

Go Get ‘em God!

Luke 15:1-7

- 1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.*
2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.
3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,
4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?
5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.
6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.
7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

I. Introduction

1. The Pharisees and scribes complained about how Jesus received sinners and ate with them.
2. It's what you do for lost sheep.
3. He leaves the 99 to give attention to reaching for the lost sheep.
4. God's plan is this: Go after that which is lost until He finds it.
5. Then when He does, he puts the sheep on His shoulders and returns home. That means God is the one bringing the sheep home.
6. He gathers His friends and neighbors around to celebrate the return: "Rejoice with me!" He says. "I've found that which was lost."
7. Likewise, joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.
8. This is God's mode of operation: Go get ‘em God!

II. Jesus' High Priestly prayer

A. They are mine

1. John 17 is a prayer of Jesus, sometimes described as His High Priestly prayer.
2. It is in the prayer that we see, perhaps more than any other place in scripture, Jesus describing His role as the God-man Mediator with a purpose of drawing all men to Him.
3. His role as High Priest meant He came to offer a sacrifice that would draw all men unto Him, and that sacrifice was Him:

John 12:32-33

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

4. So, in His prayer in John 17 from His role as High Priest who draws people to God, He prayed for two groups of people: in verse 9, He prayed for those who were His, and in verse 20, He prayed for those who would come through their preaching.
5. I want to emphasize how Jesus prayed for that first group His children—His sheep – those that belong to God:

John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world [He does that in verse 20], but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

6. His belongings—His children that He has drawn to Him, **they belong to God**. And what belongs to God, **God will keep**:

John 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

- B. Keep them from the evil one
 1. Keep us from what? From the evil one.

John 17:15-16

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep [protect] them from the evil [one].

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

2. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. And as such, we have a special protection from God on us.
3. Jesus prayed for us, so we know this is God's will, that we would be kept from evil by God through His name.
4. Listen church, if you belong to God, He intends to keep you.
5. You may be in this world, but you are not of this world. You are of God.
6. And it is no wonder, that with God's determination to keep what is His own, why **He operates with this attitude: "Go get 'em!"**
7. For everyone of His who wanders off, He intends to Keep them. That is why He will **go after that which is lost, until he find it.**
8. If we could only operate with that attitude.

III. Go get 'em with fire!

- A. They aren't of us

1. If you remember, the attitude of the pharisees and scribes was different. They complained that Jesus reached out to those who had strayed away from God. He hung out with and dined with sinners—people who rejected God.
2. How dare He defile Himself by hanging out with such people!
3. And it was not only the scribes and pharisees who showed that attitude. Even Jesus' disciples showed that attitude sometimes.
4. Yes, they expressed their desire, Go get 'em God! But what they hoped for, at least on this occasion, was, "God, send fire from heaven on them!"
5. First, they showed where their priority was, their pride:

Luke 9:49-50

49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us.

6. It is the idea sometimes expressed by church folks, that, if they are reporting results over in that church, it can't be right. Why would God bless them? We are God's special ones.
7. I heard a preacher say this: "It is possible that God can bless people we don't agree with."

8. Jesus responded by trying to refocus their thinking on the larger purpose, His work with souls, not just their group, their feelings:

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

So they had their pride hurt—God blessed someone they didn't agree with. Then it continued in the next verse.

- B. They rejected us!

1. Jesus sent word to a Samaritan village, seeking a place to stay, but He was not warmly welcomed. Here we see the disciples' hurt pride was still a factor:

Luke 9:51-56

51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

*54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, **wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them**, even as Elias did?*

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

2. The important lesson here is this: when we have the desire to burn someone, those who reject us, or even reject God, “ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.”

3. That may not sound like justice, but judgment is not always the immediate response of God:

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

4. Rather than burning them, Jesus moved on to another place.

5. Sometimes, when our pride is hurt, the God-thing is not to burn them back, returning evil for evil, but rather, returning good for evil. And then move on.

6. God has purposes that are larger than our hurt feelings.

7. Remember, God is on a mission: Go get ‘em!

8. They are lost. They have wandered away. He wants to get them on His shoulders to bring them back home safely. Not bake them.

- C. Patience and mercy, then judgment

1. Peter showed us a good balance of God's mercy and His judgment in back-to-back verses, 2 Peter 3:9-10:

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2. God keeps patience with us, holding back the fiery judgment for now, because He wants all to come to repentance.

3. Before we go on to the next verse to see the other side of patience, look to Ezekiel 33 to see what God really wants:

Ezek 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death

of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

4. Ezekiel shows the options. There is an offer of mercy on the table now, because there is a certain time of judgment later.

5. Let's return to the passage in 2 Peter to see that balance:

2 Peter 3:9-10

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

6. *10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

7. Yes, there will be a time when fire falls from heaven. So Peter gives us the right balance to live under now:

2 Peter 3:11-15

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

8. Understand that the purpose of God's longsuffering—patience—is not that He is ignoring or ok with unrighteousness. He is giving time for repentance.

9. When Jesus' Go disciples suggested, "Go get 'em God", with fire from heaven, Jesus' response was, "It's not the time for that--yet."

10. He appears with a focus on withholding judgment and instead, showing mercy that draws people to Him.

D. The other side of God's patience

1. This is a period-centric focus. There is a time of judgment of sinners that will come.

2. Those who rejected Jesus until the end, WILL find a time of merciless judgment as they stand before the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20:11.

3. So we must not lose sight of what is on the other side of God's patience:

Rev 20:11-15

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

4. Those not found written in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.
 5. So, it is incorrect to say that God does not care about justice, and that He will forever overlook or ignore evil deeds.
 6. Those who reject the mercy of God; those who shun the many pleas of Jesus; those whom Jesus carried on His shoulders back home; yet have willfully run away from such love and mercy; it is those who will see that fate.
- E. Slowness of judgment
1. Before we close, I want to point out a danger associated with God's present mercy.
 2. To some, God's apparent silence on sin, in other words, because fire does not fall on them with every sin, it appears to them, either there is no God, or that God is ok with their sin.
 3. Ecclesiastes points out this principle: when justice is not rendered speedily, it results in some continuing in their evil ways:
Eccl 8:11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.
 4. Because God is not judging their sinful conduct speedily, the world continues in sin, and even mocks Christians for believing in the Bible's commands to live holy as old-fashioned and out of touch with today's popular opinions.
 5. Why should anyone believe in the Bible? It appears that God is far away. He is not smacking sinners down.
 6. We should not interpret God's slowness of judgment as not caring about right and wrong. It all has to do with His present mission: **Go get 'em.**

IV. Conclusion

1. Jesus is on a mission right now to find His lost sheep and carry them home. He is looking for those who are lost.
Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.
2. This is His "**Go Get 'em**" mission statement spelled out clearly.
3. So if you are in the position of being a sheep who has wandered off the path, away from the fold, there are some points that God is communicating to you today.
4. He knows where you are and has come seeking you out.
5. His loving patience has resulted in His longsuffering with you.
6. He intends to put you on His shoulders, bring you home, and celebrate with all heaven, your return to Him.
7. That is the goal of His present patience.
8. However, Paul told those in Athens, there is a time when He commands repentance:
Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at [purposefully and patiently overlooked]; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:
9. He claims you as His own and intends to keep you by His name.

10. His longsuffering is not a license to continue running from Him. It is an expression of His love reaching out to you.
11. That is the point of this message today: “Go Get ‘em God!”
12. He was lifted up on the cross, so He is drawing all men unto Him, seeking to save that which was lost.
13. So don’t forget, God is after you. Our response is to be mindful in our living:
2 Peter 3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,