

- In chap 15 the Scribes and Pharisees have a **particular** problem with Jesus. Jesus was accepted by **both** groups and dined with them: Lk 5:29; 7:36; 11:37 and 14:1

Lk 5:29;	7:36; 11:37 and 14:1
SINNERS	PHARISEES
- It was the fact that Jesus treated Both groups **equally** was **intolerable** to the Scribes and Pharisees who separated themselves from sinners...
- In fact, they were **called** 'the separated brethren'!!
- They saw themselves as a Religious Elite- or Exclusive Brethren... Cf. Mt 9:10-13
- as far as **they** were concerned **Jesus had nothing to teach them!!**

The Gospels illustrate clearly that **God has two types of children** – those who co-operate with Him and those who rebel. Those two types are seen here in the Scribes and Pharisees who resist Jesus all the way to killing Him... and the sinners to seek him, repent, enter the K.O.G.

Luke 5:32 says it: ***"I have NOT come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"***
 So, Jesus responds to the criticism of the Scribes and Pharisees by giving

Three Parables on The Joy of Redemption

- The **First** Parable: **The Lost Sheep:** Lk 15:4-7 is addressed to **the men** who rule the country.
 The **Second** Parable: **The Lost Coin:** Lk 15:8-10 is addressed to **the women** who must provide and nurture the next generation.
 The **Third** Parable: **The Lost Son:** Lk 15:11-32 is addressed to **all sinners** telling them that the Messianic Banquet is provided by God Himself.

They are all invited, but must come through the door **of a truly repentant heart...**

FIRST PARABLE – The Lost Sheep: Lk 15:4-7

This parable emphasised God's love for each soul.

In this parable Jesus summarises the Old Testament where Yahweh is the Great Shepherd and His people are His flock.

Ps 23: ***"The Lord (Yahweh) is my Shepherd..."*** I want for nothing because He takes care of everything...

God says in Ezekiel 34:11 ***"Behold, I myself will search for my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when some of his sheep have been scattered, will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them"***

Ezekiel 34:23 also prophesies that God means: ***"to set up one shepherd, my Servant David, and he shall feed them and be their Shepherd"***.

Isaiah 40:11 foretold that: ***"He is like a Shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them to his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes"***.

- Here in Luke 15:4-7, Jesus tells us that each soul is so precious to him that he would abandon the 99 in the wilderness to go after the lost one until he found it!

The joy of finding is **the Shepherd's joy!** **He sought, he found and he rejoiced!**

15:7 ***"I have found my sheep that was lost"***

- This parable gives us some inkling of how **Heaven** responds to tax collectors and sinners becoming disciples and saints! Cf. Isaiah 55:6-9

- In Luke 7:36-50 we saw that the Scribes and Pharisees did **NOT** rejoice when Jesus brought back the lost soul. In fact, they complained against Jesus **and** the woman.

(NB) The lesson is that Heaven rejoices over one **REPENTANT SINNER**

SECOND PARABLE – The Lost Coin: Lk 15:8-10

- **The emphasis here is on the SEARCH** – the woman went to great trouble to find the lost coin.
- The coin was part of her dowry and therefore very valuable... it indicated her status in society
- she, too, rejoices.

Both of these parables emphasise **THE VALUE** of the lost thing...

The third parable shows the value of a son of God.

THIRD PARABLE – The Lost Son: Lk 15:11-32

- This is the essence of Jesus' reply to the Scribes and Pharisees
- God's two types of children are **BOTH** sinners! Cf. Mt 21:28-32
- The invitation to come into the Kingdom is given to both, **for God loves everyone equally.**
- One son in Mt 21:29 says 'yes', but doesn't go... like the Scribes and Pharisees
- One son says 'no', but changes his mind (conversion) and goes in... these are the sinners.

- God's two sons are clearly shown in The Lost Son.

- a) The elder brother **appears** to be obedient... like the Pharisees
- b) The younger brother rebels...

- **The hero of the story is The Merciful Father** who wants to save **both** of them – **and by Love alone!**
Cf. Titus 3:4-5 *"The kindness and goodness of God our Saviour"* is shown well here.

Who are the Prodigal Sons of the Bible?

First Prodigal Son - The Pharaoh of Egypt who rebelled against God's visitation through Moses.

- He was worldly and selfish – defied God at every turn
- Yet God, through Moses, was both forgiving and merciful to him
- After the 8th plague, Pharaoh **made his first confession to Moses** and to God through him:

Ex 10:16 *"I have sinned against the Lord your God, **and** against yourselves (Moses and Aaron),
Forgive my sin I implore you".*

Second Prodigal Son - King David in 2 Samuel chap 11-12

- David sinned greatly against the Lord by taking another man's wife and killing her husband...
- God sent the Prophet Nathan to convict him of his sin by using a parable –
- as Jesus is doing here for the Scribes and Pharisees.
- David repented – but the Scribes and Pharisees here do **not**...
2 Sam 12:13 is David's confession of sin: *"I have sinned against the Lord"*
- He wrote Ps 51 later to express his great need for God's forgiveness

Third Prodigal Son - in Luke 8:26-39 **is the Gerasene Demoniac**, but we have dealt with this.

