

# LOST BUT FOUND SERIES

## (PARTS 1 TO 4)

A Case Study of The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin and The Lost Son as Documented in Luke 15: 1-21

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## LOST AND FOUND - PART 1 (THE LOST SHEEP)



**DATE: 22ND JANUARY 2023**

**BIBLE TEXT: LUKE 15: 1-7 (NKJV)**

Let us rise up together as we make our "DECLARATION OF GATHERING" in this "YEAR OF GATHERING".

Are you ready? Say with me:

I Proclaim Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. The Lord is the Shepherd of my Soul, my Shelter by Day, my Light by Night.

In His Name, we Plough our fields, by His Spirit we gather the Harvest, in His Light we seek and find.

In this Year of Gathering, the Lord of the Harvest has commanded: Launch Out into the Deep. At His Words, we cast our Nets, we gather in Souls and Substance for God's Kingdom.

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The Lord is our Reward; in this Season I received God's Portion set aside for me: Full Measure, Pressed down, Shaking together and running over.

Nothing is Lost and Nothing is wasted in Jesus Name - Amen!

And let's give the Lord Praise everybody and welcome to the House of the Lord.

This morning, I will commence with a Three (3) Parts Series Titled: "LOST AND FOUND".

And today, we are going to talk about "The Lost Sheep" in the Part 1 of this Series!

If we take a look at our backdrop Design, we will see that the Center is the Shepherd who finds "The Lost Sheep" and on the sides, is the woman who found "The Lost Coin" (We will talk on the "Lost Coin" next week (29th January 2023 - Watch Out for it on the Label of DMC).

But today, we will focus on "The Lost Sheep" - Luke 15: 1-7 (NKJV).

Luke 15: 1-7 (NKJV)

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."
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

Now, if you read Luke Chapter 14 (The latter Part of the this Preceding Chapter of our Bible Text); Jesus Christ was calling People to be His Disciples and follow Him. And so, He was Preaching about what it means to follow Him, to leave everything behind and follow Him.

And so, we go to Chapter 15 and it tells us the response that People were giving to this Invitation.

Can you imagine Jesus Christ, the Son of God is Preaching - We wish we were there one of those times to hear Jesus Preaching and how He Preached. And just hear His Words and the Authority of His Words and the Majesty of His Words.

So, the two different reactions to the Preaching of Jesus Christ:

1. The first one, the Bible says the Tax Collectors and the Sinners came to hear Him - Pay attention to the word: "To hear Him".

In the Gospel of Luke, Tax Collectors and Sinners were People who are Outcast and Immoral People. The Tax Collectors were hated and they were hated everywhere because Nobody liked to be taxed.

But in the days of Jesus Christ, Tax Collectors were hated more than the "GRA" of Ghana.

DMC NOTES: The Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) is the Ghana Administration charged with the task of assessing, collecting and accounting for Tax Revenue in Ghana. The core mandate of the Authority is to ensure maximum compliance with relevant Laws in order to ensure a sustainable revenue Stream for Government as well as the controlled and safe flow of goods across the county's borders. The Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) was established in 2009 as a merger of the three Revenue Agencies, i.e. the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Value Added Tax Service (VATS) and the Revenue Agencies Governing Board (RAGB) in accordance with the Ghana Revenue Authority Act 2009, (Act 791).

And the reason they were hated was because they were not collecting the money for the Jews, they were not collecting money for the use of the People but they were collecting money to take to Rome and they were "Special Contractors" who went to collect the money.

So People who decided to be a Tax Collector were given a Quota and they earn in Percentage to their Quota. And so they have to oppress their own People to collect money from them.

... So, they were very, very hated People!

The Sinners there were "Generally Bad People" "Immoral People" - Everybody today that we call a Sinner now was a Sinner then.

And the Bible says that: They (Tax Collectors and Sinners) came to hear Jesus Christ!

2. And the Second Reaction are the Pharisees and Scribes came to complained.

And it is very interesting - This is Jesus Christ speaking: Tax Collectors, Bad People are coming to hear Him and the "Supposedly Good People" are complaining.

The Pharisees were very interesting Group in the days of Jesus Christ - The Pharisees emerged in the History of Israel after the Babylonian Exile.

If you know your Bible very well - The People disobeyed God and they went into Captivity in Babylon. And after many years, they came back and their emerge Zerubbabel and so on and Israel.

And during that time of Return, the Group called "The Pharisees" came into being. And the Purpose of the Group is to ensure that Israel will live strict to God's Law because they reasoned that is why they went into Captivity - They have disobeyed God.

So, the Pharisees is a Group that emerged to make sure that there is Strict Compliance to the Laws of Moses.

They are named "Itself" and this means "To be Separated" - They don't mingle with People, they were "Separated People", they were very Strict and they took the Laws of God Stricter than God Himself made it.

And so, by the time Jesus Christ came, the Pharisees had been in existence for at least three hundred (300) years.

In over three hundred (300) years, they have been coming up with New Laws and now, it has become very, very oppressive to the People of Israel - And that is why Jesus Christ has a lot of difficulties with the Pharisees.

They weren't "Bad People" in that sense but they were "Ultra Religious" - People who are very Particular that the Laws must be kept. And that is why they criticised Jesus Christ and they came to complain.

DMC NOTES: "Ultra Religious" means Extremely Religious or Devout.

What is the Complaint about Jesus Christ? What were the Pharisees saying?

They lay two (2) Charges against Jesus Christ:

1. The first complaint was that He received Sinners - That means He accepts those who came to Him.

So, what the Pharisees were saying is that when Sinners come to Jesus Christ, He doesn't sack them.

Even Tax Collectors come to Him - And infact one of His Disciples, Matthew was a Tax Collector and of course we know about Zacchaeus.

The Pharisees were saying that when Tax Collectors come to Jesus Christ, sack them.

If the Pharisees were the one running this Church; some of you won't even step into this Church because they will see you at the door and say: Hey, go back! We don't like your hairstyle.

They say: Jesus, we have a Problem with You. What is the Problem? You receive "Bad People", You receive Sinners, You are not supposed to receive them but cast them out.

But of course, we know that Jesus Christ received Sinners not to Participate in their sins but to transform them.

But the Pharisees will not even give you the Chance to be Transformed - They will just say: You are a Sinner, don't come close to us because their name means "Separation".

## 2. The Second Charge was that He (Jesus Christ) eats with Sinners.

Now, just for your information: Eating with Sinners is deeper than receiving them. Because they say that He eats with Sinners, it means that when Sinners invite Him to their home, He goes.

Not only that He welcomes them; but He accepts Invitation from Sinners. And when Sinners invite you to their homes, you are going to meet a lot of Sinners.

Many of us don't like the Pharisees. But many atimes, when we think about it, they seems to have a Point.

If Somebody is a "Bad Person", you don't want to associate with him - I mean if Somebody is in your Neighbourhood and everyone knows him that guy is bad; Nobody wants to talk to him. We all do that.

And then you see Somebody who comes in and say that he is a Pastor, who is talking to Somebody that everybody says don't talk to and then when they invite him home, he goes there and even eat.

Now, why was that important to the Pharisees?

Because if you Study the Laws of Moses (The Jewish Laws); it is based on Purity and not getting contaminated.

So, there is a lot of separation - Righteous People are supposed to keep themselves Righteous.

The Pharisees believed that if you get close to Sinners, they will contaminate you. And that was why they doubted Jesus Christ.

They will say: If you are really the Son of God, why are you dealing with these guys because they are contaminating you?

But Jesus Christ believed that He was actually contaminating them and not they contaminating Him because after an Encounter between Jesus Christ and Sinners; the Sinners become Righteous and Jesus Christ becomes Sinful.

So, something about Jesus Christ rob off on the Sinner but the Sinner does not rob off on Jesus Christ.

You know that it is very easy for us to be like the Pharisees - Even with sincerity, you can be a Pharisees with a "Good Heart" not that you don't like People but you don't like "Bad People".

You know in our world, when you get into trouble, everybody leaves you and the Pharisees were Master of that. Because under the Law, anything that was not Complete was sinful.

Even when Somebody has a body Part missing - Ear is chopped off, then you are not Clean; Somebody is fighting with you, hit your nose and your nose split, then you are not Clean; you have Leprosy, you are Lame, you are Unclean.

That is why one of the things that Jesus Christ did was also to heal the sick because the sick in those days were also part of the Unclean People.

And Jesus Christ took People who are not Complete and make them Complete. He took People who were not Perfect and make them Perfect.

... So, they complained that He receives Sinners and He eats with them.

If we are going to be a "Great Churrch" this Year (2023); we don't have to be Pharisees but have to be like Jesus Christ!

