

0 (0s):

My name's Matt Wolfe. I'm the lead pastor here. I want to get to know you go to a rise, denver.com/connect. Fill out that I'm new form. You can do it here in person. Get out your phone, dude. Right now, I want to connect with you. I want to get to know you and just welcome you to our church. We are going to start our lost and found series today. And I just think it's a good day. A lot of us are finishing up our community group. You know, we kind of had a season of being in community group, who in here is in a community group or has been in one before. Yeah. Community groups are really our community here in this church. And they're kind of finishing up a semester. They're going to launch again in September, but coming up this summer, we do have women's Bible studies and a men's group that starting here in a couple of weeks. So that's a great way to connect, even as we're not going to have those regular semester of community groups starting.

0 (43s):

We had a great time with our community group. We all met at the park. This last Thursday is kind of like a fun get together afterwards. And it was just so great to be together with community. We believe in vibrant community here, which means we are real with each other to grow together. When we're real with each other. When we open up our lives, it actually helps us grow. And it's really important. So we want to encourage you guys to get plugged in whether it's in those men's and women's groups this summer or into our community groups in the fall, keep an eye out for those. But we are going to start a lost and found series today. And I think it's,

1 (1m 12s):

It's going to be a really good series because we all are lost. We're all lost.

0 (1m 20s):

Last week, I was invited by a pastor friend on the other side of town

1 (1m 24s):

To coffee, and

0 (1m 26s):

It was a place I hadn't been to before. So he sent me the Google calendar invite. And while I set out to drive, it was like during rush hour, I just clicked. And it goes from the Google to my map and I just was following the directions. Right. So Siri's telling me where to go. I'm turning around. I'm turning left. It's a little bit of a weird route. You know, I, 78 to two 70, I'm thinking, okay. It's probably because of like the, the mile has shift. That's coming. If you guys seen this, like I'm thinking, okay, this is why it's taken me on this weird direction. I've never been this way before. Don't know where I'm going, but I'm just, I'm following it. Exactly. Like I'm not missing anything, but, but it tells me to get off on this exit. I'm like, that's a weird exit to get off of. I turned down here, I turned down another street and I'm like, I've never been here before. And then this street has like the potholes, like the size of my Jeep. And there's like, it was a rainy day.

0 (2m 7s):

So there's puddles and I'm driving under this tunnel. I'm like, this doesn't look like, I don't know where I'm going, but I'm still following the directions. I'm like going down into this industrial zone. And I'm like, where the heck are we meeting for coffee?

1 (2m 19s):

I'm going in the right place. Right? Well, turns out that somehow

0 (2m 23s):

Google had given me the wrong coordinates. Okay. It was sending me to some latitude and longitude that was not anywhere near where we were going to have coffee. Finally figured it out. I texted my buddy, Hey, I'm going to be 15 minutes late. And then I get back on and then go to the right place. Right. Anybody had done something like that before I'm going to the right place. Right? I'm following the instructions. It's telling me exactly where to go and yet

1 (2m 44s):

Lost. Anyways.

0 (2m 47s):

Maybe you've done this if you've ever driven up in Greeley.

1 (2m 50s):

If you like 20th Avenue, oops.

0 (2m 53s):

Nope. 20th street. Okay. Greeted like just wants to trick everyone when you go there, right? Yes. Some Greeley residents know what I'm talking about. Or I have some friends that went to the right city in the wrong state.

2 (3m 6s):

Yep. Oh, we're in Springfield wrong one, you know,

0 (3m 10s):

Hundreds of miles, hours wasted driving to the right place. But it's actually the wrong place. And I think that that's what happens in life. We're following directions. We're doing what we're supposed to do, where we're following what everybody else is doing with life. Getting my degree, I'm getting married. I'm I'm doing life. I got the kids, I got the job. I'm making money. And my business is expanding. I'm doing what I'm supposed to do. And yet, at some point we all realize

1 (3m 34s):

That we're lost

0 (3m 36s):

This. Isn't what I thought I was supposed to do. Or I thought I would be somewhere different at this age and stage in my life that we have this sense of anxiety or even depression about this. Isn't what I wanted with my life.

