering Shepherd and he's like the diligent homemaker. He will not stop until his sheep is brought back, until his coin is found.

Verse 9 simply says, "And when she has found it," there was no doubt about the fact that she's going to find it, it's just a matter of time. She was going to find it. Any of you had a Momma like that? If something is lost around the house, she's going to find it, "We're going to find it." Or maybe it's something you shouldn't have had in the house or you hid in the house and she would say, "I'm gonna find it." This woman was like that, "I'm going to find my coin." And that's why Jesus said, "She's like me." I think the beauty of the homemaker is that that truth that the homemaker is one who serves so wonderfully and diligently and gets great blessing out of it and we're going to see in our text that Jesus serves us so magnificently and he reaps great reward and pleasure out of it.

So let's go then to III. The great joy. The Bible says in verse 9, after she's found her coin, she calls together her friends and neighbors saying, "Rejoice with me. I found the coin that was lost." Then in verse 10, the Lord says, "That's a picture, that's a parable," because he says, "In the same way I tell you there's joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Sometimes there's something made over there's joy in the presence of the angels and I think it certainly means that God himself is greatly rejoicing but all the heavenly host will rejoice at this. The recovery of this coin to this

lady is too great a joy to keep it to one's self. Now listen to this: it's inherent in our nature that for great joy to be greatly enjoyed it must be shared. It's inherent in our nature. If a great joy to be greatly enjoyed, it has to be shared.

You know, all the pure and good joys of creation are but parables, foreshadowing the one true great joy which is the redemption of the lost. The joy over saving the lost soul starts now and it lasts for all eternity. We hold to progressive revelation. Progressive revelation means we believe that there are things taught in the Old Testament in part, in shadows and in types. Then as you progress through the New Testament, the reality of those part shadows and types comes to fruition. It's all about Jesus and all about the gospel and he appears in the New Testament, progressive revelation. Likewise, joy is the creation of God. Did you know that? He created joy and happiness; it's his idea. It's intended to be a progressive experience. First of all, there is the foreshadowing of joy in creation. When God created the heavens and the earths, Job 38:3-7 says the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. But that was not the fullness of joy yet. That was a foreshadowing that God is a God of joy and he had a plan for even greater joy.

Next, 2. The foundation of joy is the cross. When Jesus was born, Luke 2:10, the angels appeared to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people." It's progressing. This is the foundation because the cross what the Bible says in Hebrews 12:2, "For the joy set before him he endured the cross." For the joy set before him. Now look: it's a foundation because listen, when he went to the cross, the foundation stone of God's house of joy was set and everything else is going to build on it. We're progressing.

Then, 3. The realization of joy, individual salvation. Every time a soul is saved, God's joy is realized to the full and all of heaven erupts with great, great, great rejoicing. That's what the parable of the persevering shepherd taught us. Then when he found his sheep, he brought it home and everyone rejoiced. That's what the parable of the diligent homemaker teaches us that when she finds her coin, it's just too great a joy and she calls her friends and neighbors and says, "Let's rejoice! I found it." Now, it's interesting that all this builds on the fact that the Pharisees are grumbling and mocking and criticizing Jesus for his ministry. Isn't it interesting: while the Pharisees are mocking, God and the angels are rejoicing. You might want to hang onto that. It could very well be, at least in the more immature stages of local church life, that when God is really working, there will always be some mocking and some criticizing but that's okay as long as God is rejoicing over what we're doing.

The holy angels genuinely rejoice over that which gives their Master joy. Did you get that? The holy angels love it because their Father loves it, their Creator loves it. Have you noticed when there the head of the household, when the patriarch of the household rejoices everybody rejoices but if he feels down, everybody feels down? Have you noticed that? I noticed that growing up. When my Dad was up, we all felt good. Boy, if Dad was down, he was the protector, he was the provider, we could all get down. Well, our heavenly Father is really, really, really up. He's really, really, really joyous. He really,

really, really rejoices. And some of you are bad, bad, bad out of practice. You're going to be weird in heaven if you don't practice a little better before you get there.