It means that there are some People we are going to receive that they will say: Don't talk to him Pastor? If you know his Records?

I am talking to him because I know the Records but more than knowing the Recordw, I also know the saving Power of the Lord Jesus Christ

You cannot win Sinners to Jesus Christ if you have a Pharisees' Attitude.

Jesus Christ then talked to them about a Parable - The Parable is about a Shepherd.

And in the Parable, Jesus Christ talked about the Shepherd's Attitude - That he cares for and Protect the sheep.

And Jesus Christ in this Parable is telling us how we should relate with People who are Lost!

So, the Picture here is that of a Shepherd watching over his sheep in the Desert.

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Now normally in Israel, in the days of Jesus Christ and I think till date, you don't rear sheep at home. You will take them to Open Fields and Wide Areas and you will take care of them.

And so the Shepherd if he is taking care of his sheep, will take them out of the City to the Open Fields. The Bible called them the Wilderness or Deserts.

So, Jesus Christ is talking about a Shepherd who takes his sheep to the Open Fields to feed. And He says that the sheep were one hundred (100) - A Number of Perfection.

And the Shepherd noticed that one of them is Lost.

Now, the Practice in those days was that the Shepherd will have a house base in the Wilderness and then take his sheep out to go and graze in a Mountainous Area to look for water, to look for grass and then at the end of the day, he will bring back his sheep back to his base.

And when he brings back his sheep to base, he has to count the sheep to ensure that the number that he took out, is the number he has brought in - So, this is what Jesus Christ has in Mind.

So, this noticing of the Lost Sheep does not take Place in the morning; it takes Place at the end of the day - The Shepherd has taken his sheep out, he has brought them in and now he has to account for them and so start counting them one by one and get to ninety nine (99) and realised that one (1) is gone.

At this time, it is late in the Evening and very soon, nightfall is going to come. And when nightfall comes, wild animals will come out - Lions, Birds etc and that sheep is going to be eaten up by the morning.

So the Shepherd has "Short-Opened Window" from late Evening - Probably around 5.00pm to nightfall - Probably around 6.00pm. So, he has one (1) hour to account for the sheep because if he doesn't get the sheep within then, the sheep will be lost forever.

So he decides that: I'm going to do something about it.

You know that the Bible tells us that there is coming an hour when the end of all things are coming - We have between 5.00pm to 6.00pm in Human History.

And when People don't get the Gospel now, they will be lost forever.

And that is the Open Door that the Shepherd has and he decides that I'm going to use this time to do something.

So, what does the Shepherd do?

The Bible says that he went after the "Lost Sheep" until he found it - I like the word "Until".

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Matthew account of the same Story says that the sheep has gone astray - In other words: The sheep is lost not because the Shepherd was careless but the sheep was wayward. It is the sheep's fault and that is why it is lost.

Lost Sheep cannot find their way back home and so Somebody needs to go after them.

So the Shepherd decides - I leave this sheep and Pray; as its not going to find its way home. I can intercede for the sheep.

We need to Pray for Sinners because they don't know the way home - Somebody must go to find them and bring them back home.

So, that is why Jesus Christ said: Pray for the Lord of Harvest to send Labourers to the Field. He didn't say Pray for the Lord of Harvest to bring Harvest because Somebody must go and bring them. And the Shepherd decides that I'm going to be the one. And so he went after the Lost Sheep until he found it.

Two (2) things are important here:

1. Pursue
2. Persistence

The word "Until" means that he didn't find the Lost Sheep the moment he started looking for it.

If you ever have a loved one that needed to be saved - Maybe a friend, brother, sister, husband or wife; Somebody that needed Christ to be saved; you realised that they didn't get saved the first time they heard the Gospel!

You took them to Church many many times, they didn't respond to Christ; Preached to them many many times, they didn't respond; took them to several Christian Meetings many many times, they didn't respond.

And sometimes, when People are like that, after some time we give up on them saying that I have tried my best.

Can you imagined if the Shepherd says I have tried my best, its getting to night and if I stay out too long, I myself will be in dangers - Lions will come after me, Bear will come and eat me up.

Because if you want to bring Somebody to Christ, its going to inconvenient you. Its not an easy thing to just say: Oh I invited him to Church but he didn't come.

If you want to invite Somebody to Church, you have to Pursue them and you have to be Persistence.

You don't stay at home and call them - You stand in front of their door and call and say: Hey, we are going to Church today. Oh, I'm not ready. You say I'm standing in front of your Gate and we are going today.

Persistence! Because believe you me, the devil is also Persistent.

People who want to get Young People on drugs, they are not lukewarm; they are very Persistent - They will give you free drugs and teach you how to do it: Nail it, Inject it, Smoke it, Inhale it, go with you to Places, make you feel Good until you get hooked.

If the devil does that for his People, you think that Christians should do less to get the Lost Sheep?

Each one of us are like that Shepherd - We have sheep to go out for.

You know, sometimes we forget that there is Hell and that there is Judgement. And that there is Somebody you loved so much they spend Eternity in Hell. Because these days, we feel very cool - Its okay, don't bother him too much. But if the Person is going to Hell, you have to bother him.

At least this Year (2023); each one of us must have one sheep that we will Pursue and be Persistent about.

And you are going to ensure that this Person comes to Church, be a Follower of Christ, becomes a Disciple and grows well of course.

After going after this sheep for so long Persistently, he finds the Lost Sheep.

And what does he do?

The Bible says that he laid the Lost Sheep on his shoulder - He didn't rebuke it, didn't insult it, didn't spank it but laid it on his shoulders.

Very similar to how we behave in Ghana - When we want to celebrate, say Somebody becomes a Chief, we carry him on our shoulders; Somebody becomes a Parliamentarian, we carry him on our shoulders; when Good Things happen to People, they lift them up and carry them on their shoulders. That is similar to the Culture of Jesus Christ.

But instead of putting Human Being on his shoulder, this Shepherd put the Lost Sheep there and calls the sheep: My sheep was lost and now I have found it.

That means that when People are brought into the House of God, we have to put them in a Place of Honour and Privilege and we have to treat them very well.

And two (2) that he did:

1. The first was that we see Celebrations - He rejoiced over the sheep.
2. The second is Presentation - He announced and Presented the sheep to his friends.

In other words, though the sheep comes, the Shepherd Presented him so that the People can rejoice with him. But not only that, so that People can received him.

And Jesus Christ told them a Parable - Verse 7 of the Bible Text and People were wondering what does He mean?

"There is more Joy in Heaven over one Sinner who repents over ninety nine (99) People who don't need Repentance."

And this can be read in many ways:

1. Maybe the ninety nine (99) who do not need Repentance are "Self Righteous People" like the Pharisees.

So for them, Jesus Christ may be saying: This one sheep brings more Joy to God than to you.

2. But I didn't think He means the Pharisees - He means those who are already saved in the House of God.

God rejoices over us His Children but He rejoices more over a Sinner who comes to the Lord Jesus Christ!

So this morning, I want to tell us that each one of us has to be a Good Shepherd!

The first thing that we want to gather is this Year of Gathering is Souls before we gather Substance!

I know that you want to gather the money from the Month of January. And the money will be gathered but let us get our Priority right.

The first thing that we want to gather is not money, not houses, not Properties, not Increase - I know that is what we wished we will gather.

But if we make what is God's Joy our Joy, He will make what is our Joy His Joy also.

If bringing Souls to Christ gives God Joy, then God will give you the things that will give you Joy also - Which is money and all the other things that you want.

But let us fix our Hearts first where God's Heart is - Let us be a Good Shepherd that goes out to Pursue Persistently until he finds that one sheep.

This morning, we want to Pray - And I want you to think: Is there one Person that you want to Pray for this Year and Pursue and be Persistent until they come to Christ ?

1. Maybe he could be Somebody who is a Christian but has backslidened - He has left the Faith, he is back to his Old Ways,. And we say that we want to go back for that sheep and bring it back to the fold.
2. It could also be Somebody who is not saved at all, who needs to be saved.

We are going to Pray that each Individual - And Probably you can note that in your Notebook; that one name, one Person that you are going to target this Year 2023 to bring to the Kingdom of God.

It could be a Relative, Friend, Old School Mates, Somebody in your Neighbourhood, you see all the times but haven't talked to before.

And if you seek all things that bring Joy to the Lord, He will give us things that brings Joy to us too.

If we set our Hearts right, He will set things right for us.

And that is our First Major Assignment for Year 2023 - To be a Good Shepherd.

Pursue one Soul, Persistently, and bring that Person to Christ!

Let us bow our Heads in Prayers!

ALTAR CALL

Sometimes, the Lost Sheep are found in Church.

