

Luke 15

The God Who Seeks

Main idea: God relentlessly seeks the lost until they are found.

Whenever we have a youth lock-in here, we almost always play hide and seek in the dark.

- Some kids hide so well that the game has to be called off before they're found!
- Many people are "hiding" from God, but the difference is that God never stops seeking.¹
- This morning, we're going to read 9 parables that Jesus taught, and they all have one point. [point]²

Read Luke 15:3-10

In these first two parables, we find that God actively seeks the lost.

- By nature, we were all lost because of our sin. [Romans 3:23]
- In the parable of the lost sheep, we see that God leaves the 99 to find the one who is lost.
- In the parable of the lost coin, we see that God searches with determination until He finds what is lost.
- People have spent millions of dollars searching for treasure shipwrecks and hidden treasures. [photo]
- But each human soul is worth far more to God!³
- God is not passive; He is actively searching for those who are far from Him.⁴

Continuing in Luke 15, we also see that in seeking the lost, it's because God loves us and desires that we have a relationship with Him. (Luke 15:11-24)

- In the parable of the prodigal son, the father runs to meet the lost son and rejoices at his return.
- In other words, God eagerly welcomes those who repent and turn to Him. [Matthew 21:28-32]
- You see, no matter how far someone has strayed from Him, God is waiting with open arms.⁵
- For those of you who have children, I'm sure that even if they left, and cursed you, and left everything you consider important, you would pray for them and would welcome them back.
- God loves your kids, and God loves each and every person, far more than we do! [point]

And the awesome truth is that God invites everyone! [Luke 14:16-24]

- In the parable of the great banquet, God compelled those who were overlooked and outcast.
- Interestingly, even when people RSVP to an event, there are always some who don't show. [chart]
- When you don't show up to the party, you miss the benefits of the celebration!
- And the hard truth about this parable is that those who reject the invitation will face a Judgment.⁶
- So in the parable of the workers in the vineyard, we read that God continues calling people to Him at every stage of life, even if they've previously rejected Him. [Matthew 20:1-7]
- You see, God's invitation to know Him is open to all people, and He never stops calling. [point]

So in the next parable, we see what Jesus did to save the lost. [John 10:11]

- Jesus gave His life!⁷
 - We've all heard of examples of rescue workers who put their lives on the line to save people who are in danger. [photos]
 - As much as we honor their bravery, Jesus not only risked His life for us, but even gave His life for us.⁸
- God continues to call out the lost, even going to the furthest lengths to gather them into His Kingdom. [Matthew 13:47-50]
- So God gathers all people, separating the righteous from the wicked at the Judgment.⁹
- And this is the Judgment. [John 3:19] [John 1:9] [John 1:5]
- We can trust Jesus to bring the lost into His kingdom because He is the Good Shepherd. [point]

But it's not automatic. We must humble ourselves and repent of our sin, trusting in Jesus. [Luke 18:10-14]

- God saves those who humbly recognize their need for Him.¹⁰
- We don't have to be perfect to come to God, but we do need to trust in Jesus, who makes us perfect.¹¹
 - So trust God for your own salvation. Know that if you feel lost, God is seeking you.¹²
 - And also trust God for the salvation of others. It's important to invite people to church, share the gospel, and pray, but ultimately, know that God is the one who seeks and saves.¹³

Because that's exactly what Jesus came to do. [Luke 19:10]

God relentlessly seeks the lost until they are found.¹⁴

Endnotes

1. Luke 19:10
2. God relentlessly seeks the lost until they are found.
3. Luke 12:6-7
4. Ezekiel 34:11
5. Isaiah 55:7
6. John 3:18, Hebrews 9:27
7. Mark 10:45
8. 1 John 3:16
9. Matthew 25:32-33, Revelation 20:12
10. Psalm 34:18, James 4:10
11. Hebrews 10:14, 2 Corinthians 5:21
12. John 6:37
13. 2 Peter 3:9
14. Ezekiel 34:16