

Daily Devotional, June 4, 2021 To Seek and Save the Lost

Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ Luke 15:3-6 (NIV)

This is probably one of Jesus’ best-known parables. We have heard numerous times how Jesus is the Good Shepherd who will leave the flock of 99 sheep behind to find the one sheep who has wandered off. We know that Jesus wants to gather in all who are lost. We know that through Jesus’ love, mercy, and grace, His aim is to bring home every lost sheep, every lost soul, for the kingdom will not be complete until all the lost have been gathered into the sheepfold of our Saviors arms.

We all know this Scripture, and we have heard many lessons on it, and yet we find ourselves always learning something new from it.

Most often when we read this parable, our focus on the one. The one who is lost, the one who has strayed, the one who is separated from the rest. We all want to see this one returned. And when you sense that you are that one that Jesus sought, you know how important it is that the shepherd cared that much for you. Lately, however, our world has been too busy focusing on the ninety-nine.

You see the ninety-nine are safe. The ninety-nine are doing what they are supposed to be doing. They are keeping out of trouble, keeping themselves and their families safe. The ninety-nine are just going about their business as best they can. Yet, it is the ninety-nine who are also complaining about the focus on the one. The one most neglected. And we go, what? Who cares about that troublemaker, about that misfit? Well, we should.

The ministry of Jesus is focused on growing and building a community that is seeking to live in peace with God *and* with one another—even those troubled misfits! For all of us now living in God’s community, praise be to God! Now, let’s help do the work of finding that missing one.

There are many lost ones in our society today, who need someone to show them genuine love and care. There are many who have been outcast, even by the church, even by Christians, and they need to know that their experience doesn’t represent who we are or the Christ we serve. We serve a Lord who seeks all, who cares for all, whose life was given for all. I sincerely hope and pray that we, as a society, can learn that caring for others is our call, that loving others as we would love ourselves, is our standard. We are the people who represent our almighty God, who gave us the Holy Spirit that we would continue to do the work of creating unity. For God’s Church it is time to unify our efforts for seeking out the lost and bringing them into the sheepfold, our family, and boy, *we’ve got work to do!*

I hope you will join me in praying for our nation, for cities that are not at rest, and the communities who need to find again the work of peace. Let us look at every lost soul we encounter, as one of Christ’s flock who needs to know His love, grace & protection, and His complete salvation.

Almighty God, may your spirit guide our voices of peace to speak up. Let us seek to hear our sisters and brothers who are lost, who are angry. Let us have hearts and minds to understand their concerns, let us seek to shine the light of Jesus into the darkness, and help us, Lord, help us to be a people that reflect a better way of living, of caring, and of loving. In the grace and mercy you have shown us in Jesus Christ. Amen.