1. So, if you are here morning or reading now on the Label of DMC and you say: Pastor, I am a Lost Sheep, I want to give my Life to Christ, I want to live for Him, I want Jesus Christ in my Heart as my Lord and Saviour, I want to be Born Again. There are People who needs to make that Decision.
2. And there are others who say: Pastor, I need Help. I used to love God, I used to live for Him, I used to live in Righteousness but I have gone back to sinful behaviour and want to come back to the Lord.

If you are that Person too, this morning we are going to Pray for you.

So with every head bowed and every eyes closed, if you fit into any of these Categories - You say that I need my sins to be forgiven, I want Jesus Christ in my Life or I want to go back to Christ Jesus.

If that is your Prayer, let's begin this Year right with you reconnecting with your Shepherd Jesus Christ.

Just raise up your Right Hand.

And if you are that Person - You want to make Peace with God, you want to have a Right Relationship with God, you want your sins to be forgiven, you want to Return to the Lord, you want to come back to your Faith.

Those of you with your hand up, I will ask that you Stand Up wherever you are on your feet even those reading now on the Label of DMC. Put your hand on your Chest as we Pray together:

Say with me: Heavenly Father, I come to You today just as I am. I am a Sinner, I cannot save myself but I thank You Father that Jesus Christ came to look for me and now I surrender my whole Life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus Christ: Receive me, forgive me of my sins, Change my Life, Change my Heart, make me a Brand New Person.

From today, I have decided to follow Jesus Christ and no Turning Back.

I Thank You for accepting me in Jesus Name - Amen!

And for the rest of us - The ninety nine (99) who didn't Stand Up; we will now commit each one of us to go and look for one Soul for the Kingdom of God. And make it your Ambition this Year that you will get one Person reconciled to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And if you make the Lord happy, He will make you happy.

As we do what Pleases Him, He will do for us what Pleases us.

May the Lord use us Mightily for His Kingdom in Jesus Name - Amen!

Thank you so much for staying all through to read.

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## LOST AND FOUND - PART 2 (THE LOST COIN)



**DATE: 29TH JANUARY 2023**

**BIBLE TEXT: LUKE 15: 8-10 (NKJV)**

Let us rise up together as we make our "DECLARATION OF GATHERING" in this "YEAR OF GATHERING".

Are you ready? Say with me:

I Proclaim Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. The Lord is the Shepherd of my Soul, my Shelter by Day, my Light by Night.

In His Name, we Plough our fields, by His Spirit we gather the Harvest, in His Light we seek and find.

In this Year of Gathering, the Lord of the Harvest has commanded: Launch Out into the Deep. At His Words, we cast our Nets, we gather in Souls and Substance for God's Kingdom.

The Lord is our Reward; in this Season I received God's Portion set aside for me: Full Measure, Pressed down, Shaking together and running over.

Nothing is Lost and Nothing is wasted in Jesus Name - Amen!

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This Parable carries a Similar Message as "The Parable of The Lost Sheep" that we did in the Part 1 of this Series!

DMC NOTES: We can get to read the Part 1 on the Series "Lost And Found" centered on "The Lost Sheep" on this Link:

<https://discoverymediacrew.com/Lost-And-Found-Part-1-The-Lost-Sheep-Pastor-Dr-Mensa-Otabil>

Luke 15: 8-10 (NKJV)

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."

In this Parable however, we see the escalation in two (2) Points:

1. We see that as important as one (1) Sheep is, when it is compared with ninety nine (99); the Lost of one (1) coin compared to ten (10) seems to have a Greater importance than one over ninety nine (99).
2. So, this Parable takes it a little higher - Although, it is a Shorter Parable but there is a Greater details in this one than the Parable of the Lost Sheep.

So the Parable talks about a woman who has lost a Silver Coin - A Silver coin literally means a Piece of Silver.

And the woman that is envisaged in this Parable is a very Poor woman - She doesn't have much.

And the reason is because the Silver coin which Jesus Christ is referring here didn't have much Value - It was small in size and small in Value. It didn't have so much Value and so it was to a very large extent an insignificant amount of money.

In the Greeks Language, it is called Drachma.

DMC NOTES: Drachma, is a Silver Coin of Ancient Greece, dating from about the Mid-6th Century BC, and the former Monetary Unit of Modern Greece. The Drachma was one of the world's earliest coins. Its name derives from the Greek verb meaning "To grasp," and its Original Value was equivalent to that of a handful of arrows.

The Drachma will weigh about 4 Grams of Silver.

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And I took the Liberty to check in Current Terms how much a Gram of Silver will weigh. And in Today's Term: A Gram of Silver will be about three dollars (\$3).

That in Ghana depending on the State or City, it will be about thirty six Cedis (Cedis 36) Coin.

DMC NOTES: In Current Terms, in Nigeria, 1 Gram of Silver is #321.39. Therefore, for a Drachma of Silver weighing about 4 Grams; the Current Price in Nigeria is #1,285.56

Now that seems to be a lot of money to some People but it is a lot of money because that coin or those ten (10) coins represented a Life's Savings. This is all that she has, this is what she has worked so hard for and had gathered over the years that she is being alive and she is just able to gather ten (10) Pieces of Silver coins.

Now for some of you, that will not be a lot of money but you know that if that is all that you have; that's your whole Life load.

And losing one coin, is losing a lot - Not simply in the Value of the coin but in terms of its Relationship or its Value to you.

For this woman, losing that one (1) coin was a lot of money lost.

And the Passage says that she lost one coin - And in the context that it is used here; it means fall out of Place.

People had speculated where the coin could be:

I. Some People had said that the coin was around her Neck Place.

II. Some People believed that it was Part of her hair Coverings.

III. Some People also believed that it was Stored somewhere.

I tend to believe that it was not a Necklace around the Neck or Head but it was Stored somewhere. Because if it is around the Neck, you can't just lose one. If you will lose, so many of them will fall down and you will lose almost all of them at the same time.

So, she has Preserved these ten (10) coins in a Place of Safety but she lost them - One of them fell out of Place and she didn't have that any longer.

Now, the difference between the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin is that the Sheep wandered away, went astray but the coin doesn't have a Mind and the coin was just Lost. And you can't tell whether it is the woman who Lost it or the coin was hit by something but whatever it is, it got Lost.

And the thing about Life is that sometimes, People just get Lost - And you can't explain it.

1. The Lost Sheep got Lost in the field and it went outside the field. But this coin was Lost at home and it wasn't afar off.

It is strange that sometimes, People can be at home - When we think that they are at home and secured and still get Lost.

You can also have a child at home and think - Oh, she goes to Sunday School, she loves Jesus Christ, have her Devotion every morning and we sing Christian Songs everytime, Praise and Worship, Pastor actually come to our home and Pray. And you will think that your daughter/son is safe at home but somewhere you found out the she/he is Lost.

In that Place of Safety and Security, something took the child away!

Sometimes, People that you think are safe can be Lost - And this is what this Parable is talking about.

In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, the Sheep went out rebellious and astray - You can say that this is a Bad Sheep.

But this coin is not a Bad Coin - It is at home, it is supposed to be safe but it is Lost.

And if you have been a Parent before, it is one of the scary things for every Parents - When you think that you are Training your child the best way you can and then you find out that they are doing Stuffs that you never trained them to do and you wondered: Where do they learn it from?

These days, there is an enemy that comes into our homes silently - It is called "The Internet" and it is taking away many children even from Christian Homes like this coin that was Lost at home!

2. The Second Thing you should Note about where it was Lost or being Lost at home is that it was in the Dark when Nobody was watching.

Sometimes, when you think that you know; you realised that you don't know - If you are a Parent, you understand what I'm talking about.

There is a darkness in your home that you don't see clearly; there is a darkness around your Family that you can't see clearly.

I. Sometimes, you think that you know your husband so well and then realised that there is a darkness you couldn't see and there is an aspect of his Life that you don't know.

And then your husband did something very terrible and you wondered: Where do I go wrong as a wife?

Well, that is a Lost Coin!

II. Sometimes, you think that your wife is the Best - Oh, I give her everything she wants, I take Good care of her and then you realised that something has gone terribly wrong and you wondered what went wrong?

Well, it was at home but it was in the dark. Something that you couldn't see enveloped your Love ones.

What we need to learn from this Parable is that: Sometimes right under our Supervision; we can loss People. Right under our Christian Training in our homes, you can still loss your children.

And this coin got Lost in the dark!

The Question has been asked - What kind of Darkness? Was it Night Time?

I don't think that it was Night Time; I think that it was Day Time. And the reason for this is that in the days of Jesus Christ, as in those days in Ancient times; most People don't have Windows - Most especially the Poor. If you go to a lot of our Villages even in Africa, you will find such there.

So, you can be at home and still be in the dark as there was no Electricity.

