

You're Never Lost with Dad

Luke 15:31-32

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

1. Introduction

1. When my oldest son, Chris, was 7 years old, we rented a place from a farmer who owned about 250 acres of fields and woods on the south side of Bloomington, not far from Lake Monroe. Knowing we had little boys, the farmer said we could feel free to roam the property and explore it with the kids.
2. We often took long walks on that property to explore the creek, follow the trails to a small water fall, and searching little caves. As we got to know the lay of the land, we knew all the turns and how to take

advantage of the sites, and also how to safely get back home.

3. But on one of those walks in the woods early in our days of living there, it was just me and Chris going exploring. I had a general sense of north, south, east, and west so I felt confident I could get us back home as we explored the unknown. And I knew if I got lost, all I had to do was keep walking to the west, because the western boundary of his property was Fairfax Road, and it would be easy to find our way home from that road.
4. Well on that day, we were well past anything that looked familiar, but Chris and I were really enjoying what we were seeing: hills, valleys, rocky cliffs, huge trees, streams, squirrels, and birds. But Chris was just 7 or 8 and he was starting to get tired and said he'd like to go back home. I didn't want to let him sense any fear on my part, but I was truly lost at this point and had no

idea where we were in relation to our home, or how long it would take us to get there. Based on the position of the sun and the time of day, I felt pretty confident we were walking west and would soon come on a familiar road.

5. Well I talked a confident talk to Chris, trying to cover up my underlying fear that we were lost, and I just kept leading him in what I was certain to be the right direction. And sure enough, after probably a half hour of wondering and wandering, we came upon a familiar road, and I was able to assure Chris that we were not far from home. This proud daddy/explorer was able to assure him, “See son, we’re not lost. Daddy knows how to get us home.”
6. I don’t know if I said it this way, but I wanted to communicate to Chris, **“You’re Never Lost With Dad.”**
- ii. He will find you

A. Security of earthly fathers

1. Kids who have the advantage of having a dad whom they perceive as having things under control, live with a sense of security that they are not hopeless or lost, but safe and cared for.

Prov 17:6 Children's children are the crown [crowning glory] of old men; and the glory [boasting] of children are their fathers.

2. A child wants to and needs to be proud of his parents.
3. Although earthly fathers can be *pretty sure* of how to get somewhere, it is certain that our heavenly Father **does know** how to get us somewhere.
4. Truly, you are **Never Lost With Dad**.

B. Abba Father

1. If you had a difficult relationship with your dad, you might struggle with associating our Heavenly Father with a dad figure. But you can think of Jesus as the Dad you never had.

2. In Jesus' days of living in human flesh, He prayed to God, calling Him, "Abba, Father." Mark's version of Jesus' prayer in the garden records:

*Mark 14:36 And he said, **Abba, Father**, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.*

3. When things looked the most bleak, Jesus cried out to Abba, Father, for guidance.
4. **Abba** is a loving, familial term for **father** in Aramaic, the language Jesus and the disciples would have spoken. It is similar to us using the word, "Daddy."
5. Our heavenly Father wants to be our **Abba Father**, or like a Daddy with a wholesome, pure, loving relationship, one that will rescue, redeem, and save us.
6. And when you are walking with Him, you are truly **Never Lost With Dad**.
7. In this world of peril and uncertainty, we need our Father to hold us secure.

- III. The lost things that are found
 - A. Intro to the lost and found parables
 - 1. Jesus illustrated that point with three parables He told that are recorded in Luke chapter 15.
 - 2. He told these parables in response to some Pharisees who complained that Jesus was being too chummy with the riffraff of the day. Notice how chapter 15 begins:
Luke 15:1-2
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. So to address the pharisees' concern about Jesus associating with publicans and sinners, Jesus revealed from the parables just how hopeless people are who are lost, and the joy that is felt by all when they are found.

4. All three of the parables tell:
 - a. An item is lost
 - b. A search is made
 - c. The item is found
 - d. Rejoicing follows

B. Lost Sheep

1. *Luke 15:4-6*

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.

2. It is important to point out that the action that Jesus ascribed to the shepherd was risky and not one that his listeners would

have thought was a practical response to the situation.

3. Leaving 99 behind, alone in a wilderness, would have placed the majority of his flock in a potentially perilous situation.
4. But a decision was made that emphasized the high value the shepherd placed on a single sheep. It is as though the shepherd was saying one sheep has equal value to 99 sheep.
5. The shepherd search and found and carried the lost sheep on his shoulders so they could return to the fold.
6. Remember how Jesus had introduced these three parables. It was in response to how Jesus took time for sinners and publicans. And as unlikely as it was for the shepherd to take such a risk of going after the lost sheep, it was nonetheless a cause of rejoicing, even in heaven:

Luke 15:7 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.

7. Clearly, Jesus was justified by going after the lost due to the joy felt, even in heaven, when sinners repent, and then are united with the shepherd and the flock.
8. And notice, the joy is not that a sinner has now joined the family of God. The joy is that the sinner repents and turns away from his sin.
9. **The sheep is never lost with the shepherd around. He will find it.**

c. Lost coin

1. *Luke 15:8-9*

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together,

saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

2. Jesus described again the exaggerated response of the woman to the joy in finding the coin. Calling friends and neighbors together to express her joy in finding a coin sounds like an over-the-top reaction that Jesus' audience would not have expected.

