



The Parable of The Lost Coin

(Luke 15:8-10)

Have you ever lost something important? Did you ever lose your wallet and all your personal cards? Did someone ever ring you up and say, "You left your wallet at my place?" Was there a time when you wanted to have a cappuccino with a friend but when you looked in your wallet, there was nothing there? You thought you had five dollars, but you forgot that you used it for some milk and bread.

Have you lost your joy or peace? When you were first saved, you must have been very excited that Jesus had given His life for you. It felt like He had installed springs in your steps and all things were new and better. Colors looked different. Things were vibrant. Moments were joyful. You were so blessed. You felt so happy, excited and safe.

Then you started attending church. Religion slowly set in. There were rules upon rules and without noticing it, the joy left. What happened? Why had things turned sad? You were eager to learn; but the people seemed starchy and unapproachable. At the midweek Bible study you had so many questions but you still felt intimidated: you felt restricted even in a private home where you thought that people would have wanted you to ask questions. You were frustrated and sad. Your joy and your enthusiasm waned.

Let's look at this parable: "What woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin does not light a lamp, sweeps the house, search carefully until she finds it and when she finds it she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying 'Rejoice with me for I found the piece which I have lost.' Likewise, I say to you there is joy in the presence of angels of God when one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:8-9).

I think sometimes we look at the woman in this parable differently. She lost one of her ten silver coins. Maybe we ask, "What is the point of looking for that coin? She still had nine of them."

Do you know that the fifty four videos of the parables on which this book was based were transcribed by a couple of ladies in the Philippines for only two dollars and fifty cents per hour? Here in Australia, a good transcriber charges at least twenty dollars per hour. That is eight times the price. Both of these women from the Philippines wanted the job. In fact, one of them undercut the other, just so she could get the project, because she desperately needed money.

Well, going back to the woman in the parable, we might think that losing one of the ten coins would not bankrupt her. We probably do not consider that someone who owns ten coins would actually need all of them, but what if she needed all ten of them to pay the rent? What if the rent was fifteen and so with her ten, she was trusting God for another five? If that was the case, losing one would be a big calamity.

Most of us live in a world where there is enough money to buy DVDs, MP3 players, flat screen TVs, iPods, books, movie tickets, expensive coffee, hamburgers and fast food. Most of us in Australia can save for those things. We do not really mix with the people who do not have enough money, those who do not have any food in the cupboard.

Your heart may not break if you lost one of your ten dollars as this woman did. But I can assure you that, this woman was desperate! She turned over her whole house, in the hope of finding her lost coin: it was very important to her!

Similarly, this is what Jesus said, that the angels rejoice when one sinner repents. Jesus taught the parables in a series. First, it was the parable of the lost sheep. A man had one hundred sheep and he left the ninety nine to find one sheep that went astray, and then he taught the parable of the lost coin. Jesus had a wide audience. He was teaching tax collectors, sinners and the Pharisees. He did three parables in a row, the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son.

To the Pharisees, Jesus was actually rebuking them, saying: "How dare you say that I can't mix with tax collectors and sinners. These people know that they are sinners: these are the ones that need to be saved and brought back to the flock. They are the one lost sheep of the one hundred. They are the lost coin of the ten. They are the prodigal son. How dare you judge me? I am here for them."

Jesus always mixed with the "under dogs" of the world. As He sat down with them, He shared motivational and exciting stories where He made them feel that they were precious to God and their souls were worth saving. Can you imagine what these people must have felt? Jesus was eating with them. This man, (who really was the Messiah) Rabbi Jesus, gave them such attention: they must have felt very important! I mentioned Heidi Baker in the previous chapter. Once God gave me a prophecy about her and I sent it to her husband. She wrote me four emails, thanking me. You know, I was so touched that someone who is making such a huge impact in the world would even write to me. It was amazing and I felt so happy. I went to a conference; she laid hands on my head and prayed that I be healed of my mental illness and I have seen a marked change in myself. Having her write an email meant so much to me. I have her letters framed in my house like a doctor displays his medical qualifications on his office walls. Heidi's letters are a treasure to me. Well, she is just a beautiful person: she is not Jesus! You imagine how precious these tax collectors and sinners felt in the presence of Jesus and here in this parable, He was saying that, "If I lost you guys, I would turn my whole house upside down to try and find you, and when I found you I would call all my neighbors around and we would have a big party because I found you. You are so precious to me."

If you are a Christian, you might think that this parable has got nothing to do with you because you are already saved. So we sit in the church and say, "It is a nice parable, it is so nice!"

But let me tell you, this has a couple of applications for the Christians too. Here they are:

First of all, if you are a Christian who is having problems with lust, masturbation or pornography, Jesus is going to have a huge party one day when you conquer those. When you come to a place of repentance, where you feel so loved and forgiven by God, Jesus will be so happy to welcome you back. You score a major breakthrough when you surrender those emotional wounds of rejection, pain and suffering and allow God to minister His love and healing into those hurting areas of your life. When you reach a stage where you totally reject pornography, there is going to be such a celebration in Heaven for you. Jesus just wants you out of the trap of guilt and shame. Jesus just wants you free.

That is just one area. Studies show that forty eight percent of Christian men have problems with pornography, because it is so free and easy on the Internet. So, Jesus will celebrate when you are free of that. When you are free of swearing, of gossip, of any habitual sin, His angels will have a party seeing you so free. Now, does this apply to you?

Nearly every Christian has a besetting sin. God wants to set us free through the power of His Holy Spirit and His blood. He wants you to know how much He loves you; that your sins are as far away, as the East is from the West. The Scripture says that "your sins I will remember no more." He does not even know what sins you did yesterday.

And the second application to this is: let us not be like a Pharisee. When we see people in sin—the homosexuals, the drug addicts, the prostitutes, the down and outs, the broken-hearted, the drunk, the gambler, the divorced or the people whose marriages are not working out right, the gossipers or the lonely—or even some of the people in your church: love them. When you see all those hurting people, share your love with them. Welcome them into your house. Talk to them as though they are clean, fresh, holy and righteous, because God loves them and once they surrender to Christ, they will have His righteousness. Do not be like the Pharisees and be angry with Jesus for being compassionate. The fact is that Jesus actually loves these messed up people. You could be the bridge. You would bring Jesus to them. Reach out to these broken-hearted people. Help them come out of sin.

In closing, if you have a sin that you are struggling to conquer, know that this was written for you. You can overcome sin with the grace of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. There will be great rejoicing in Heaven when you do.