1 (3m 47s):

We're lost, even though we've been following the directions and in this

0 (3m 52s):

Series, we're going to talk about it and show how Jesus provides a better way. We're going to go through Luke chapter 15, all the way through 17 in this series over the next six weeks. As we learn from Jesus himself, as he helps us as we're lost spiritually, as we're lost with things like money and other things in our life. So what I want to encourage you to do, whether this is your first time or someone sent you this message, or you stumbled upon us by a Google search or a YouTube thing came up, whatever it is I want to encourage you and challenge you to commit to this entire six week series commit to it. And you're like, well, I'm traveling. I'm going on vacation to Aruba. Well, great. You can still join us online or you can subscribe on YouTube or subscribe on your podcast app. So you don't miss a single one of these messages.

0 (4m 33s):

So that's my first challenge. Everyone should commit to this entire six week message series. Even if you're an unbeliever, think I'm crazy. Commit to it. Just listen to it before you reject it. Okay? Because you are lost and God wants you to be found. And we're going to see that, especially today that our father in heaven, who loves us is inviting us to come

1 (4m 53s):

Home, to come home because home is one of those things that we all long for.

0 (4m 59s):

Remember back at home. When you were a kid, maybe you have this memory. I don't even, maybe it was a kid teenager, maybe a young adult and you think, Oh, back Macri fan. It was so great. We all have this sense in our heart. And some of us tried to recreate it or refined. It's a homesickness we have. But one of the crazy things is sometimes we're even homesick at home. I Kia did a survey survey and they found as they surveyed people. And they said, where do you feel most at home? 20% of respondents said somewhere other than their home or apartment 20%, they did the same poll two years later. And the numbers had increased to 35%. So more than a third of people say, I don't feel at home at home.

0 (5m 39s):

I think there's a sense that we all have that idea of homesickness, Madeline, Madeline L'Engle once wrote, we are all strangers in a strange land, longing for home, but not quite knowing what or where home is. We glimpse it sometimes in our dreams or as we turn a corner. And suddenly there is a strange sweet familiarity that vanishes almost as soon as it comes, if you ever had that sense ever had that feeling, it's why GK Chesterton and the British author would say that he feels homesick at home. There's this sense that there's something better. There's somewhere better than that. Maybe I am

3 (6m 17s):

The last and I want to be found. I want to find my true home.

0 (6m 23s):

So if you have that sense right now, or you've had it in the past, or you will have it in the future, what we're going to learn today that our father in heaven, God himself is saying come home

3 (6m 34s):

And he loves us. He's waiting for us.

0 (6m 38s):

So today we're going to look at Luke chapter 15. If you have a Bible, go ahead and get it out. If you have your smartphone, you can use the YouVersion Bible app. And we have a special event there. You can take notes. If you're online, open up another browser, perhaps we're going to cover this entire chapter today. It's a lot. So what that means when we cover a big section, we don't read every verse and every word, but every word and every verse is important. So read it. It's important. I'm going to kind of summarize some of these stories as we look at them. And what we're going to see today is that Jesus teaches three stories, but what's really interesting is Luke writes that he told one,

3 (7m 11s):

It's not plural.

0 (7m 14s):

Interesting little insight. So Jesus is telling all three of these little stories, as one bigger parable, that's teaching a deeper spiritual truth. One that we desperately need to your, all of us, because we are all

3 (7m 27s):

Lost. So the first story Jesus tells,

0 (7m 32s):

And it starts in verse three. If you're following along in your Bible is about a shepherd

3 (7m 38s):

Who loses a sheep.