3. Yet that is not the end of it. Jesus makes another connection to joy and repenting sinners:

Luke 15:10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

4. Verse 7 mentioned joy in heaven, and verse 10 mentions joy in the presence of God's angels.
5. That does not say it makes angels rejoice, but is more likely saying that God is the one rejoicing in their presence.
6. Do you think the pharisees are getting Jesus' point?

7. **The coin is never lost with the woman around. She will find it.**

IV. Lost son

A. Broken relationship

1. And then finally, we come to the parable of the lost son. This story makes the same points as the other two:

Luke 15:11-12

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

2. For the younger son to ask for his inheritance while his father was living, was equivalent to saying, "I'd rather you be dead so I can spend your money without you being around."

3. I'm sure most of us adults remember the years when it seems that we operated without our brains, perhaps those years

between age 16 and age 25. We thought our parents were all wrong. They didn't understand us. They had such a small view of the world.

4. Relationships with parents are often difficult during these years as the precious child that once gladly sat on our lap and saw us as their knight in shining armor, now wants to end that closeness and sees us as a hindrance to them enjoying life.
5. They walk away from clear and reasonable thinking during this period and are willing to challenge what their parents have taught them.
6. In Jesus' story, the young man discovered fairly quickly that rejecting truth did not prevent him from suffering the consequences of that rejection:

Luke 15:13-16

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his

substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

B. Greatest despair

1. This reveals an unchanging reality that young people of every generation has faced.
2. It happens when someone places all their hopes into something, thinking it will finally bring them the satisfaction of their pleasures, desires, and delights.
3. For some, it is a relationship. For others it is a job or career. For others it is a drug.

4. But then when they finally have that thing in their grasp, they find themselves more greatly disappointed than ever because they are left unsatisfied. And for some, they feel even worse than they did before they got it.
5. It is a feeling of being deceived and cheated.
6. This is the reason behind many of the deaths of despair our world is seeing now.
7. So instead of finally “becoming their own person,” or finally being “set free to be all they wanted to be,” they found they have become a prisoner to their own pleasures, and a slave to others, making money for others, and taking care of pigs.
8. But what is worse is the memories of the past that linger.
9. Right now, this son longs for any sort of comfort and settles for what is leftover after the pigs have eaten.

10. Perhaps it happened just as he successfully fought off a pig for a desirable piece of garbage, that he fell into the mud, and as he brought that rotting food toward his mouth, a memory came to him.
 - c. He came to himself/repented
 1. That is when it happened:
Luke 15:17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!
 2. Why am I eating garbage jerked from a pig's mouth, when even my father's servants have more than that they need?
 3. The memory was painful. The realization was painful. But it is what was necessary for him to finally come to himself after he had left himself, his clear thinking, and wise reasoning.
 4. But it is back now.

5. No, he is not yet out of the mudhole and not yet redeemed, but **the greatest battle has been won. The battle for the mind and will.**
6. He was finally willing to say, “I give up! I have messed up royally and am willing do whatever I have to do to get out of this mess! Even if I have to apologize to my father!”

Luke 15:18-19

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

7. The problem many have with coming back is their unwillingness to admit they had sinned against God and their father or mother.
8. They are not willing to consider that the pain they have caused others has damaged their reputation.

9. But this young man honestly recognized what he had done. He sinned. He disrespected his father and did not deserve to have that place of honor returned to him.
10. But for him, he was broken, and his brokenness made him willing to his trade life among pigs with life among servants. He saw that as a definite upgrade.

D. Dad was searching

1. But like Jesus' two other parables, the thing that was lost had someone searching for it. While the son was looking for Dad, Dad was on the lookout for him:

*Luke 15:20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when **he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.***

2. The son had something he wanted to tell his father, but notice how the compassion of

the father caused him to meet his son while he was still a great way off.

3. Like the shepherd who left 99 to search for one, like the woman who went over her whole house to look for one, the Father was on the search for His one repenting, returning son.
 4. Wayward sons and daughters, the Father WILL find you if your repentance begins to aim you in the direction of home. He will find you and receive you.
 5. **And once you are back with the Father, you are Never Lost With Dad.**
- E. Need for repentance before joy comes
1. But the son had something he had to say to dad. The success of this meeting and his relationship with his father depended on him coming clean:
Luke 15:21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in

thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

2. He said it. He got that off his heart. He made things right. And while it was hard to admit he was wrong, it sure felt good to finally confess his sin and get back into his father's arms.
3. And it also felt good to the father to hear those words:

Luke 15:22-24

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

- v. Conclusion

1. In these parables I'm sharing on this Fathers' Day, there are some lessons for dads and sons.
2. Fathers have a life-long impact on their kids. Because kids have a tendency to wander off and get lost, fathers must be diligently watching over them to guide them on the right path.
3. And if they get off the path, but decide to return in repentance, it is a cause of great rejoicing.
4. When it comes to God, it is His way to receive repentant sons and daughters, so that as long as **you are with Dad, you will never be lost.**
5. Reclaiming a family with broken relationships is always a challenge, and it takes work.
6. Jesus could have ended that final parable with the merry making celebration after the son returned, giving the parable a "they all lived happily ever after" fairytale ending.

7. But Jesus added 8 more verses to address the realities of the relationships we live with. The older brother who had stayed home grew jealous and angry at the celebration held in honor of his younger brother.
8. There will always be struggles in families, but if dads will lean heavily on our Heavenly Father for guidance, He will guide us to the right path.
9. When you remain with the Father, you are never lost, and will always have what you need:

Luke 15:31-32

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

10. We should make merry!