So, it is likely that she is in her room but her room is dark - There is no Light in the room.

... So, the coin got Lost in the dark!

3. The Third Thing is that it got Lost among other items.

It wasn't in an open room where the coin got Lost but there are other things in the room.

Most of you have had the experience when maybe you are holding something in your hands, trying to work with it and then it get off your hands and you felt the sound that it fell here and you looked around and it is not there because after it fell, it rolled and went to hide somewhere.

And you can pull all kinds of tables, of beds and chairs; trying to find something that just fell out of your hand.

And that is what the Lost Coin did - You think that you know where you can find it but you can't find it. Especially if you are a Parent and you think that I know my son, I know my daughter. But you can't just seems to help them.

You think that you know where they fell, you think that you know how to Pick them up but you still can't find them.

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And this is what this Parable is telling us - People who are Lost at home: Friends and Loved Ones. Surrounded by People but Lost. They didn't go astray, they stayed but they got Lost.

When you are Young and you are inexperienced; you heard that Somebody child is bad and you become very Judgmental - You don't come from Good home and this and that.

But Life will open your eyes and you will realised that you can be the Most Disciplined Person and yet a coin will be Lost in your home, in your room, right there under your Supervision!

And if you are one of those who blames other People; may the Lord help you to have Empathy and Compassion because Nobody seeks to have somebody they loved Lost - Lost to sin, Lost to Bad Habits.

These days, our Young Ones are getting Lost - They are in the room Lost to Pornography, Lost to Drugs - You will be shocked with the amount of Drugs that your kids are taking or contemplating whether they should take it or not.

These days, it comes in Cookies, in Candies. Your child is chewing biscuit and you say: Hey, my child loves biscuit.

The coin was Lost but thank God that we can Redeemed the Lost!

So, how did this woman go about seeking for the Lost Coin? How do we seek for the Lost at home? - She did three (3) things!

And these are the details that you don't have in the Parable of The Lost Sheep - The Parable of the Lost Sheep just says that the man went out to search until he found the Sheep.

But the Parable of the Lost Coin gives us three (3) Specific Action Points:

1. She lid a Lamp.

That means that she turned on the Light.

That tells us that she was searching in the dark - It was a dark Place and she turned on the Light.

You cannot find what is Lost until you find Light and until you get Clarity!

And for us Christians, what does that means for us?

It simply means that we must be Guided by God's Word and God's Spirit - Not by Frustration and Anger but by God's Word and God's Spirit.

Sometimes, your Frustration and your Anger can drive the coin further away.

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It is time to get into the Word of God and it is time to Pray and be Sensitive to the Spirit of God.

It is time to have Light - The Light of God!

We must walk in the Light of God's Word - That means that we ourselves, trying to seek for the Lost must be in Alignment with the Word of God.

Because if you are further away from the Word of God, and your children knows that you are Immoral, but you are trying to correct their Immorality; then you yourself trying to Redeem the Lost are in the dark as you have not turned on the Light.

Fathers, your children knows that you chase girls but you are trying to discipline them - You are in the dark and you need to turn on the Light so that you can see yourself clearly and so that you can see them better.

The woman herself needed Clarity and the coin also needed to be found but it is tied by she Aligning herself with the Light.

If we want to touch those who are Lost, then we have to be in the Light - We have to open our eyes clearly!

## 2. She swept the House

She has to use the broom - The broom allowed her to reach out to the Places she couldn't reach out to Naturally herself.

What does that mean for us? - Don't hide or turn away from the Truth!

The Purpose of the broom is to get things out of their hidden Places!

I. Parents, it doesn't serve any Purpose for you to Praise and Protect your children when they are Horrible - Get the broom, bring everything out, face the Truth and face the Reality.

You may think that it may means People will think that you are a Bad Parent - It doesn't mean that. It simply means that Life happens to People. But don't be in denial - Bring out the broom and sweep it.

II. Ladies, don't say: Oh, my husband has gone on a Trip but you know that he didn't go on any Trip.

Get the broom out, bring things to the open, and don't hide anything (The facts and the Truths).

If you are going to help People; you have to face the Truth and we have to get the Light on and the broom out.

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Sometimes, it means having very difficult Conversation because there is a lot of anger in the Conversation but it has to be heard!

And Please, if you are Lost and they bring you out with a broom to the Light; don't get angry!

Don't say: You are following me everywhere; why? Are you my mother or father?

Coins that are Lost don't talk that way - Just keep quiet, come out from where you are so that the Light will Shine.

Because the whole Process is not to Dishonour or Disgrace you; the whole Process is to put you in Alignment with God or in the Plan of God.

It is not about Humiliation but it is about Redemption!

### 3. She searched everywhere

She has to search and wondered what was she doing - You have brought out, you have swept your room, you have searched carefully through the things that you have brought out of the room.

Look for and encourage True Repentance because People that need Jesus Christ can show up with Deception - False Repentance!

I. Oh, I am sorry but he is not sorry.

II. Oh, I won't do it again but he will do it again.

You know sometimes, I wondered how Parents forget how they were, when they were children. And your children are Playing the same Games you Played on your Parents on you too!

You ought to be Smarter!

Because your child is on Drugs and sitting at the Morning Devotion and blasting in Tongues but he is still eating the Cookies.

And if you are not careful, they will even Prophecy to you at the Morning Devotion.

But Nothing has Changed - You have to search carefully!

Don't take and be deceived by Appearances - Go Deeper!

That was what the woman was doing!

Because sometimes, you might see a Shinning Thing, thinking that it is your coin but it is Cigarettes wrapper.

You have to search until you find the "Genuine Coin".

And this is what Jesus Christ is teaching us in this Year of Gathering - For some of us, we have to gather 'Lost People' in our homes: Our children must come back to God; our wives must come back to God; our Husbands must come back to God; our Friends must come back to God; our Cousins must come back to God.

They are all at home with us but they had gone somewhere - Not too far away, they are still around but they are Lost!

May the Lord help us as we seek to find out Lost Coins in Jesus Mighty Name - Amen!!!

Thank you so much for staying all through to read.

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## LOST AND FOUND - PART 3 (THE LOST SON)



**DATE: 5TH FEBRUARY 2023**

**BIBLE TEXT: LUKE 15:11-14 (NKJV)**

Let us rise up together as we make our "DECLARATION OF GATHERING" in this "YEAR OF GATHERING".

Are you ready? Say with me:

I Proclaim Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. The Lord is the Shepherd of my Soul, my Shelter by Day, my Light by Night.

In His Name, we Plough our fields, by His Spirit we gather the Harvest, in His Light we seek and find.

In this Year of Gathering, the Lord of the Harvest has commanded: Launch Out into the Deep. At His Words, we cast our Nets, we gather in Souls and Substance for God's Kingdom.

The Lord is our Reward; in this Season I received God's Portion set aside for me: Full Measure, Pressed down, Shaking together and running over.

Nothing is Lost and Nothing is wasted in Jesus Name - Amen!

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This Parable carries a Similar Message as "The Parable of The Lost Sheep" that we did in the Part 1 of this Series!

I have been teaching from Luke 15; and I have been talking on "LOST AND FOUND".

We've talked about the Lost Sheep and we've talked about the Lost Coin.

And today we are looking at "THE LOST SON".

I am going to deal with "The Lost Son" this week and next week because I can't do all of it in one week. It is far more detailed than the other ones.

... Although I said this was going to be a Three-Part Message; it's going to end up being a Four-Part Message.

So, we are talking about "The Lost Son" and we go to Luke 15:11-14 (NKJV).

11 Then He said: "A certain man had two sons.

12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood.

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.

This Gentleman is normally called "The Prodigal Son." And the word 'Prodigal' simply means "Wasteful" - The one who wastes.

I want you to remember what Prompted Jesus to talk about these Three (3) Parables.

Jesus was teaching, the Pharisees and Scribes came to Him and said: Lord, we have a Problem with You, "You receive Sinners and You eat with them."

In other words, "when they come to You, You receive them; and when they invite You, You go to them."

They had a Problem with Jesus on that, because the Pharisees were People who were committed to Separation of what they called "Holy from the Unholy".

And if they felt that you were not a Holy Person, they would never visit you.

If you lived in those days, most of you would never have a visit from the Pharisees; because they would have looked at you and say that even your smile is not Holy, your hair cut is not Holy, your shoes are not Holy!

And so, they were very Particular about the Life of the People - They came to Jesus complaining, and Jesus is now responding.

And in answering the question of, "why He receives Sinners and why He goes to them?" He tells them three (3) Parables - The Parable of the Lost Sheep, the Parable of the Lost Coin; and now, the Parable of the Lost Son.