0 (7m 40s):

So the shepherd has a hundred sheep, which would have been a normal flock size and, and one of them wanders off. So the shepherd would have been counting. Okay. One, two, you know, you'd have to with a hundred sheep. Some of you have to count your three kids and you still lose one. Right? Okay. So there's a hundred sheep. I mean, definitely. You gotta count them. One, two. Oh shoot. Did I count you twice? All right. Okay. This is what he's doing. And finally, he gets through the count and you realize, Oh, there's only 99 of these a hundred.

3 (8m 5s):

So what does the shepherd do?

0 (8m 8s):

The shepherd leaves the 99 in the open country. They're all together. There are heard there flock. I'm going to leave them so that I can go after this one, sheep that has gone away. And he looks for that sheep. He tries whatever he can to find it. And when he finally finds

3 (8m 21s):

Is that one lost lamb. He picks him up, puts him on a shoulder and returns.

0 (8m 29s):

That's where I want. I'm going to pick up the story here in verse

3 (8m 33s):

Six. I'm sorry.

0 (8m 35s):

Five verse five. It says. And when he finds it, the shepherd, he joyfully, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, rejoice with me. I have found my lost

3 (8m 50s):

Sheep. I found my lost sheep.

0 (8m 53s):

This is interesting. Okay. He's like I to throw a party, I'm happy. I found the sheep. I had the sheep lost the

sheep. Now I got the sheep again, party. Okay. If you're thinking that well, that's kind of a small thing to party about. It's not for the shepherd. And that is a little weird thing. Whenever you're reading a parable or a story, and there's something weird there and you're like, well, would I throw a party for that? Okay, you should perk up. This is important. That's why Jesus is telling this story. He's saying that the shepherd is so happy that he wants to celebrate, throw a party for the one sheep that he found. And then he tells the deeper spiritual truth behind why that party is happening for seven. I tell you that in the same way, there will be more rejoicing in heaven, over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who do not need to repent saying, there's the righteous, there's the flock.

0 (9m 46s):

They're the church goers. They're the believers in there. They're all there. And they're, they're living like they're supposed to. But when that one who's lost, the one sinner goes astray. And that sinner is found. It's time to party celebration. How exciting we found the last sheet, Jesus telling us what Jesus is saying is that some of us are lost. Some of us are wandering in sin and we've been going down. Maybe the path of world says, or the path that we think that we've got to go after this pleasure and that this, this thing that's sin. And we know it's wrong. We were doing anyways, because we want to find something there. We're searching after something, we're following the directions. More pleasure, more fun, more trips.

0 (10m 27s):

I got to do more stuff. I got to make more money. And we're going after all these things and what in reality is we're lost. And when we realized that we were lost

3 (10m 38s):

And then we can be found again, it's time to party

0 (10m 43s):

Our father in heaven, all of heaven. They're throwing a party. Yeah. Whoo. Celebrate the sinner who was lost is found. And this doesn't even matter how many times we sin or how stupid we are. Do you know that sheep are pretty stupid? They really are. They're dumb creatures. If you've ever been around them, they wander off where they're not supposed to. And then they get lost and everything. There was a little video going around social media a couple of weeks ago. And I thought you might like this because it shows us how dumb sheep really are. So here's this, this young boy probably, you know, they're shepherds in the family getting, getting that land, pulling them out. Great rescue Right back in the ditch, right back in the ditch.

0 (11m 28s):

Oh my gosh.

3 (11m 32s):

What

0 (11m 32s):

Were you thinking? We just rescued you. And yet somehow slow motion now, right back in. I think there's a reason why sheep is one of the most common metaphors that God uses for his people.

3 (11m 49s):

We're dumb. We

0 (11m 51s):

Go the wrong way. We get lost. Then we're found again and we get lost again. The exact same way. We send a certain way. We fall into an addiction or into a bad relationship. We get out of it. Rescued. Thank you, God, praise you, Jesus for rescuing me.

1 (12m 4s):

And then right back at it, back into sin,

0 (12m 7s):

Back into addiction, back into that same tired type of relationship that almost destroyed us before. Isn't that what we do? We are dumb sheep.

