



# The Parable of The Lost Sheep

(Luke 15:4-7)

*I hope that you will enjoy what I have got to say to you about the Parable of The Lost Sheep. If you have been in church for a while, you have probably heard this parable preached quite a few times. I hope this brings new insight and revelation to you and I hope to leave you with a feeling of joy, peace and encouragement in the Lord.*

*The Bible says we are all sheep. Jesus identified Himself as the Good Shepherd; He said that He is the door and we are His sheep. We are to know His voice and not follow another person's voice.*

*Psalm 23 tells us all about the Good Shepherd. It is a wonderful and comforting Psalm that is often read out at funerals, but it is also a Psalm for us to reflect on right now. This Psalm, although written about three thousand years ago is all about our Lord Jesus Christ. He makes us lie down in green pastures and leads us to a source of pure water. He corrects us and guides us with His staff and His goodness and mercy are with us forever. He is indeed the Good Shepherd.*

*Let's now read Luke 15:1-3 - "Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him; and the Pharisees and the scribes complained saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." So He spoke this parable to them."*

*One of the reasons Jesus shared this parable was because the Pharisees and the scribes complained; "This man receives sinners and eats with them." And why did they say this? Because all the tax collectors and the sinners then drew near to hear Him.*

*Let us put it another way. Let us just say I came to your city to speak at a convention and I was going to speak about the gift of prophecy and how to be able to develop this gift. You wanted to come because the subject really interested you. Imagine when you arrived at the conference you saw that the venue was full of New Age people, openly-gay people, prostitutes and suspected pedophiles, along with known criminals and drug pushers all seated at this meeting. I would give my message but I would not rebuke anyone or condemn them for their chosen lifestyle in any way. In other words I would not tell them to stop being a "tax collector." Instead, the Holy Spirit in His gentle convicting way would lead them to repentance. I would just preach Christ to them and they would respond to the Gospel. They could then be filled with the Holy Spirit and could even manifest spiritual gifts, including the gift of prophecy.*

*I am not the one who can cause them to repent: I am not the one that opens their heart to receive Christ or the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Who am I? I am just the messenger that God has chosen to use, to bring healing to their lives. They had come with messy lives and yet Jesus ministered His grace to them. But how would you feel? You paid your conference money and all those seeming “free-loaders” are in there, taking up my time. You would have questions for me. You would want one-on-one time with me. You are important. You do everything right. You have been a Christian all your life. You have come and you wanted to move in signs and wonders and here I am sitting down with the worst sinners in the world. How would you feel?*

*If you honestly consider what I have shared, you might be feeling very put out by me at the conference and you might very well be feeling exactly how the Pharisees were feeling with Jesus when He told this parable. “What man of you has a hundred sheep if he loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders rejoicing and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me; for I found my lost sheep, one which was lost.’ I say to you that likewise there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance” (Luke 15:4-7).*

*There was a time when I had an addiction to prostitutes. I used them weekly or fortnightly, depending on when I was paid. Every week or every fortnight I was blowing a large portion of my money on this sin. I was under so much spiritual condemnation, which caused me to stay outside of church for fifteen years. (I now realize that while the Holy Spirit gently convicts someone, it is the devil that out-rightly condemns a person!) Eventually, I was able to return to church and for five years I was going to church while still practicing that sin. However, God healed me sufficiently and took the hurt out of my life so that I could walk out of that sin. I was in the middle of this addiction one day; I was going through King’s Cross, the famous red light district of Sydney, when I saw some girls singing choruses on a corner where all the major heroin deals were done. I went up to these seven girls and I said, “You know, this is really amazing. You are in the heaviest place in the city but I want to encourage you that I can see in the Spirit, that there is a canopy over you; it’s just like, you know, Maxwell Smart’s Cone of Silence over you. This is a supernatural protection all over you; you are entirely safe and you do not have to worry.”*

*And they said “Yeah, we know we don’t have to worry.”*

*I said. “Can I pray for you?”*

*They all said, “Yes,” and I prayed for them.*

*And then one of the girls said “Can we pray for you?”*

*I said, “Okay.” And we got to the third girl praying. She said “Thus sayeth the Lord, ‘I am going to send you into a dark place, a place where angels fear to tread and I want you to take My joy and love into that place and share it with the people. Tell them that I love them. Give them treats, spend time with them and shine My light.’”*