There is something very unique about this Parable I want us to Note before I go on to talk about it.

In the earlier Parables - The Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin: after they were found, Jesus added a Notation.

After the Parable He would say, "There is Joy in Heaven over one Sinner who repents."

He said it after the Parable of the Lost Sheep, and the Parable of the Lost Coin.

However, in this Parable of the Lost Son, Jesus did not use that Phrase.

When He concluded the Parable, He didn't say, "There is Joy in Heaven over one Sinner who repents."

And of course, when you look at the Parable, it feels like the Boy who went out was a Sinner.

So, why didn't Jesus say the same thing He said about the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin?

Because Jesus is talking about two (2) kinds of Lost People.

And the clue you will get is that He starts by talking about a Father and His son.

So, the first two (2) Parables - of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin talked about Sinners, Unbelievers, People who are in the world.

But this one talks about Christians who backslide - People who are with the Father, who know the Father, who know God, who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; and return back into the world.

So, this is what this Parable is talking about.

It is not talking about the New Person who comes to know Jesus Christ as Lord. It's talking about the Person who already knows the Lord, knows the Father: He is a son or daughter of the Father, but falls away into sin.

So, I want you to have that in Mind as we look at this Parable of the Lost Son.

... And the Ladies, you are also included in the Lost Son. Alright!

There are two (2) main aspect of this Parable: The Going away and the Return.

This week I will just focus on the 'Going Away.'

- What took the Boy away?
- And how he ended up when he went away?

Next week I will talk about how he returned to the Father.

So, let's look at the Going away from the Father.

- How did it start?
- How can a son who lives with the Father go away?

WHAT WENT WRONG?

#### 1. Self Centeredness:

And the first thing you Note that went wrong is that the son was Self Centered.

Remember, when I was talking about the things that take People away from God, I talked about self Centeredness as one of them.

This is a Self Centered Child.

How do we know?

He only saw what he could get from his father, and he asked for what was his. Isn't it amazing that the Wealth belonged to the father; the inheritance was for the father.

But he said, "Father, give me what is mine." He only saw what he could get from his Father. And that is where he started going wrong.

This is where everything started going wrong. He was fixated on himself.

His Language is similar to many in our Generation today.

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Sometimes in the Church, Christians - we want what is 'ours' and we want it now!

We say things like, "I can't wait any longer." And all that we are looking for is for something that God would give us now.

I believe that God is a Good God, God blesses, Prospers and heals His Children.

But if all your Christian Life is based on what you can get from God, you are in danger of doing what this Gentleman did. Because if all you do is, "Lord bless me, favour me, increase me, heal me, prosper me..."

If that is all your Christian Life is about, then you are in danger.

Because that is what this Gentleman is doing - He is only looking not to serve the Father, but to take what the Father has, for himself.

Sometimes I feel that Christianity, especially (I can't speak for other Countries) in our Country, has become like that. All our Prayer is: Lord, bless me, increase me, destroy my enemies. Everything is "me, my, I".

Every time we go before the Lord, we are asking for something for ourselves.

Is that how your Christian Life is?

Every time you start Praying you are talking about yourself and what you want from God. And yes, God wants you to have it!

The interesting thing about this Father is that, He didn't refuse giving the son's Portion to him. He didn't say, "No, I will not give it to you." He said, of that's what you want, that is it!

If all the Relationship you are going to have with me is for my inheritance - Have things but never have me. Because sometimes we have things that God give us, but we never have Him. And that's the trouble with this man: he is Self Centered, Self Conceded.

I. And as much as God wants us to have things, our Christian Life should not be about things;\*

II. As much as God wants to Prosper you, your Christian Life should not be about Prosperity;

III. As much as God wants you to be the Head and not the Tail, your Christian Life should not always be, "Lord I want to be the Head, Lord Promote me, increase me."

Yes, He wants you to have it, but our Christian Life is beyond that.

So, the first Problem we have with this guy is that he wants something for himself, he wants Nothing to do with the father.

You know a lot of Christians, if you would give them Miracles without God, they would take Miracles without God.

If you put Breakthrough and God on the table, they will pick Breakthrough and leave God; because we are so fixated on Gifts and not the Giver of the Gifts.

If our Christian Life starts on that Premise, we are going to get into Prodigal Living.

So, that's why we see this guy - Self Centeredness.

That's the Problem: "Give me, give me, give me?"

... From Self Centeredness comes the next step:

## 2. Separation:

The Passage says, "... He journeyed to a far Country."

He separated from the father - He received from Him, but separated from Him.

He received from God, but turned away from God.

\*It's amazing where a lot of us have taken our Christianity - We go for Prayer Meetings, All-Night Meetings not because we love God.

For all of us who go for Prayer Meetings and Pray very long: have you ever considered why you are doing it? Is it really because you want to be in the Presence of God or you want something from Him?

The moment this Gentleman got what he wanted, he separated from his father.

I mean, you would have thought he would say, "Okay father, give me what is mine" - He gets what is his, stays with the father and starts using the father's Gift (next door) to grow.

So, you see that the real reason why he wanted something for himself was because he hated to be in the Presence of the father - He didn't want his father, he didn't want to be accountable, he didn't want his father's correction, his father's direction or his father to say "don't do that!" All he wants is, "Bless me and I don't want you again."

And there are many Christians like that - "Bless me and I don't want You to interfere in my Life."

"He journeyed far away from his father."

Usually, this is the first step that many People take when they turn away from God - They separate themselves, they disconnect.

Sometimes, they stop coming to Church.

When they are broke they are in Church, they are in the Meetings, they are Praying in every Prayer Meeting. The day the so called Breakthrough comes, now they have a lot of excuse not to be in Church.

You see the Separation happening; and the Separation is happening because their heart was for themselves. Once they get what they want, God is out of the Picture.

Sometimes People do that - They stop going to Church. Sometimes they go to another Church no one knows them. Now they can sin freely, because nobody knows them! They take a girlfriend and go to another Church.

Sometimes they will say, "well, you know I don't want to go to Church again. I just want something Private."

I have seen lot of People - They hire Private Pastors and Prophets, "Come and do Bible Study in our house, all I want is just love God. I don't want to go to Church."

And so they have this Man of God (So called) that they can control. Who can see the right Visions for them. Who never sees anything wrong about them. He tells them, "It shall be well with you; you will Prosper, your enemies will be defeated."

Aren't they suspicious that these hired Prophets (who are working for wages) have all been engineered for salary?

You've hired him, what do you want him to say? "That you are wrong?"

You have that Young boy come, and every Vision he sees is Good for you. And they are the ones who see all your enemies; because they know you are a Paranoid Person - Your head is not correct. So, they are twisting your head.

Separation!

And that is what is happening to our young friend here (the Prodigal son).

Sometimes People who are separated from God act like, now they have a a deeper understanding of Scriptures.



They become cynical, they question everything about God; everything about the Bible.

They talk down on all Pastors. They don't believe any Pastor again.

They talk down on all Christians: They say, Christians are all hypocrites.

They talk down on all Churches.

You know what they are doing? They just want to be alone!

It has nothing to do with Spirituality, because true Spirituality would connect you to God; connect you to His Word and to His People.

If you think you know so much and you are so Spiritually deep; and you are disconnected from God and His People, and His House. Check your Spirituality - You are separating from God, His People; you are now giving excuses.

And I know the Prodigal son was saying the same thing: "My Father's is boring, He wants to control my Destiny." So he went out!

... There is a Separation, and I hope you are not there!

### 3. Spending:

And from Separation comes the next step - Spending or Squandering.

He used up all that his father gave him. He left home rich.

The father had invested so much into him. He started using what the father had given to him without replenishing what he was spending.

They are the Christians who attend Church - Start from Children Church, you learn so much; start from Youth Church, you learn so much. And you sit in Church and hear all the Sermons. So you are so full.

And then one day, you say, "I'll just stay at home, I believe I can Worship God with my Whole Hjeart."

... You are going to squander everything you have learnt over the last Thirty (30) years of your Life.

And yes, you can quote Scriptures. And you can do all the things that you can do, based on what has been invested into you. That's where this guy (The Prodigal son) is.

I. The first part of Spending is very exciting - That is when you can afford so spend. It is the fun Phase of spending.

Prodigal Living can be very exciting at Phase one.

When you start sinning, Prodigal Living is very fun - Got a good boyfriend, it's going to be fun. A good girlfriend, it's going to be fun. You started doing drugs, it's going to be fun.

That's the Spending stage!

And everything feels "this is a Good Life! This is what my Father has been denying me."

These days a lot of Christians raised in the Church, raised in the House of God; who have learned so much from God, somehow feel that they have to start drinking (so they go ahead). And now they are learning wine tastes: "This is from France, and this was cultivated Grapes on a Mountain and this is from that! And now they are smoking cigarettes.