1 (12m 18s):

We are lost.

0 (12m 21s):

And when we recognize though, that we're lost and we can be found again, it doesn't matter how many times we do the same stupid thing. Our father in heaven is rejoicing. He's throwing a party. You are found,

1 (12m 34s):

Come home,

0 (12m 35s):

Come home. That is the heart of our father in heaven. And in case you didn't get it from that story, Jesus tells the second one, right? Here's the second story. As part of the same, the same parable. He tells about a woman who has 10 coins and loses one. What you're going to see here as a progression in these three stories in the first story, there's 100 sheep. One is lost. Now there's 10 coins and one is lost and you don't need a degree in economics to know that the less of something you have, the more valuable it is. Okay? So this one has 10 coins. And by the type of coins is probably would have been a daily wage. Meaning this woman is not very rich. She is a day laborer and she has 10 coins. This is her entire savings that she has to live on and have this savings.

0 (13m 19s):

10%. One of those 10 coins is gone. Now there were no banks. There was definitely no Bitcoin, whatever that is, you okay? None of that stuff, there was nothing. There was no digital phone that she could transfer money over Venmo to another person. She had to hide her money in her house somewhere. You would have thought very carefully about where you're going to hide this money, right? You would have dug under your house in those days, you would have hit it somewhere. So she would have done that with her money, but somehow she goes to look for it. And one of those 10 points, 10% is

1 (13m 49s):

So what does she do? Oh, well, no, no. She

0 (13m 55s):

Scours the house. She tears it apart looks everywhere. She's probably digging under her house. So she gets out of broom and she can sweep. So maybe she can hear the coins. She gets out of lamp at night. She's still searching in the dark. She doesn't have a flashlight on her iPhone to find it, but she's looking everywhere. She can to find this one coin because it's that important to her. And finally she finds it. She finally finds it. And that's what Jesus says in verse nine says, and when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, just like the shepherd rejoice with me, I have found my lost coin in the same way. Verse 10, Jesus tells us the significance. I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner who repents,

1 (14m 41s):

Not only is God, the father. Yeah.

0 (14m 43s):

Cited the sinner, repents, the sinner returns. He comes home, but all the angels are throwing a party.

1 (14m 50s):

You know, they're playing some celebrations, good times on their harp. Right? Okay. Whatever it is, they're excited. That's why we do that here. When, when someone raises their hand and say, I follow Jesus, we say the angels are rejoicing with you. When we have a baptism, there's a party going on in heaven. We can't see it, but it's happening. It's a celebration. And we're so excited about it. And that's what Jesus said. This is the heart of the father. This is the heart of the angels. We want people to come home. And when they do it is time to celebrate. It is an amazing thing. When a sinner who is lost, admits it and they can be found. It's an amazing thing. I will never forget in Nebraska when we were there, there was, there was a woman and she had got involved with a sin and it was a very, very public sin.

1 (15m 36s):

So much so that she got fired from her job. She was the gossip of the entire small town. Right. Everyone knew about this. And she immediately stopped coming to our church. We went after it. We, we, whenever we'd see her, we'd invite her back. We'd go to her house still. She stayed away because of the shame she felt for her son. It was a small town. Okay. You can't hide in a small town. Everybody knows, but I will never forget. There was a Sunday that I was in the back of the worship service. Sometimes I do that. Everybody else is worshiping in the service and she snuck in, right.

3 (16m 11s):

She kinda

1 (16m 11s):

Like peered around the corner and you could see it on her face that she was like, am I welcome here? Is it okay for me to return? I will never forget because there's a whole bunch of people that went up immediately to her and hugged her. She didn't need to say anything. We were so happy to have her back. That's how we're supposed to be when a center of pets. So excited that you're back. We love you. Just like our father in heaven loves you. Just like the angels are celebrating. We are too. We love when the lost are found. That's what Jesus, that's the heart of the father. If you are lost in some of you are lost

3 (16m 48s):

Today, her father and having to sing, come home. I want to throw a party for you. Can't wait to see.

