

Ask, **What are some ways that people become lost?** (possible answers)

- Out without a map
- Don't ask for directions
- Not usually of their choosing and do not always know that they are lost initially.
(You might want to share a time when you found yourself lost. Describe some of the feelings you go through when you realize that you are lost.)

Ask, **What might lead someone to becoming a runaway?** (give time for people to respond)

- A runaway chooses to think they are running to freedom.
- They have taken deliberate action to leave.

Let's explore the Difference between someone who is lost and a runaway (prodigal)

The Lost Sheep - 15:1-6 (take time to read or summarize these verses)

- Speaking to tax collectors, sinners, Pharisees, scribes, and His disciples
- Who are the Lost here? – tax collectors and sinners
- Read John 10:16 – more than just the Israelites in the flock – others will recognize His voice
- The Lost sheep does not know it is lost.

The Lost Coin - 15: 8-10 (take time to read or summarize these verses)

- Loses 10% of her wealth and rejoices when it is found – it is just lost. No way for a coin to know it is lost.
- But the woman was focused on finding that which she had lost.

The Lost Son - 15: 11-32 (the older son is a picture of the Pharisees) (take time to read these verses or summarize)

Notice that all the stories finish with celebration. Let's be quick to celebrate that which the Bible clearly celebrates.

Some observations from the three accounts shared in this chapter.

- The lost sheep and coin are lost not by their own doing. They don't even know they're lost.
- The prodigal chooses to wander/leave. The prodigal knows the father's voice and still leaves.

Scripture is clear that the lost are seeking a voice they can hear and trust.

John 10:27-30 English Standard Version (ESV) 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

We are to go to them Matthew 28 –

Matthew 28:18-20 English Standard Version (ESV) 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing

them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Ask, Why are we hesitant to share the gospel with others?

Talking to others about Jesus is hard. We fear rejection, judgment, awkwardness, fear of not saying or knowing the answer. Evangelism and mission work – the GO is hard. Jesus commands us to Go and it is not only to a far land but in our everyday, walkabout life.

Now let’s talk about prodigals? (Prodigals are those who have known the truth and chosen to run.)

- Waiting is so hard. Waiting for the wayward to return home is so very hard.
- We are to practice Matthew 18.
- We are to Wait on the prodigals and Go to the lost, but we reverse it too many times. In error, we wait for the lost to come to us and we go after the prodigals. This is not the biblical example.

In Luke 14 Jesus talks about the costs involved in being a disciple.

Luke 14:25-27 – 25 Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, 26 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. 27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

This is the setup for the 3 “lost” in chapter 15. Following Christ requires surrendering our very life. Grace is free but has a great cost.

What are some practical steps we can take with the lost and the prodigal?

How to go.

As you are going, share Christ with the lost sheep.

Go looking

How to wait. 1. Remember that they know better but have chosen to leave. 2. We keep our same address, and 3. We keep the porch light on. 4. Practice Matthew 18. 5. Pray.

How to welcome home.

Celebrate repentance.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Take time to allow prayer requests and to pray.