You look at them and you just feel like, "Woow, they have arrived!" But all they do is, they are spending: and when you start spending, you Pay People to be with you.

Phase 1 seems fun - The fun side.

II. But there is a Phase 2 - When the fun wears away and things start Changing.

That is what happened to the Prodigal son - He spent everything, he spent his Relationship with his father, spent the father's money, spent the father's inheritance - blew it all.

Spending is going to lead to Scarcity.

#### 4. Scarcity:

Scarcity is when you become a Slave to degenerated Life.

Now you are imprisoned, you can't get out again.

He has finished spending his father's money.

What the father had given him over a Lifetime is gone in a short Period of time. Now there is Scarcity. Everything is gone!

You know, when you started to do the drugs and you said you were 'high'. And now you are a drug addict, it's no longer High, it's Low!

Your whole Life is miserable. You are twitching, you can't get your whole Life free: what used to be fun has now imprisoned you.

When you started drinking, you said "Oh, that is nice. That is why Pastor is always Preaching we shouldn't drink but this is a Good Life! He does not want us to have a Good Life."

You squandered and squandered; now you are a drunkard.

You took that girl and you thought you could get rid of her, now you are stuck. And she has Pictures of you (Laughter)! She has your Conversations, she has recorded everything on Phone.

Listen, it is a Digital World and anybody who thinks, "I will not leave a footprint" you are joking! You have footprints: and one day accountability will come.

So, here you are, you can't get rid of the girl, you are stuck. It is no longer fun! Now you are running away, you are hiding. Now you are going for Prayer Meetings, Praying "Oh God, let her die."

For some People, we treat God as if He is some Machine - He doesn't have Intelligence. "I have gone to mess up my Life Lord, now kill the girl so my Secret will not come out."

That's what David thought he could do: "I have gone to mess up my Life, now I'll kill Uriah."

This is a Christian, Born Again - He went astray. Scarcity and he became a Slave.

And if you read how the Bible describes a Slave's Life; from Luke 15:14 it says: But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that Land, and he began to be in want.

... That means, events conspired against him: he is broke and there is famine.

So, there is a Global Economic crisis but you were already broke before the Global Economic crisis comes. Now, you are in want.

... Sometimes, events can conspire against you.

Luke 15:15-16 says: Then he went and joined himself to a Citizen of that Country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

He spent all, there is famine, he has now gone to join himself to a depraved farmer. His best buddy now is a Pig Farmer.

Your best friend now is a degenerated man! You used to have Good friends; now look at your friends, look at the People you hang around with!

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You've left your father's house, now look at your friends - Drug addicts, Drunkards, Womanizers, Gamblers; those are the People you've joined with. And you really think you have a Good Life?

For those who say, "I don't trust Church People" now whom do you trust? Pig Farmers!

Whom do you trust again?

You say: "I know Church is full of hypocrites; these Pastors are all hypocrites".

But the Pig Farmer is a nice guy! You like the Pig Farmer better.

"The worst of a Child of God is better than the best of Sinners."

The Church is not Perfect: Church - People make mistakes and they will do things that will hurt you; but the best out there cannot be anywhere near the worst in the Church.

Because if for Nothing, they hear the Word of God every time. And the Holy Spirit convicts them every time. And people would correct them - There will be redemption.

But he joined himself to a Pig Farmer! And the Bible says that he wanted to eat the food of the pigs.

He has moved from eating the best food in his father's house to eating Pig food.

But the saddest part is that the Passage says, "now no one gave him anything." They threw him away!

You know, sometimes People who are down would bring you down and mock you. They would say, "you were the ones in those days going to Church; now you see where you are."

All they want is to testify Negatively about you - You used to make them feel bad, now you are down to their Level.

Don't ever think that everybody who is trying to encourage you in Life, wants the best for you. Most of them just want Companionship in their sinful Life. They don't want you to judge them again. They don't want your Life to condemn them.

You are the only one who says, "My wife, my wife!" They want you to stop doing that! While you say, "Sweetheart, I am going for a meeting, now I am with this Person." They say, Haaa!

They want you to be a liar like them. They want you to live a Secret Life like them so they will pull you back. And when you hit rock bottom everybody leaves you. "Nobody gave him anything!"

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Let me tell you this: "The Christian Life is not a Perfect Life; but it is the Best Life among all the Options available."

... It is the Best among all the options - It is the Best!

Going to Church is the Best Option you have!

Where are you supposed to go? Which one is better - going to watch football? Where is better?

Where would you go to and have what you hear in Church always? Worshipping, Music, dancing, hearing the Word of God, being encouraged, being guided, being exalted. Where are you going to get that?

You can watch Manchester United and all you want. They would not encourage you. They would not lift you up. Rather they are going to lose their Games and you would be depressed (laughter)!

You would be so depressed and you'll wonder: why am I watching these People?

You are Paying for your depression! And weeks after weeks, they buy Players, it doesn't work!

All I am saying is, your Best Life is with God; It is with God's People in the House of the Lord - In the House of your Father.

"Your Best Life is with God, with God's People, in God's House."

That's your Best Life! It's not Perfect, but it is the Best!

And this guy found out that he hit rock bottom.

The Question is, "What is he going to do now that he has hit rock bottom?"

... And next week we are going to find out what to do when you have hit the rock bottom and you have messed up your Life!

What would you do after that? Because there is a way back to the father; and the father still wants you back to Himself.

Let us Pray!

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as we listen to your Word, we are reminded of ourselves that sometimes we can be Selfish, Self Centered, seek our own and never seek You.

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Sometimes we can be so bored with Life with You that we want to go on experiment with another Life.

But today Lord, help us to know that Your House is the Best Place to be; Knowing You is the Best thing; staying with Your People is the Best Place.

And keep us Lord, to fix our Hearts on You; fix our Minds on You; to settle on You and desire You more than the things You give to us.

We know you bless us with Good Things, and You fill our mouths with Good Things and You Prosper us.

But help us never to put our eyes on the things You give us; but to always fix our eyes on You - The Giver of everything that we have.

And help us Lord, like the Psalmist, "to dwell in the House of the Lord for ever!"

In Jesus' Name - Amen and Amen!

Thank you so much for staying all through to read.

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And I can assure you that you will be glad you did as it will avail you first hand access to comprehensive reports on the various Messages of Pastor E.A Adeboye and other Men of God!

It is outrightly wrong and a sin we frowned at it for anyone to consciously remove the original source of the work that does not emanate for him or her!

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## LOST AND FOUND - PART 4 (THE LOST SON - B)



**DATE: 12TH FEBRUARY 2023**

**BIBLE TEXT: LUKE 15:17-21 (NKJV)**

Let us rise up together as we make our "DECLARATION OF GATHERING" in this "YEAR OF GATHERING".

Are you ready? Say with me:

I Proclaim Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. The Lord is the Shepherd of my Soul, my Shelter by Day, my Light by Night.

In His Name, we Plough our fields, by His Spirit we gather the Harvest, in His Light we seek and find.

In this Year of Gathering, the Lord of the Harvest has commanded: Launch Out into the Deep. At His Words, we cast our Nets, we gather in Souls and Substance for God's Kingdom.

The Lord is our Reward; in this Season I received God's Portion set aside for me: Full Measure, Pressed down, Shaking together and running over.

Nothing is Lost and Nothing is wasted in Jesus Name - Amen!

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## LOST AND FOUND - PART 4:

And we are just concluding "The Lost Son": I did Part A of The Lost Son last week (12th of February 2023). So, we are looking at Part B of The Lost Son today (19th of February 2023).

If you look at the Three (3) Parables that Jesus spoke in Luke Chapter 15; He talked about the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son.

The Lost Sheep belonged to the Shepherd; the Lost Coin belonged to the Woman; the Lost Son belonged to the Father.

Be he had something else: he didn't just belong to the Father, he was born of the Father.

The Sheep was not born by the Father, the Coin was not born by the Father but the Prodigal Son was born by the Father - He had a very Special Relationship with the Father.

And that is why I believed that this Parable is for Believers who fall away from the Faith and return home.

The last time we met this guy, he had gone his merryway and eventually found himself in a lot of trouble. He spent everything that he had, and then he was assigned to go and feed the pigs.

And the Passage says that even whilst he was feeding the pigs, he wanted to eat the food of the pigs.

Now, for a Jew to feed pigs, that's an Abomination in the first place. But to try to eat the food of the pigs - I don't know what is greater than an Abomination: that is "Super Abomination".

And the Passage says that although he wanted to eat the food of the pigs, no one gave him anything. In other words, he couldn't even eat the food of the pigs.

