

The Lost Sheep

This is one of Jesus' coolest parables. A parable is also an **allegory** which is a story, poem, or picture used to reveal a hidden meaning or message. In this story found in Luke, chapter 15, Jesus responds to the accusations of the Pharisees about his actions of eating and speaking with sinners.

Most people listen to this story, but they don't really think about what Jesus is saying. He is telling the Pharisees that he is concerned about all men, but that when one of those who believes in Him and the Father decides to get involved in the sins of the world, it is our responsibility to go to that brother and try to help them to return to God.

Remember that the people of Israel departed from God many times. He sent prophets over and over again to help the people to return to God. They did for a while and they then decided to get involved in the world again. They kept doing this before, during and after the time of the Judges.

God finally decided to send His son to be the final sacrifice for our sins. He did this because He was concerned about the many who did not pay attention to His word and to the individual lambs who walked away. They are worth bringing home.

Question Time:

1. How many sheep will Jesus let perish?
2. How many sheep should we go after and try to bring home to God?
3. Why did Jesus eat with sinners?

Scripture: Luke 15 New International Version (NIV)

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

15 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ²But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he 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.

Next Steps: Take a scotch tape dispenser and tear off a small piece. Roll it up so that it is sticky all the way around. Put ten of these pieces on all eight of your fingers and your two thumbs. Mom or dad can put the final pieces on your digits. Then see how long you can go without touching your face. Have mom or dad start the timer on the stove or set a timer on their watch.