1 (16m 59s):

And in case people didn't get it from those first two stories. Jesus tells a third story. And like I told you, there was increasing value with each of the stories. So in the first story, there's one sheep that wanders off shepherd gets the one in the second story. There's 10 coins. And the woman looks for that one lost coin. But here in this third story, there are two sons. And one of those sons wanders off

3 (17m 24s):

Jesus

1 (17m 24s):

Tells this story. It's well-known as is often the prodigal son, but there are two sons in this story. And the younger son says to the father, dad give me my inheritance right now. We're not told how old the dad is. So it could have been years. Maybe he was real old. Maybe it was decades that he still had to live. But the son says, I want my inheritance. Now in our day, that would be pretty rude.

0 (17m 51s):

In that day. It was extremely dishonorable. It would be like saying to your dad,

1 (17m 55s):

She were dead because the father didn't pass on an inheritance until he died.

0 (18m 1s):

And because the younger son was the younger son in those days, the older son got two portions, a double portion of the inheritance and the younger son, because there was two would have gotten one, meaning the older son got two thirds of the estate. The younger son got one third of the state. So the father would have had to liquidate a bunch of his assets, sell some property, get money together so that he could give it to the younger son. But he did.

1 (18m 25s):

Father

0 (18m 25s):

Gives it to the younger son and the under son then collects all of his assets, get everything he belongs and leaves. It says he goes

1 (18m 32s):

Off to a far country.

0 (18m 34s):

So not only has he dishonored his father, which was simple, this is breaking the 10 commandments honor. Your father and mother wish you were dead. But now he's like, I don't want anything to do with my family or my,

1 (18m 46s):

So you went to a far country, meaning it wasn't

0 (18m 49s):

In Israel. It wasn't where God's people, the Jews were. This means this son is not going to synagogue every week, right? He's not going to church every week. He's not around God's people. He's going as far as he can away from that. He said, I don't want anything to do with, with my dad, with my brother, with my family, with even my own people. I don't want anything to do with God. I'm going to live the way I

1 (19m 9s):

See fit. And that's what

0 (19m 12s):

Younger son does. He, he goes and he spends his money and he's got some money. So he's throwing it

down. We're not told exactly what he's doing. And he says, he's involved in reckless living, reckless spending. He's involved in, okay, he's throwing money around gambling, right? He's he's throwing parties. He's, he's getting drinks. He, the older brother accuses him later in this story of spending time with prostitutes. So he's spending it on money, on booths, whatever it is, he's wasting all his money. And he gets to the point where he has spent all of it.

1 (19m 39s):

Okay. He spent all of it. And then there's a famine on the land. Now this is

0 (19m 45s):

An interesting detail in his story. And it's one that we often skip over as Westerners. In fact, there was a one Bible teacher, the Bible scholar, and he had a group of 12 Bible teachers that were in training and he told them to read Luke 15, read this story. Now summarize it. So they would tell the story of those 12 future pastors who read this story. Guests, how many, remember the detail of the

1 (20m 12s):

Zero? Nobody brought up that detail. We skipped right over that.

0 (20m 16s):

He tried it again with a hundred Bible teachers.

1 (20m 20s):

And I think somewhere about six of them picked up on that.

0 (20m 24s):

Six of them reminded, remember the detail that's pretty bad. Right? What was interesting. Then he did some work in Russia and he was teaching some Bible teachers there and he asked them the same thing. Okay. You read Luke 15 and then summarize

1 (20m 34s):

The story. And 44 of the 50, remember the famine

0 (20m 40s):

Because they in Russia had experienced a famine a few decades before that when Hitler invaded and attacked St. Petersburg. And there was a fam that killed almost 7,000 in that one town,

1 (20m 48s):

Because there wasn't a food.