The owners of the pigs felt that the pigs were more important to them than to the Prodigal son - Because the pigs would be fed to be sold, and they would fetch a Price. And so they Valued their food was to fatten them.

This guy (in their own estimation) had no Value - A great son from a great family reduced to a Place below pigs: couldn't eat the food of pigs because the Value of a pig was higher than the son of a Noble Man.

It just shows the extent to which sin can bring a Child of God: to a Place where even the Unbelievers don't consider you worthy, because you have gone far below.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THIS SITUATION?

Let's pick the Story back in Luke 15:17-21;

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,

19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.'"

20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

... So, what do you do when you have reached rock-bottom?

I. There are some who will keep going and going and going! Probably move to another Town and hope that somehow, they would find the way.

It's like People who get lost and still keep driving and hoping that they will find their way.

II. There are other who will stop and settle and say well, Life is bad. I am just going to stay here - I think this is all that I have.

III. And there are those who would try to go back to where they used to be.

And that is the Option that this Gentleman took - He decided to go back to the Father.

So, let's look at the Process of going back to the Father - There are Four (4) Things he did in order to go back to the Father:

#### 1. REALIZATION:

The Passage says, "he came to himself".

That means he was beside himself all this time. He came to himself, he took Charge of his Life; he accepted the reality of his Life. He stopped making excuses, he stopped lying to himself.

He faced reality!

He looked himself in the mirror and told himself the truth.

The Problem many times with us is - When things go bad, either our Christian Life goes bad and we are now backslidden; we don't face reality.

I. And there are People who still think they are doing well, when they are not doing well.

II. There are People who are down, but think they are up. They never face reality.

But this Gentleman faced reality.

And if you are here now or reading this Message now on the Label of DMC, Struggling with your Christian Life: if you want to get back to the Place of Relationship and Intimacy you had with God, you are going to start with facing reality.

That is what you need to do - Face reality. Because if you don't start facing reality, you are going to lie to yourself for a very, very long time.

Apart from our Christian Life, there are many areas where we need to face reality.

I. Sometimes, couples need to face reality that there is a Problem in their Marriage. Instead of saying, there is Nothing, they has to understand there is a Problem.

II. Maybe you are in a situation where your Finances are going bad and now you are blaming Witches and Wizards, blaming everything. And now you are blaming the almighty Russia and Ukraine War.

But you have to face reality, because until you face reality, you are living a lie. And nobody can have Recovery and Restoration when they live in a lie and tell themselves a lie.

I must admit that telling yourself a lie is something very nice because it encourages you. But when you are feeding, eating and living with pigs; you don't need encouragement to live with pigs - You need to get out! And you starts by facing reality.

## 2. REASON:

The Second Step he took was that he reasoned with himself.

He spoke to himself, he reasoned, he started thinking and he said - Woooooow! I remembered my Father's House. And even the Slaves, the Servants have bread to eat and they have bread to spare.

Common sense, reason!

And that's what he did - He remembered what Life was and he asked himself the "All Important Question":

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I. If this is how Life was in my Father's House, what am I doing here?

II. Why am I allowing this thing to overtake me?

III Why am I allowing this thing destroy my Marriage, my Christian Life?

IV. Why so I sit here and allow this situation to destroy me?

Reason!

Because if you don't reason and you don't ask the tough Questions of Life yourself, you can't get out of the pig's stall.

You know, for many of us, when we are in trouble (in Ghana or even in Nigeria); we blame the Witches and Wizards, Demonic attacks, Spiritual attacks.

I can guarantee you: Most of your Problems, about ninety nine Percent (99.9%) are not Spiritual attacks - It is Personal attacks you have given to yourself. It is based on wrong Choices, based on Mistakes we have made, Bad Choices we are making.

And if you keep blaming the Witches, you will never reason to solve the Problem.

So, we'll stop blaming, and face them squarely, and then start to think:

Why am I sitting here? Why have I allowed this to happen to me? Why do I keep doing this to myself? Why do I keep making this Mistake over and over and over?

That's reason!

But he didn't stop there: because if you just reason with yourself you are just joining a Debating Society. He took the next step;

### 3. HE RESOLVED:

He committed himself, he brought his Will into play.

He said, because of all of this, "I WILL ARISE".

This is so important because many times we know what is wrong, we have no Will to do anything about what is wrong.

It is like Couples who are having Problems in their Marriage - One is facing West, the other is facing East.

In their minds, they both want to resolve the Problem, because none of them is happy.

Husband is saying, I wish you would say something, and I will respond. The wife is saying, I wish he would say something then I would respond.

So, both of them are wishing somebody would speak first!

And so, they keep lying East and West. And this can go on for Weeks and even Months.

Before then a Problem which started so innocently - A very small Problem has now become a huge Problem.

All because, although you are reasoning in your heart that what you are doing is wrong, you haven't applied your Will.

And that is what this Gentleman did: "I will arise, I will do something about it. I am just thinking about it; I will do it."

And so it is with every Problem - You want to lose weight and you say you don't like what you see in the mirror. Get up! You have done Phase 1 and 2, now you need results "I Will."

He said, I will arise, I will go back to my Father: I am not waiting for my Daddy to call me. I am not waiting for my Father to send Servants to look for me. I am going to take the initiatives because I left by myself, I have to go back by myself - "I will do it."

But that is not enough, because you can just keep on Procrastinating: "I will" and end up not doing it.

So, you have to realize it, you have to think about it - reason. You have to resolve.

#### 4. HE ACTED:

The Passage says, "And he returned" - He went back by himself.

He left the Father by himself, and he returned by himself.

This return journey must have been Probably not easy for this Young man.

I don't know what he said when he was leaving home but normally when some People leave, they do so very bombastically - "You will see, by this time next year when I return to this house, you will see!"

It's like somebody who left Ghana/Nigeria - Went to America, to come and Prove to all of us that he has Prospered. Now life is treating him badly, he can't come back because he Promised that next time we see him, he'll be on a Higher Level.

So he stays on, thinking a long stay will Change his situation. But things get worse and worse. Returning is always tougher.

Can you imagine what the Prodigal son is thinking?

I. He is returning with Shame.

II. He is returning to face Disgrace.

III. He is returning with Guilt - He knows he has messed up his Life.

IV. He is returning with fear - He doesn't know whether the Father will accept him, whether he will mock him.

So, every step from the Pig Stall to the Father's House is very difficult - His heart is heavy, thoughts are going through his Mind but he has said, I've reached rock bottom, and no Life will be worse than what I have experienced. I am going back.

And there are many People who need to return to God - There are People who need to return to Church; return to their Marriage, apologise to People. And it is a very tough thing: "What if the Person insults you when you are apologising? What if he disgraces you?"

So, this guy is going back to the father with a very heavy heart - If he is defeated, he still goes.

Restoration, Returning is not always easy - And for him it was tough!

And then, he gets to the area where his Father's House is:

I'm sure the moment he entered the territory he is now Speaking in Tongues, Praying in the Spirit.

And if he had forgotten how to Pray in Tongues, he is now remembering it - Praying, having All-Night Meeting, Fasting, speaking to God "Oh Lord!"

Now he is in his father's House - Let's see the reaction(s) from the father:

And for me as a Church, this is the most important Part of this Message because all the others are taken by People who are Returning;

Now, what about those the People are Returning to - What is our Attitude?

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Three (3) Things I want you to note about what happened in the father's House:

First, let's look at Like 15:20-24;

20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.

23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry;

24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

... What a Reception! What a Welcome.

THREE (3) THINGS I WANT YOU TO NOTE ARE:

1. RECEPTION:

How he is received - He is seen and he is received!

The father sees him and welcome him.

The Passage says that "his Father was so full of compassion when He saw him, that He ran to him, fell on his neck and kissed him."

That is Reception!

There is nothing like, "I told you so!"

Finally you have realized I Am the father, and you have come back.

Now you know there is a father somewhere." There is nothing like that!

Reception is how you are treated at the Entrance - And sometimes in Church we can also be very nasty to People who are Returning.

So, if there is a Church Member who left saying, "you People here are all Lost. I am going to find the "Real World" and I am going to have fun." And for a Season, the Fellow is having fun.

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And then Life hits him or her very badly. And now he is very disturbed and finally decides to come back to Church.

And you saw him or her outside.

Some of us would look at them and say, "Finally you have come back to Church. Now you know there is Church. Look at you, see how you suffered."

But that is not the way we receive People back to the Father's House. We don't receive with condemnation; we don't receive with guilt by Pointing out their mistakes.

We receive as this father receives - He received because He sees the Person, goes to the Person and He welcomes the Person.

