



Rejoicing In Heaven, Luke 15

Rejoicing In Heaven

- We humans are curious creatures unlike any other in creation
 - From our earliest ability to speak, we ask the question, “why?”
 - We want to know how and why things work
 - Adam and Eve’s conversation with God in garden
 - Hear God say, “Don’t eat that fruit?”, “Why”, “You will die”, “Why”, “Cause I said”, “OK”

Rejoicing In Heaven

- When it comes to heaven, we have more questions than answers
- There are times the Bible pulls back the curtains and give us a peak
 - **Job 1:6 NLT**, One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. 7 “Where have you come from?” the Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, “I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that’s going on.”

Rejoicing In Heaven

- We have more why or how questions about heaven than we have answers
- There are times the Bible pulls back the curtains and give us a peak
 - **Danial 10:12-13 NLT**, “12 Then he said, “Don’t be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. 13 But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia.”

Rejoicing In Heaven

- We have more why or how questions about heaven than we have answers
- There are times the Bible pulls back the curtains and give us a peak
 - **Matthew 6:9-10 NIV**, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”
 - But one thing heaven contains is great rejoicing
 - Jesus explains part of this rejoicing by using three parables

Luke 15:1-2 NLT, “1 Tax collectors and other notorious sinners (*who would this be*) often came to listen to Jesus teach (*why*). 2 This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with (*or welcomed*) such sinful people—even eating with them!”

- These men were the religious leaders of that time and had created their own set of rules referred to as the “*tradition of the elders*”
- According to them, eating with a (*notorious*) sinner defiled them (*made them unacceptable to God*), this was just one of their rules Jesus violated
- By creating their own set of rules, they established themselves as righteous (*and able to judge*) and all who didn’t comply were labeled sinners or outcast

Luke 15:1-2 NLT, “1 Tax collectors and other notorious sinners (who would this be) often came to listen to Jesus teach (why). 2 This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with (or welcomed) such sinful people—even eating with them!”

- Jesus’ actions in spending time with sinners was in perfect accordance with His mission
- **Luke 19:10 NLT**, “10 For the Son of Man came to seek and save (*rescue*) those who are lost.”
 - How did they become lost?
 - Jesus is going to provide an answer with parables

Luke 15:3-4 NLT, 3 So Jesus told them this story: 4 “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others (*safe*) in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it?

- I would call this the Parable of the inattentive or wandering away life
- How do you think sheep got lost in Israel during this time?
 - Run from fear until the impulse fades
 - But mostly they just wander away
 - Or they become inattentive to where the shepherd was going

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- Jesus is not saying the religious leaders did not need salvation
- These sheep were already a part of or belonged to the shepherd
- How do His people wander away from God today?
 - They become inattentive to their spiritual life
 - Other things get their interest and attention, and they start following them
 - Hurricanes of life that stick around

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- So, what does our Shepherd do to or for His wandering, inattentive sheep?

Luke 15:5-7 NLT, 5 And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. 6 When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.' 7 In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!

- He joyfully carries it all the way home and has a party
- This is what happens in heaven when a wandering, inattentive sheep is brought home
- This is the story of repentance
- The sheep could not find their way back home – the need to be carried back

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- Notice the progression – Lost, Search, Found, Returned, Rejoicing in heaven
- Now so the religious leaders and we don't miss His point, Jesus tells a similar parable

Luke 15:8-10 NLT, “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won’t she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbors and say, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin.’ 10 In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God’s angels when even one sinner repents.”

- I would call this the Parable of a misplaced or neglected life
- How do you think the coin become lost?
 - Many today are misplaced because of things that has happened in their past
 - Some today neglect their spiritual lives not realizing how precious it is

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- This is the story of renewal
 - The coin belonged to the woman; it was missing causing her great concern
 - Notice how complete the woman looked for the coin
 - Like the lost sheep, the coin could not find its way back

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- Notice the progression – Lost, Search, Found, Returned, Rejoicing
- This understanding is so important Jesus gives a third parable on how this should work in our human relationships

Luke 15:11-12 NIV, 11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.”

- There are those who go through life not inattentive nor neglectful to God, but are willfully rebellious
 - We see this in the life and choices of Cain
 - **Genesis 4:6-7 NIV**, 6 Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

Luke 15:11-12 NIV, 11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.”

- I would call this the Parable of the rebellious life
- What do we really know about this family from these verses?
 - The father is wealthy and probably older
 - The family is broken
 - We have a son who wished his father dead, get his inheritance, and take off vowing never to look back
 - I wonder if the father might have shared some of the blame in their relationship

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- I would call this the Parable of the rebellious life
- What do we really know about this family from these verses?
 - I wonder if the older brother shares part of the blame as well
 - Remember Jacob’s favoritism of Joseph and how Joseph’s brothers treated him
 - Maybe the father’s joy at the end had as much to do with his repentance as it did his son’s

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- Shaking your fist at God rebellion brings about a different sort of searching and pulling toward repentance
 - Notice the father does not follow, go after, or search for him, why?
 - It’s the son’s choice to run
 - Maybe the father had some things to work through
 - The older brother may have been glad the younger one was finally gone
 - God uses the consequences of life’s choices to bring this son to a point of great need leading to repentance

Luke 15:18-20 NIV, 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

- Notice it was the son’s decision to return
- Was the son trying to manipulate his father?
- Was the Father’s response what ultimately brought his wayward son to repentance?
- Notice the father was looking and longing for his son to return

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- When the father saw his son with all their history
 - He was filled with compassion
 - He ran to the son, He didn't check his son's attitude first
 - Embraced and kissed his son
 - All signs of acceptance and joy

Luke 15:22-24 NIV, 22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”

- Notice the word Quick, Best family robe, Ring of authority
- Why sandals on feet
 - Only slaves and servants went barefooted
- Notice lost, found, returned, celebration

Rejoicing In Heaven

- **Luke 19:10 NLT**, “10 For the Son of Man came to seek and save (*rescue*) those who are lost.” Regardless how they got there
 - Does Jesus is still doing this today?
 - He still uses repentance to begin the process of restoration
 - He starts with each individual separately
 - We have the option to allow, ignore or fight the process
 - Father and younger son allowed, the older son did not
 - The older son still wanted the father to reject the younger son

Rejoicing In Heaven

- **Luke 19:10 NLT**, “10 For the Son of Man came to seek and save (*rescue*) those who are lost.” Regardless how they got lost
 - The family was put back together, but it still has a bad spot in it like an apple
 - Restoration takes time with multiple steps because restoration is messy
 - Do not miss what happens in heaven when the lost are found, the fractured are restored – **Great joy and glory in heaven**
 - And it begins a spark of joy in you
 - Your loving Heavenly Father desires that for you today



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