



Normal Campus Sermon Study - 7.19.2026

Leader's Corner

Lost & Found

Luke 15:1-10

Main Idea: The heart of God is not merely to welcome people who come looking for Him—it is to lovingly pursue those who are lost. Luke 15 reveals a Father whose joy is found in seeking, finding, and celebrating His children. Because we have been found by Jesus, we are invited to join Him in His mission of seeking others.

Main Passage: Luke 15:1–10

Key Truth: God passionately pursues what is lost because every person bears immeasurable value in His eyes.

Main Practice: Spend this week intentionally participating in God's mission by praying for, noticing, and moving toward someone who may be spiritually distant, lonely, overlooked, or disconnected.

Prayer and Praise

Opening Prayer:

Father,

Thank You for being the God who never stops pursuing Your children. Long before we ever searched for You, You came searching for us. Thank You for Your grace that finds us, Your mercy that restores us, and Your joy that celebrates every life brought home.

Open our ears to hear Your Word today. Help us see Your heart more clearly, recognize our own need for Your grace, and awaken within us a deeper love for those who are still far from You.

May we become people who reflect Your compassion, Your patience, and Your relentless love.

Through Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Worship Suggestions:

* Reckless Love — Cory Asbury

* The Goodness of God — Bethel Music / Jenn Johnson

* Build My Life — Pat Barrett

Group Discussion

Tell about something you've lost that took a long time to find. How did you feel when it was finally recovered?

Read Luke 15:1–10 together.

1. What do you notice about the people gathered around Jesus at the beginning of the chapter (vv. 1–2)? Why do you think the religious leaders were bothered by Him?

2. What does Jesus' willingness to eat with sinners teach us about the heart and character of God? Consider:

- * Who does Jesus naturally move toward?
- * What does this challenge about the way we often think about God?

3. In both parables, what actions does the shepherd and the woman take to recover what was lost? What does this reveal about God's pursuit of us? Notice the intentional language:

- * Leaves the ninety-nine
- * Goes after
- * Searches carefully
- * Until he finds it

4. According to these stories, why are people valuable to God? Discuss:

- * Is our value based on performance?
- * Achievement?
- * Morality?
- * Or something deeper?

How does understanding our worth in Christ change the way we see ourselves?

5. Isaiah 53:6 says, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray." How does Scripture describe our natural spiritual condition? Why is it important to recognize that all of us begin as "lost" before we can appreciate being "found?"

6. Jesus emphasizes heaven's celebration over one sinner who repents. Why do you think celebration is such a major part of these parables? What does God's joy teach us about repentance?

7. Which part of God's heart stands out to you the most?

- * His compassion?
- * His persistence?
- * His joy?
- * His willingness to pursue?

Why?

8. Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." If this summarizes Jesus' mission, how should it shape the mission of His Church—and your own everyday life?

9. Jeremiah 29:13–14 says, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." If someone in your life is spiritually searching, what practical ways could you help them take one step closer to Jesus this week?

10. As you reflect on today's message, where do you most identify yourself?

- * Being reminded you are deeply loved?
- * Being invited to return to God?
- * Being called to join Jesus in seeking others?

What is one specific step God may be asking you to take?

Practice

Together: (Group Challenge)

As a group, identify one person, family, or neighbor who is disconnected from church or from Jesus.
Over the next month:

- * Pray for them consistently.
- * Look for opportunities to build genuine friendship.
- * Serve them in a tangible way.
- * Invite them to share a meal, your group, or a church gathering.
- * Celebrate every step toward Jesus, no matter how small.

Remember: our role is not to “fix” people but to faithfully join Jesus in loving and pursuing them.

Individual Practice:

This week:

1. Remember

Spend time thanking God for pursuing you before you ever pursued Him.

2. Reflect

Ask:

- * Have I forgotten what it felt like to be lost?
- * Have I become more like the shepherd—or more like the Pharisees?

3. Pray

Write down three people who are far from God. Pray for them by name every day this week.

4. Move Toward Someone

Ask God for one opportunity to:

- * Begin a conversation,
- * Offer encouragement,
- * Serve someone,
- * Invite someone to coffee,
- * Or invite someone into Christian community.

Pray for courage to take that next step.

Further Study

Supporting Passages:

God Pursues the Lost

- * Luke 19:1–10 (Zacchaeus)
- * Mark 2:13–17
- * Luke 5:27–32
- * John 4:1–42
- * John 8:1–11

The Heart of the Shepherd

- * Psalm 23
- * Ezekiel 34:11–16
- * John 10:1–18

Our Need for Rescue

- * Isaiah 53:6
- * Romans 3:23
- * Ephesians 2:1–10

God’s Desire for All People

- * 2 Peter 3:9
- * 1 Timothy 2:3–6

Theological Reflection:

“The church exists because there is mission, not the other way around.” — Christopher J.H. Wright

“Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.” — D. T. Niles

“God’s grace is always seeking us before we ever begin seeking Him.” — Augustine (paraphrased)

Leader Encouragement:

Luke 15 begins with religious leaders questioning why Jesus spends so much time with sinners. By the end of these first two parables, Jesus has completely reframed the conversation. The question is no longer, “Why would Jesus spend time with lost people?” but rather, “Why wouldn’t He?”

Healthy groups adopt the posture of Jesus. They don’t simply preserve community for the already found—they intentionally create space for those who are still searching. A life-giving group reflects the joy of heaven by noticing, pursuing, welcoming, and celebrating people as they take steps toward Christ.

As leaders, continually ask:

- * Who is missing?
- * Who might God be inviting us to pursue?
- * How can our group reflect the welcoming heart of Jesus this week?