*What Jesus was telling me, was to go into was one of the brothels where girls strip and dance. Then when all the men got excited, the girls came down and invited them upstairs to pay prostitution rates. Jesus was telling me to go into this brothel, to get to know these people and be friendly to the sex workers there. That was not hard for me, but I was scared of doing it, because I was not going to be a client, I was going to be a witness there for Christ. I was also scared because I had heard of people being killed in there. So anyway, I was at a church after two weeks of not going there. The Pastor said to me, “Stand on your feet.” And he said exactly the same prophecy. “I am going to send you into a dark place where angels fear to tread.”*

*Well, I went back into that brothel and stayed there for a year. While I was in that place, I met a practicing prostitute who was into Buddhism and she confessed to me that her parents went to a local church in Coffs Harbour, the country town where I come from. When I went back up to Coffs Harbour, I told the Pastor that the daughter of one of the men in his church, who had been abused by her father, was now working as a prostitute and involved in Buddhism in Kings Cross. I had a lot of hurt and pain in my life and I shouted that out in the meeting in anger. It was not the nicest scene and I certainly wasn’t exercising the grace of Jesus. I was out of order and was reacting totally in the flesh.*

*This girl in the brothel who reached out to me became one of my friends, but there I was—lost. I was a lost sheep myself, stuck in my own addictions as I ministered God’s love.*

*Surely, when it comes to this parable, I can relate. Hurting people need other people strong in the Lord and led by His Holy Spirit to minister to them because they are far away from Jesus. We all need a shepherd. We all need a Christian friend. Some of the shepherds—some of the Pastors—are too busy. The broken world needs compassionate people to go and rescue those broken sheep and bring them back to the flock. That is what the parable is all about.*

*In the midst of my sin, in the darkest part of my life and at a time when I was not even attending church, Jesus sent me to minister to the hardest, most wicked, most violent club in Kings Cross, Australia and He protected me. I used to buy these girls little treats, like a two dollar chocolate and they would be so touched by it and some would even cry.*

*I was a lost sheep, but I was ministering too. Looking back now, I realize that I was never really lost to God – He had been there with me all the time! In the worst of my depravity, I still had Jesus. He was still talking to me. The Good Shepherd was still with me. I had to get pretty bad for Jesus not to talk to me. The only way Jesus did not talk to me was when I told Him I did not want Him to talk to me and then, months later, He would interrupt me and play me a song in my mind and once again we were talking and I was crying again. I suffered so much pain. Why do I have so much revelation in the parables of Jesus?*

*I hope that in sharing my story, I have touched you. Not everyone can go into a strip club or a brothel and minister to broken girls. Not everyone would have the ability to do that, but do you know, lost sheep can be found anywhere and everywhere? There are people in your workplace, at your gym and at the café that you go to. People have left Jesus and left religion to do their own thing and God needs people like us to wrap our arms around them and bring them back to Jesus. We need to let people know that “religion” is not what Jesus wants. He wants you to have a deep personal encounter with Him that develops into a wonderful relationship.*

*Don't be too quick to judge people. Some atheists have spent more time reading the Bible than us and have their own personal reasons why they do not walk with Christ. We all need to be “little-Christ's” to people and to go out and love them where they are at.*

*I often look at the time I ministered to those girls in the brothel and wonder why God chose me, a self-confessed addict to prostitutes, and all I can come up with is that He knew that I would love them for who they were and by not using them, I could show His love to them. I think back to those times and consider it a miracle that even in a time when I was not going to church I was still being used by God to show His love. I have said it once before, but it bears repeating. People have until their very last breath on earth to accept Jesus and we do not need to rush the Gospel at every person we know, but simply to reach out to them and love them like Jesus loved the sinners and the tax collectors. God can and will use you in His great plans to save people and you do not need to be an evangelist to save them. He will use the gifts He has given you to do His work. This little book may even be a tool that He has put in your hands*