

For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter. 2:25

3 Jesus gave us a pattern to follow.
If Jesus came to seek and save the lost so should we. Jesus is calling us to act and think like shepherds. To be like him. (As Jesus original audience where the Pharisees He was also making this call to them.)

How does this parable fit in terms of evangelism and the world around us?

**? Who is the lost sheep?
What does it mean to be lost?
What danger is the sheep in?**

**? According to this parable what priority should we put on the lost sheep?
What kind of attitude does Jesus want us to have?
Does this mean we neglect the programs of the church and the needs of the safe?**

! Parables are dangerous. They are stories that are intended to make a point. Usually a single, simple point. The parable is saying seek the lost it is not saying neglect the everything else. After all, a strong church is a good platform to fulfil the parable.

**How are you going to reach the lost?
What are you going to do to put this parable into action?**

**? Have you noticed any missing sheep?
A modern day tax collector and sinner would be ...
Is Jesus saying we should only reach out to the worst?
Why was Jesus able to reach the tax collectors and sinners when the Pharisees couldn't?**

This study started by pointing out that the inner Pharisee is a danger for every Christian.

**? What kind of attitudes are going to stop us from reaching out?
How are we going to emulate Jesus in this parable?
What kind of attitudes are we going to need to do this?**

**▶ Read Luke 15:8-9
How does this parable work – who is what?
The coins were savings – there to help the women through lose, hardship, or old age.
Are nine coins not enough?
What elements does this parable add to that of the lost sheep?**

Urgency
Value
Bigger percentage

In the first the sheep was in danger in the second it is the women who is in danger. It is not hard to work out what this means for us, we lose out if we do not evangelise. If we see the women as Jesus then we get a picture of how important we are to Him.

**✓ How will you change as a result of this study?
What will you change as a result of this study?**

FREEDOM

Christian Church

Ninety Nine

The rules for hide and seek.

▶ Read Luke 15:1-10
Much of Jesus teaching was sparked by some kind of incident. Here Jesus tells two parables with the same basic meaning. Jesus seems to have often told parables in pairs. This may well have been true even when the Gospels only record one.

What was the occasion that sparked these parables? v1-2

Tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus. The Pharisees considered such people unclean, they also believed that this uncleanness was contagious. Meeting with unclean people made Jesus unclean. To eat with someone in this culture meant accepting them. Tax collectors and sinners were the social outcasts of the day.

✓ Embracing the Inner Pharisee.
Christians love to hate Pharisees. This is unfair. The Pharisees were popular with the ordinary people of the day. Theologically their teaching was quite close to that of Jesus. (Jesus endorses their instruction, Matthew 23:2-3, though not their actions.) Many Pharisees later became followers of Christ including Paul.

What do we hate about the Pharisees?

Intolerance, rigidity, hypocrisy, legalistic, narrow thinkings etc.

✓ None of these things represented what the Pharisees believed or what they aspired to. It is these things that we have come to define them by.


Religion breeds Pharisees like flies.

! The danger that faith in God degenerates into all the things we have come to hate about the Pharisees is still with us. When ever you read the word Pharisee in the Gospels a long hard look in the mirror is always a good idea.

**? Do people outside the church ever think of us the way we think of the Pharisees?
Are they sometimes right?
What should we do about this?**

**? Why do you think tax collector and sinners wanted to gather around Jesus?
What was Jesus response to them?
Define 'sinner'.
Why do you think Jesus welcomed them?**

X True or False
Faith in Jesus is for good people
If we let sinners in it might jeopardise our stands

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Sometimes our exclusivity is because of fear of reaching out.
 Sometimes we couch it in politically correct language.
 We must respect their choice not to include Jesus into their lives.
 We should not force our beliefs onto others.
 They seem happy as they are.



Zacchaeus

"Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke. 19:9-10
 This is what Jesus is illustrating in these parables.



The Lost Sheep

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah. 53:6

Read Luke 15:3-7

It is the nature of sheep to stray.



In the parable, who are the 99?

Who is the lost sheep?

Who is the shepherd?

Who are the Pharisees in this parable?

You could say the Pharisees are a part of the 99, but if you read the text closely, Jesus is being a little more pointed. The Pharisees are probably the friends and neighbours.



Why did the sheep wander? - pontificate.....

Tired of the shepherds rules and control
 Never seeing the shepherd only acted for its benefit
 Looking for greener pastures.
 Looking for freedom.
 Deceived by the world around it.



The moment a sheep strays it puts itself in danger.

Danger it does not see.

Danger it does not understand.



What danger were the tax collectors and sinners in?

When did the sheep realise it was in trouble?

Freedom turns to fear.

What did the shepherd do?

1	Realised one was missing.
2	He figures out which one.
3	He leaves the 99
4	He goes out into the open country.
5	He searches until he finds it
6	He brings it home
7	He calls on everyone to rejoice

Who does Jesus want to do rejoice when the sheep has been found?



Jesus is calling on the Pharisees to rejoice that the outcasts are coming back rather than to criticise him for eating with them. He wants the Pharisees to align themselves with heaven, which rejoices when the lost are found. Heaven has aligned itself with Jesus actions. This is a call for the Pharisees to change but it is also a strong criticism of them.

According to this parable, what do you think Jesus wants us to be excited about?

OK lets be honest, when the shepherd put the sheep on his shoulders it was heavy, it smelt and it probably fought a fare bit of the way. Rescuing a sheep is hard and possibly dangerous work, but the shepherd persevered.

If you listen carefully to the text, you might just hear a little bit of an echo of Ezekiel 33, 34 or perhaps Psalm 23.



Jesus is giving us a picture of His ministry

How does this parable fit Jesus mission and ministry?

If we were the lost sheep of the parable – what did Jesus do for us?



Jesus did not wait for us to find Him, He came looking for us.
 He did not wait for us to be good enough, He reached out.
 Jesus is still in the open country looking for the lost sheep.

What does this parable tell us about Jesus priorities?

Does Jesus not care about the 99 safe sheep?

What counts as a safe sheep anyway?

At the start of the parable, Jesus has been accused of hanging out with the 'wrong' people. But both parables end up with Jesus hanging out with the 'right' people, the friends and neighbours. Jesus is for both.



What is God's attitude to sinners?

What was the Pharisee's attitude toward sinners?

What is your attitude toward sinners?



Jesus gave us a warning

You can read this parable in the context of the church.
 Most of us are the 99, we are safe in the sheep fold. But the parable started out with 100 safe sheep and one wandered.

How does this parable fit the context of a church?

What is Jesus lesson for us in this parable?

Don't wander, there is only danger outside of Christ.



Did the sheep intend to get lost?

Did the sheep realise how hard it was going to be to get back?

As Christians how do we wander?

Why do we wander?



How are you going to know when someone is wandering?

What are you going to do about it?

To what extent is it our responsibility when someone wanders?

How much is the pastors job and how much is it everyone's job?



If truth be told most of us are in some way hiding from God. There is a part of each of us that is a lost sheep.

What should we do?