

The Kingdom of God
Lesson 6: The Parable of the Lost Sheep
LifeWalk Leader Guide

Open/Icebreakers: How does it feel when you lose something precious to you? If you find the lost item, how do you react? How does it feel?

What do you know about how a good shepherd would tend to his flock in the 1st century? What would be qualities a good shepherd would need to have to do his job well?

Digging In: Luke 15:1-7

1. What groups of people are listening to this parable? Think about how the parable would be heard by each group. Discuss your thoughts.
2. What accusation is Jesus responding to? How does the parable answer this accusation?
3. Vs. 3 begins, "Suppose one of you..." This may have been an offensive statement to the Pharisees as they may have felt that being a shepherd would have been beneath them. Read the beginning of Ezekiel 34. What truth is Jesus trying to help the Pharisees consider?
4. Who does "the lost sheep" represent? What about the 99 sheep who were not lost? What about the friends and neighbors?
5. Why do you think celebration is important to the shepherd? Re-read vs. 7. Do the "righteous" really not need repentance? Why or why not?
6. What is the point of the parable? Who do you identify with and why?

Reflection: (from whchurch.org)

As the community of God and the body of Christ in our world today, our LifeWalk Groups are an appropriate gathering of "friends and neighbors" who rejoice when the Lord wins the heart of the lost. But most likely our groups share some characteristics with all 3 groups in this parable.

- The sinners who are drawn to Jesus, but perhaps have not fully embraced Him.
- The religious folks who think they are on the inside but don't look much like Jesus.
- The friends of God who do rejoice in what God is doing especially when God brings another lost soul to the community for healing and restoration.

As a group discuss each of these three group characteristics and consider what it would look like to move more fully into the third group.

Prayer: God, thank you for being the good shepherd. Thank you for rejoicing over me and for leading me on your path. Give me a heart like Yours.