0 (20m 50s):

You don't get this. If we don't get this, when there's like a little line to get some gasoline, we freak out.

1 (20m 59s):

When we have

0 (20m 59s):

To drive to the other side of town to find toilet paper,

1 (21m 3s):

Remember that

0 (21m 6s):

When there's a famine in that day, it wouldn't be that I have to go to another grocery store.

1 (21m 11s):

There was no food. There was no

0 (21m 14s):

Grocery store to provide the food. So if you were hungry, you start

1 (21m 17s):

And die.

0 (21m 20s):

There's this famine going on. And this man has now wasted all his money. So he can't even spend top dollar to maybe buy some food because now the price has gone up for everything. He has nothing. He finally finds a job, working and cleaning out and feeding.

1 (21m 34s):

Pigs

0 (21m 37s):

Is already a pretty low job on the totem pole, right? Feeding the pigs and taking care of them.

1 (21m 42s):

But it's even worse for a Jew because Jews don't eat pork. They still don't eat bacon today. Right? Pigs are considered unclean according to the scriptures. So

0 (21m 54s):

There's this Jewish man who's left his faith. And now he's having to work with the pigs. This is like the lowest, most demeaning job you can imagine for this young man. And it says that he longed to fill his stomach

1 (22m 9s):

With the pods that the pigs were reading. So this is

0 (22m 13s):

And worse. This is eating the food for the unclean pigs. This would be like us. I think, as Americans like, okay, you need to eat the crickets that

1 (22m 22s):

Or Dietz. Ooh. Right? I don't want to eat the lizard. I definitely don't want eat the crickets. This is

0 (22m 28s):

Disgusting. It's unclean. And here he is just longing to be able to eat

1 (22m 32s):

Pots he's at the lowest of the low,

0 (22m 37s):

It was awful. And I bring up the detail of the famine because we know that this prodigal son has done some sinful, awful things. He has made some very poor decisions in his life that have gotten him to this point.

1 (22m 50s):

He has sinned, but there's

0 (22m 52s):

Also some terrible things that are far outside of his control that have happened to him as well. Right? And I'm saying this because a lot of times it's both of these things for our lives. We have sin, we have done wrong. We've done terrible, awful things. We've made bad decisions. We make the bad decision. Again, we're out of money. We're broke. We're, we're S we're struggling, but also bad things happen. There are famines. There are pandemics. There are health issues that happen to us that are completely out of our control. There's something that someone else does to us. The economy goes bankrupt. We lose our job. Our business goes under those things happen to us, but for the son, it doesn't matter whether he made the bad decisions or something happened to him either way. He is

1 (23m 29s):

Lost. And he finally recognizes it. And the way he recognizes it is because he remembers home. He thinks about home and thinks the servants in my father's eat better than I eat right now. And he comes up with this whole speech in his mind, he's ready. Right? This is what we do. Comes up with a speech saying, maybe I'll go back and tell my dad

0 (23m 58s):

Data. I'm so sorry. I've sinned against heaven. I've sinned against you. Please just let me be your servant in your house. Maybe God, maybe my dad will, will do this for me

1 (24m 7s):

Back home. He thinks about home. And he finally decides to go home and

0 (24m 12s):

He's preparing the speech. He probably thinking about it the whole way

1 (24m 15s):

On this journey. And he starts heading home

0 (24m 21s):

Really interesting. Is that in Buddhism, there's also a story.

1 (24m 26s):

The lost son. I don't know if you knew this. There's a story of the lost son. It comes in one of their Holy scriptures. And with

0 (24m 32s):

It's interesting is a lot of people study religions and look, Oh, look how similar they are because there's two stories of lost sons. But let me tell you a little bit about this story that occurs in the Buddhist scriptures.

There's a lost son. And it says that he left his, his father to live in wasteful, living that he's, he's sitting, he's making bad decisions. And it says for some 10, 20, 50 years, that's what it says. So a very long time, he's away from his father. And in the meantime, his father actually moves to a new town. His business takes off and he gets very rich that this father, to the point where he's living like a King, and then one day, this son, after decades of wasteful, prodigal living comes back and he is just begging for work because he wants to eat.

