

Luke Series #9
“The Joy of Repentance” - Luke 15:1-10

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Child & Vase*

1. A boy got his hand caught inside an expensive vase
2. Parents tried everything to get it out
 - a. soap and water
 - b. vaseline
 - c. Dad even sprayed some WD-40 in there
3. Nothing worked
4. Right at point of breaking vase
5. Mother very upset because it was a family heirloom
6. Just as Dad was about to bring down the hammer, the boy asked, “Would it help if I let go of the penny I’m holding?”

B. *Repentance*

1. Many people do not come to Christ because they are holding on to their sin
2. They won’t let go, even though they know it may cost them heaven
3. Repentance means letting go of our sin so that we can embrace Christ with both hands
4. Our text today talks about the importance of repentance

II. TEXT

A. *Vs. 1-2*

1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.
2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.”

1. 14:25 tells us that as Jesus was making his way toward Jerusalem, He had attracted huge crowds
 - a. and the people could be roughly divided into two groups
 - b. those who supported Him, and those who opposed Him
 - c. those who supported Him were the common people
 - specially the downtrodden and social outcasts
 - Jesus showed special love and care for them
 - d. those who opposed Him were the religious leaders
 - they were the spiritually elite
 - looked down on the common people as beneath their dignity
 - so when they see Jesus fraternizing with them, they become

- indignant
 - they especially thought it scandalous that Jesus would eat with sinners
 - in their mind, to share a meal was the most intimate kind of friendship
 - so of course, it really bugged them that Jesus, a man so obviously empowered by God, would dirty Himself with people they deemed so unworthy
2. Jesus knew their thoughts and heard their criticisms

B. Vs. 3-10

3 So He spoke this parable to them, saying:

4 “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?

5 “And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 “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!’

7 “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.

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

9 “And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!’

10 “Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

1. Jesus tells two parables to try to get across to the people just how much God yearns for the lost to be saved
2. In the first, a shepherd has a flock of a hundred sheep
 - a. during day, has taken them out to pasture
 - b. but in evening, has returned them to the sheepfold
 - c. as they pass under his rod into the fold, he counts them off; 96, 97, 98, 99
 - d. one is missing
 - e. so he immediately goes out to search for the lost sheep
 - it might be hurt
 - if he doesn't find it soon, it will certainly be in danger
 - f. so there is an urgency to the shepherd's search
 - g. he calls out, making his distinctive shepherd's call, hoping to hear

- the lost sheep's answering baa
- h. he looks here and there, going back over every place the flock went that day
 - i. and finally, after a weary search, he finds the lost sheep
 - j. his joy is complete, for what was lost, is now found
3. In the second parable, a woman has lost a precious coin
 - a. she has nine others, but they are secure so she doesn't worry about them
 - b. it is the lost coin that occupies her attention
 - c. she turns her house upside down in the search
 - d. and finally finds it, tucked away in some overlooked cranny
 - e. as with the shepherd, her joy at recovering the coin is complete
 - f. she calls her friends and tells them the good news!
 - g. the coin is back where it belongs!
 4. Jesus tells the people that these two parables are a picture of heaven
 - a. God is like the shepherd who is going after lost men and women
 - b. He is like the woman who searches high and low for the lost coin
 - c. when the lost is found, He rejoices
 5. But Jesus says that it is when sinners repent that the heavens break forth in celebration
 6. What's the connection between finding the lost and repentance?
 7. Notice something about both these parables
 - a. in both of them, something precious was lost
 - b. for a shepherd - each and every sheep is as precious as a child
 - c. the woman lost a coin - which to her was precious
 - d. it was *because* of the preciousness of these lost things that the two of them were so diligent in seeking to recover them
 - e. the point is this: we are precious to God!
 - He values us so much that He sent His Son to seek us
 - all the religions of the world are the story of man's attempt to reach up to a distant God
 - Christianity is utterly different because it is the story of a loving God reaching down to seek and save indifferent lost people
 - f. friend = you are precious to God!
 8. And though we are of great value to God, from His perspective, men and women are lost in sin
 - a. Isa 53:6 "All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way."
 - b. Jesus came, as the Good Shepherd, to turn us from our own way, back to God
 - c. and that, in essence is what repentance is
 - to turn around

- to turn from our own way, the way of sin, and turn TO God
- d. Rom 2:4 “Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

C. The Point

1. Jesus is making a point with these parables
2. The Pharisees were critical of Jesus for the company He kept
 - a. he hung out with shady folk
 - b. people with a poor reputation
3. Jesus rebukes them for not realizing why He showed such love and grace to these people
 - a. they were the poor lost sinners
 - b. God was seeking them
 - c. and because they were seeing the love and mercy of God in Jesus, they were coming to repentance
 - d. the angels were celebrating and all heaven was a party because of the large number of sinners who were repenting
4. The rebuke to the Pharisees was that they were all sour and upset when they should have been rejoicing too
5. There is a very real danger that we face as committed Christians
 - a. it's the danger of becoming so ingrown and comfortable with each other that we stop reaching out to the lost
 - b. we get in to our holy huddle
 - c. and the only time we ever look out is kind of over our shoulder at that wicked world out there that is going to hell, and good riddance!
6. Let us never forget that God loves the world
 - a. He loves the lost
 - b. they are precious to Him beyond comprehension
 - c. and we are the ones who have been given the message of love and repentance

III. CONCLUSION

- A. An Important Message
 1. This is an important message for us at this time
 2. We continue to grow!
 3. Seeing more and more people who don't know the Lord coming to our services
 4. When they come in, sometimes . . .
 - a. dressed strangely
 - b. look a bit different
 - c. maybe even smell a bit
 5. Rejoice that God has brought them to hear of His love

6. Pray for their salvation
7. Ask God to add them to His people
8. And get excited when you see them respond to the gospel!
9. Good grief = the angels are celebrating - why don't we?
10. We will soon be moving to a new area of the City that desperately needs a work of God
 - a. our opportunities there will be tremendous
11. Both for here and there, we need a sense of expectancy that God is going to save men and women and children
12. We need to have a sense of expectancy that God is going to set people free from sin, that they will repent of their sin
 - a. delivered from drugs, booze, perversion
13. And we need to be praying that it will happen in our church, home, job.