If you see a Person who left the Church and is coming back; don't ask them embarrassing Questions. Go to them and welcome them - "We are so glad to have you, we are so honoured you are in Church today. And we trust you will enjoy the Service. May God touch your Life today."

Say something warm and nice to the Person - Don't Point out their mistakes because the People who have messed up know they have messed up. They don't need you to tell them that they know they've messed up.

Don't you know when you've messed up? If you mess up you will know you have messed up. Hence, you don't need somebody to indicate that you are messing up because you are already coming with guilt on top of your head.

The father showed how to receive a Lost son! And I believe this should be the attitude of every Church - Every House of God must be like the father's House; where those who are wayward come and we don't fight, curse or belittle them. Rather we welcome them.

You say, "but how are they going to learn their mistakes?" They learnt the mistakes before they came!

You are not the one to teach them their mistakes. They already knew they were wrong, that's why they've come back.

And if you look at the Father's attitude, He doesn't even say repent. He doesn't even say Pray. He doesn't even talk about all of that. All He does is "Unconditional Welcome".

Why? Because He knows how tough it is for His son to come back - Smelling like a pig, and coming back home.

It is tough for you to be wayward and go back.



If somebody used to be in Church and backslides; listen, it has taken them Months to arrive at that Decision.

They have been thinking "should I go back there? Should I go to another Church or go to where Nobody knows me? If I go back, how will they treat me?"

They have debated and debated;

And then one Sunday, he gets up, and he says, I will go back! He carries his bag, puts on his clothes, comes here.

He already knows he has messed up! We are not the ones to Point his guilt to him - He knows it.

... So, that's the first thing - Reception: how we receive People.

## 2. REPENTANCE:

This is the Second thing - Very interestingly, Repentance.

He confessed his wrongs.

The father didn't ask him to, the father received him and then he repented.

In other words, the father didn't wait for the Repentance before He forgave him - The father heard his cry in the Pig Stall and then forgave him already.

But the son also understood, "I cannot act as if nothing went wrong. I cannot act as if everything is Perfect: I have to "Own Up" to my mistakes and I have to make Preparations for my mistakes. And I have to repent."

The fact that somebody has forgiven you doesn't mean you shouldn't repent. Because sometimes you know, we take People for granted. We take people's treatment for granted.

And this guy has learnt a Lesson - "I am not going to take my father's love for granted. Although He hasn't asked me to repent, I will repent."

And here, his Repentance is very, very Total - Father, I have sinned against God. I am not worthy to become a son again. Just make me one of your servants. Because I have realised, in this house, even the Lowest is better than the Life I experienced.

Total Repentance - Not Expectations, not asking for Restoration, not asking to be put back into the Palace. He says, I have messed up, I'm just happy to be back.

And that is for those who returned; they don't come back with Expectations. You come back just trusting in God's Grace, in God's Mercy.

And if God wants to lift you up, He will lift you up. Don't say, "before I left, by the way Pastor do you know I was the Director for so and so? And I was Heading so and so Unit? I am coming back for my Position."

That is a wrong attitude! You don't come back with Expectations - You come back with Repentance.

... There is Reception, there is Repentance, and the final one:

### 3. RESTORATION.

He is Restored! He is Clothed and Celebrated.

The father did Three (3) Important Things for him:

- I. Gave him new Robes;
- II. Gave him a Ring;
- III. Gave him Sandals.

Now, for us today, they may not mean much. But everyone of those things the Father did - in the Culture at that time was very Symbolic.

#### 1. A ROBE:

The Robe that was given to him, in those days in the Jewish Community, they were Robes for Treasured Guests.

If a very Important Person comes to visit you, you put a Robe on him to say, "we value you, you are Important - You are a Special Guest to our home."

And so those Robes would be in most homes and would only be given to an August Visitor.

And that is the Robe that the father says, "Take and put on this Boy!"

... Interestingly, there is no note that he had bath. Maybe they bathed him but that is not recorded.

So I would assume he was still in a mess when the Robe was put upon him; just to say, "we know you don't smell good but you are welcome - You are important to us."

The father put the Robe of Honour on him; the Robe reserved for People who are highly Treasured but it went to him.

That's the first thing He did!

## 2. A RING:

The Second thing He gave him was a Ring.

This Ring is not a Wedding Ring - It is the Family Ring.

In Prominent families they would have a Ring, and the Ring would be a Seal of the family. That is what shows that this Person is a son of a Noble Man and not only that; he can act on his behalf.

So, if a son went to transact a business and People wanted to know whether they had the right to transact business, the Ring will show, they can represent their father.

The father says, not only are you welcome; you can represent this house.

That's quite a big deal to somebody who has just been come from feeding pigs - You can represent this house; you are Part of this house.

## 3. SANDALS:

In those days Servants and Slaves did not wear Sandals - Only Noble People and sons, Free Men wore Sandals.

Obviously, whilst he was away, he had lost the Sandals he went out with. Probably, it's in the Pig Stall or he used it for gambling or he did something with it.

So, he is walking barefoot as a Servant, as a Slave. And that's why he said to the father, "treat me as one of the Slaves."

The father said, "Son, you are not a Servant, you are not a Slave." And the Sign of it, he was given Sandals to wear.

So when he walks into this house, the Servants would know, "he is not one of them. He is my son - He has my Ring, and he has a Noble Robe on him."

And the father did all of these things for only one Purpose: to Celebrate his son.

At no Point in this journey did the son cease to be His son;

He was his son when he was with him; when he left home, when he was wasting His Property and Wealth. He was his son when he was feeding the pigs, when he was returning, and he was his son back home!

At no Point did he cease to be a son - He was His son and He had never forgotten that, this is my son. And never ever cut the son off in his Life.

And that is what God does to Believers - When a Believer backslides, at no Point do they lose their Salvation; at no Point are they totally disconnected from God.

They may sin, rebel against Him; but God always looks after them and say, that is my Child and I want him or her back. My son or daughter, I want him or her back.

Never ever confuse People's Relationship with how God sees them - This man was a son throughout; and the father affirmed it in his Life.

This morning or as you read now on the Label of DMC - As we think about this Story, there are People here who are Struggling with their Christian Life:

I. Some come to Church but they are far away from God.

II. They come to Church just to Prove a Point to somebody, "oh, I went to Church."

But you know that your heart has been out for a long time.

III. There are People in Church who are Struggling with drugs, who are living all kinds of Life;

And they want to get back to God; they want to reconnect with them with their Father; they want to get back with their Father.

This morning, I am going to give you the opportunity to reconnect with your Father; and to come back home.

I. If you are here this morning and you say: Pastor, I want Jesus Christ to come into my Heart, to be my Lord and Saviour.

Jesus would save you.

II. But if you've Prayed that Prayer before, and now your Christian Life is a mess.

You used to be for Christ; you used to live for Him, but now you are no longer living for Him - He can still restore you.

So, with every Head bowed and every eyes closed; if you are here this morning or reading now on the Label of DMC and you say- Pastor, I want to get back to God; I want my Relationship with God to be better.

I want to live for Him, I want to live a Righteous Life. I want to stop living in sin; I want to overcome this drugs Problem, this alcohol Problem, Prostitution Problem - I want to live for God. I want the Good Life of Jesus Christ.

If that is your Heart desire and that is your heartbeat, don't feel condemned. And don't feel ashamed, because God loves you just as you are and He will Change and Transform you this morning.

So, if that's your Prayer - You want to reconnect with God, just lift up your Right Hand wherever you are: don't put yourself down.

Nobody would put you down - It takes a lot of boldness to lift up your hand.

Like that son returning home, it takes a lot of boldness to return home.

I am going to ask you to do one more thing - Just Stand Up wherever you are.

God bless you!

It's taking you a lot of boldness to do what you are doing but you are coming home.

We are going to Pray this Prayer together. And let it be your Prayer of Restoration.

Say with me:

Heavenly Father, I come to You today just a I am. I am a Sinner - I cannot save myself. I trust You for my Salvation, for my Restoration;

You are my God, You are my Hope. I trust You today to accept me and make me Your Own;

Fill me with Your Holy Spirit, make me a Brand New Person. Let me live Victoriously for Your Glory, all the days of my Life.

In Jesus' Name - Amen and Amen!!!

Thank you so much for staying all through to read.

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And I can assure you that you will be glad you did as it will avail you first hand access to comprehensive reports on the various Messages of Pastor E.A Adeboye and other Men of God!

It is outrightly wrong and a sin we frowned at it for anyone to consciously remove the original source of the work that does not emanate for him or her!

Discovery Media Crew ... Reaching out to the World through the Power of the Gospel!!!

**COMPILATIONS BY:**

*MOSES DURODOLA, TITILAYOMI AJAYI AND TOPE BABALOLA*

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SIGNED

MOSES DURODOLA

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