When Jesus delivered him from the demons who controlled him, Lk 8:35 says that the man ***“sat at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind”*** – just like the younger brother in the parable!

- 15:11-13** The younger brother insulted his father by asking for his inheritance ahead of time.
- He doesn't care whether his father is alive or dead!
 - This is the position of the sinners in rebellion against God. **They want everything NOW** – in this life – with no thought for God or eternity...
 - The 'far distant country' means that he wanders far from God and his family (the church)
 - lost in the satisfaction of sex and all that money can buy
- 15:14-16** Divine Providence – the love of God – allows him to experience what happens when the money is all spent:
- the world doesn't love you – only when you are useful
 - the 'fair-weather friends' are gone; **you are no longer useful** – ***“eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die”*** they say
 - but tomorrow you ***“reap what you sow*** (Cf. Gal 6:7-8), ***whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction...”***
- 15:16** To feed with pigs was a Jewish expression for having reached 'rock bottom'
Cf. Prov 27:7; Prov 29:3
- The pig was an unclean animal, which represented the unclean spirit – as it does, even today
- 15:17** His spiritual poverty is now also expressed as material poverty... it is from this place of **NEED** ***“that he comes to his senses”*** Cf. Zec 10:9 ... ***“from far away they will remember me... and return”***

Steps in his recovery:

- a) Think... meditate on your condition:
“my father's paid servants have more food... and I am dying of hunger”.
- 15:18** b) Make the life-decision to return: ***“I will leave this place... go to my Father...confess...”***
- 15:19** c) Then he put his decision into practice! He went!! Decision becomes action...
- 15:20** d) His Father **saw** him.... moved to **compassion** (Luke's description of Jesus)
- 15:21** e) His **Father** hugged and kissed him **tenderly**
- f) Then the son confessed – **with the exact words which Pharaoh had used to Moses in Exodus 10!**

V.I.P: ***“I am not worthy to be your Son”.*** He had proved this with his bad life...

15:22 The Sonship is restored

- (i) **Sandals** – used by family only – slaves and servants went barefooted
- (ii) **The Robe of Salvation** – **gifted by the Father**
- (iii) **The Ring of Covenant rights** restored – **gifted by Father**

The Banquet can only happen AFTER the restoration of the Son.

The Messianic Banquet **is for saved sinners** – those restored to right relationship to God in the New Covenant of Jesus.

- everything is gift and grace for those **who are NOT worthy** to be children of the Father

- but whom the Father has received **anyway!**
- this is **spiritual resurrection** - what is happening to the tax collectors and sinners...

15:25-32 **Now we meet the second son – the ‘good’ one!**

- his reaction to what the Father has done is **NEGATIVE**
- **He represents** the position of the Scribes and Pharisees and their reactions to Jesus’ Ministry to sinners

15:25 The Elder Brother was at his work in the fields – obedience to the father...

15:26 He enquires about the Banquet...

15:27 **Your brother has come home...**

15:28 He was angry and refused to participate – just as the Scribes and Pharisees did

15:29 **The Father loves BOTH SONS** – came out to plead with him as Jesus patiently puts up with the Scribes and Pharisees and tries to reach them.

15:30 The ‘confession’ of the Elder Brother **is condemnation for the Father’s mercy to his brother**

*“all these years I have **SLAVED** for you... (Notice the motivation – no love)*

*“never **ONCE** disobeyed your orders... ”*

*“you **NEVER** put on a banquet for me and my friends”*

- These words betray the deep-seated feelings of the Scribes and Pharisees against Jesus and his followers... Jesus is showing Mercy to sinners... but **they** have kept the Law and there is nothing for them...

Ⓝ *“But as for this son of **yours** [notice **NOT** my brother!] **who swallowed up your property he and his women”***

- No forgiveness or compassion or understanding here...

Words Betray the Heart: The Elder Brother **LOOKS** good, but as soon as he begins to speak he shows what is in his heart...

Luke 1:35 said that Jesus’ Ministry would *“uncover the secret thoughts of many... ”*

- this parable certainly does this.

The Elder Brother manifested self-pity: ‘poor me’ syndrome

- Martyr complex: ‘nobody understands me around here’
- Lack of love for both his Father and his brother
- Rejection of his brother for having disgraced the family
- A refusal to forgive and allow new life to begin...

Tragedy:

- Neither son appreciated **the greatness of their Father**
- The younger son discovered his Father in his conversion...
- The older one had a problem with his own sense of ‘goodness’...
 - He was good - **but not good enough!**
 - The Scribes and Pharisees keep God’s Law, but didn’t develop a personal prayer-life, where they would get to **know** Him...
- Their challenge was to change from self-righteousness to **true goodness**
- They had to learn HOW TO LOVE in thought, word and deed.**