

## “Lostness” Compared:

Matthew 18 vs. Luke 15

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### Matthew 18:1ff. (NIV)

Matthew 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2 He called a little child and had him stand among them.

3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.

6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

7 "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!

8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.

9 And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell. to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little

### Luke 15:1ff. (NIV)

Luke 15:1 Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him.

2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

11 [Not included in the most reliable manuscripts: "The son of man came to save that which was lost."]

12 "What do you think?

If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them *wanders away*, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the *hills* and go to look for the one that wandered off?

13 And *if* he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off.

14 In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

3 Then Jesus told them this parable:

4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and *loses* one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the *open country* and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?

5 And *when* he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders

6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'

7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

8 "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?

9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.'

10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.

16 But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'

17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

18 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

19 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him.

25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that

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.

13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all

he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.'

27 The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

28 "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

29 "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

30 "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.

33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'

34 In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

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 men.'

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.

21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. '

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.

25 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.

27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.

29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

31 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.

32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

**Notes:**