

Luke 15–17 contains some of the most personal and unforgettable teaching Jesus ever gave — and much of it is **unique to Luke’s Gospel**. The parables of the Lost Coin (15:8–10), the Prodigal Son (15:11–32), the Shrewd Manager (16:1–9), the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19–31), the Ten Lepers (17:11–19), and the Persistent Servant (17:7–10) appear nowhere else in Scripture. These chapters emphasize God’s heart for the lost, the danger of loving wealth, the urgency of repentance, and the unseen reality of eternity. Jesus repeatedly draws attention to the difference between outward religion and inward transformation, revealing that eternal life is not about status, success, or self-righteousness — it is about repentance, gratitude, humility, and faith.

Luke 15 is especially powerful because Jesus tells three back-to-back parables — the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and Lost Son — all centered on one truth: **God relentlessly seeks what is lost**, and heaven rejoices when one sinner returns. In Luke 17, Jesus continues this theme by teaching about forgiveness, faith, humility, and gratitude — climaxing with the healing of ten lepers, where only one returns to give thanks. Jesus’ message is clear: God notices repentance, celebrates transformation, and values thankfulness — while pride, entitlement, and spiritual indifference quietly destroy the soul.

Devotional Reflection: *Lost...and Loved*

Jesus tells the first three parables of Luke 15 for one audience in mind: **religious people who were irritated by sinners finding grace**. The story of the Prodigal Son exposes two kinds of lostness — one that runs far away (the younger brother), and one that stays close but never truly loves the father (the older brother). The younger son represents those who have wandered from God — chasing freedom and finding emptiness instead. Many people recognize themselves here. They’ve messed up, drifted from God, and don’t feel worthy to come home. But the gospel says: *Run anyway*. The Father is not waiting with folded arms — He’s watching the road.

But for others, the older brother hits closer to home. He obeyed. He stayed. He worked. But his heart was hard. Instead of celebrating grace, he resented it. Instead of welcoming his brother, he distanced himself. The danger is that religious behavior can exist without a loving heart. Legalism quietly turns Christians into gatekeepers when we were called to be door-holders. We forget that we were once the lost ones too.

Heaven’s joy is not found in rule-keeping — it’s found in **rescue and restoration**. If the kingdom of God is your home, then your mission is clear: care about the lost things God is still searching for.

Reflection Questions

Which brother do you relate to more right now — the younger or the older?

1. Have you ever found yourself frustrated with who God chooses to forgive?
2. Are you more excited about people coming to church — or about people coming to Christ?
3. When was the last time you truly celebrated someone else's spiritual breakthrough?
4. Are you currently running from God or standing near Him with a distant heart?
5. Who in your life is spiritually "lost" right now?
6. Are you actively praying for anyone's salvation?
7. Do you tend to invite people *in* — or keep people *out* with judgment, indifference, or silence?
8. What does it look like to reflect the Father's heart toward broken people?
9. If your attitude toward sinners reflected God's — what might change in your circles?

Take some time to pray for the people that are lost in your life...ask God to give you wisdom on how to be used to be light in their world.