

A misty forest scene with a person standing in the distance. The background is a soft, greyish-white mist, with the dark silhouettes of evergreen trees framing the scene. In the lower center, a person is standing on a path, their figure slightly blurred by the distance and mist. The overall mood is serene and quiet.

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

LIFE STORY

THE STORY OF THE
HAPPY FIND

Luke 15

Luke 15

1Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. 2And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." 3So he told them this parable:

4"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? 5And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' 7Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

8"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? 9And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' 10Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

11And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. 17"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants." ' 20And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate. 25"Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' 28But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, 29but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' 31And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.' "

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

What do you notice in this story?
What details stand out to you?

Who are these parables told to?

What are common words in all three parables?

How does each parable end?

What do you notice about the father?

What do you notice about the younger son?
The older son?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Why do you think the Holy Spirit intended this story to be in Scripture?

What do the 'lost' items represent?

What does the younger son's conduct demonstrate? What attitude does he show?

What does the older son's conduct demonstrate? What attitude does he show?

What is the kind of joy that is described at the end of each parable?

How does this joy show us the heart of God for people? What is he concerned about?

Our joy should come from seeing sinners found rather than seeing religious comfort maintained.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ME? WHAT CAN I DO THIS WEEK?

In what ways have you been like the younger son?

In what ways have you been like the older son?

Would you describe yourself as having a concerned determination to seek after lost people? What makes you think this?

What habits or understanding do you need to develop to seek after others? What may help you in these ways?

Do you have joy in seeing outsiders come into the comfort of your church or your personal walk with Jesus?

Yes? >>> What has helped you arrive at this place?

No? >>> Why do you think this is a struggle?

What ways do you think the Holy Spirit is directing you to show a greater concern for the lost?

PRAYER

How can the group be in prayer for your needs or concerns this week?

Is there anything that you would like to thank God for from the previous week?