God the Father and the heavenly host are exceedingly joyful when the coin is found and when the lost sheep is brought back to the fold. That leads to what I call the consummation of joy. We've seen the foreshadowing of joy in the creation, we've seen the foundation of joy in the cross, the realization of joy when any individual is saved but there will be a consummation of joy in the eternal state when all the elect of God are finally home and finally glorified. We call it the eternal state. Satan and sin will be banished, the church will all be resurrected and glorified and then will be the fulness of joy. Jude 1:24, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy." We're not just going to be in heaven and say, "I'm like Jesus." No, you're going to be in heaven and you're like, "Wow! I'm like Jesus! And Jesus is like Jesus! And the angels are holy like Jesus!" It's just going to be a great rejoicing time.

Let me give you 2-3 thoughts here and I'm done. First of all, it's going to be a multiplied joy because all the saints of God are perfected and glorified. Here's what you've got to get: God is thrilled over his wisdom, his power and his beauty to save his church so perfectly. He's happy about it. Hey, do you know what it's like when all the kids come home except for the one that drives you crazy maybe, but when they all come home and it's just like....listen, that's a parable of what our Father is going to have when we all get home perfected by his Son's merit and in his Son's righteousness. There is going to be a joy in that, unspeakable. It's multiplied because all the saints will be together.

Not only a multiplied joy, it's going to be a perfected joy. Perfected because we're all glorified and finally enabled to experience his joy. The completed church will be in glorified unison. It will be like a great orchestra of joy, all the saints of God there. It's kind of like we're just one nuclear reaction fueling the other one. Nuclear reactions of joy for all eternity. You think it's fun down here, give me a break. Everything you touch down here has rot and pollution and corruption and God's going to judge it and burn it up but we have a multiplied perfected joy.

That's not all, it's going to be an enduring joy because you'll finally be perfected and you'll never wear out. You'll never get tired. Perfected minds. Perfected emotions to take in the infinite flows of eternal every-increasing joy. It never ends. It's an enduring joy just like I've just said.

Lastly, it's an increasing joy. It can and only does increase for all eternity. That's the point that Jesus is making here. Look at these parables and their real emphasis in on the rejoicing. God is thrilled about what he can do to save his church. I don't what the Arminian does at points like this. It's as if God is in heaven worried that he died for all these people and some of them aren't going to be there. There's not a hint of that here. Not a hint of it. There's not a tiny, tiny fraction of that spirit here. Everything here is God will find his sheep, God will get his coin and God will be greatly rejoicing in the

perfection of the work of doing it and accomplishing it. How in the world can you make God happy if his eternal plan depends on us?

Let's talk about a joy scale. How do you measure joy? We've got the Lord's Supper tonight, don't we? That's alright. You don't have to come to church tonight, some of you don't anyway so you can sit a little bit longer. Suck it up. Amen? For the glory of God. I love you in Jesus' name. On a scale of 1-10 if you take common grace and common grace means the blessings that God gives everybody, sinner, saved, whoever. The rain falls on our crops, we enjoy family, we enjoy holding a baby, that's common grace and everybody gets that. On a scale of 1-10, common grace is a 1.5. Just 1.5. On a scale of 1-10, redeeming grace is a maxed out 10. But on a scale of 1-10, the joy of eternal salvation, the joy in the eternal state is not a 10, it's infinity, it's all the way and never ends.

Now, circling the field, the Pharisees are grumbling at his teaching and his ministry while the child of God is on a progressive journey into greater joy that cannot be removed and will not be diminished while the unbeliever is on a digression into woe, unhappiness and despair, a digression that will never end and will never decrease, only increasing in digression for eternity. You see, the greatest lie ever propagated upon the human race is that committing your life to Christ leads to misery and unhappiness and the greatest deception ever exhibited within the human race is believing that committing one's life to Christ will lead to misery and unhappiness. God is a God of great joy and he is most glorified in us and most satisfied with us when we find his joy and progress in that joy for all eternity.

If you're sitting here today and something in your heart as your pastor is preaching this truth says, "Oh, thank you, Jesus. That thrills me that I'm one of those coins he cannot lose. That thrills me that I'm one of those sheep that the persevering shepherd would never leave behind," and you get some joy in that, God's happy. He's not happy in your work, your work gets you to hell. He's happy when you joy in his work. Listen to me: and when the saints of God focus on him and have joy in his work, they live better than if they're focusing on their work trying to please him. Do you get that? Psalm 16:11, "In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever."

Men, come quickly and let's share in the Lord's Table.