0 (25m 18s):

And the father sees him a long way off. Very

1 (25m 21s):

Similar to our story today

0 (25m 23s):

Sees my lungs way off. But the sun does not recognize the father. And because of a couple of freak circumstances, the father never tells the son that he is. And then the father just watches this son. This son has to beg for a job. And it's the lowest job in the town, which is cleaning

1 (25m 39s):

Poop, not animal poop. Okay.

0 (25m 43s):

He would go around and pick up people's poop, put it in a basket and take it out of town. That's what his job. And he does this for days, weeks, months, years, the father watching him the whole time

1 (25m 52s):

I'm evaluating him.

0 (25m 55s):

The father kind of looks after him and make sure he keeps that job in the village and ends up giving him a better wage. So, so he has a place to live, but, but years it says a couple decades go by with the father, watching it, never introducing himself, never saying that he is this man's father. And after two decades of that, the father is on his death bed

1 (26m 14s):

And he calls in the sun. And he finally says,

0 (26m 19s):

Because you have worked so hard and shown me the character that you have, I'm going to reveal to you that you are actually my son. And now you get the inheritance. So this is the teaching. The teaching from this in the Buddhist scriptures is that you must work really, really hard, strive to develop character and show that you are a good person. And then at the end, you will realize that you have all these treasures

1 (26m 43s):

Given to you and that you are the child of a King. That's not at all like the story Jesus tells. Cause do you know what happens when the prodigal son decides to go home? It says that while he is still far off, the father sees him. The father has

0 (27m 3s):

Been sitting there waiting, watching the whole time

1 (27m 7s):

And he gets up

0 (27m 9s):

And he would have had to roll up his robes to show off his, his, his legs. And then he started to walk. He started to run. He started to sprint old. Men did not do that in Jesus's day. It was, it was considered dishonorable for a man to run and especially to show his legs. But he had to because he was running with his robot. But, but the father doesn't care. He runs out to the sun and before the son can even open his mouth to say this prepared speech, the father throws his arms

1 (27m 35s):

Around the sun, kisses him and welcomes him home.

0 (27m 40s):

And this is what he says. The son then tries to get out the speech and the father just cuts him off. He doesn't even care about anything that the son has to say, but in verse, in verse 22,

1 (27m 55s):

Okay.

0 (27m 55s):

In verse 22, it says what 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, bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and sell it

1 (28m 11s):

Right for this son of mine was dead and is alive. Again. He was

0 (28m 16s):

Lost and is found. So they began to sell.

1 (28m 19s):

Great. Do you know what the differences between these two stories are one word. Grace

0 (28m 28s):

Need to wait for the sun to prove that he was a good person, that he had character and would work hard. Father accepted him. Exactly.

1 (28m 35s):

She was said, welcome home. I love you.

0 (28m 39s):

He gave him the robe to, to, to make him a Prince. He gave him the ring to say, you are still my son right now. You don't have to earn it. You're not a servant. And let's celebrate. Let's take the fattened calf. This is what they would have had for a feast for celebration. When the King comes over to their house, he said, let's have the biggest party. We can imagine, bring everybody in. Let's celebrate. And they do,

1 (28m 59s):

Because that is the heart that our father has towards us. So Jesus is saying, I don't care how lost

0 (29m 7s):

You are. How far you have wandered into sin.

1 (29m 11s):

Come home. Now, a lot of people,

0 (29m 12s):

Well, a lot of us don't understand this. We expect we've. We think, well, God says I have to do this. I'm not good enough. And we create those speeches in our mind. Well, God, if you rescue me from this, when we've reached our lowest point, when we realized we're lost God, if you rescue me from this, I'll serve, you I'll go to church again. I'll be nice to my mom.

1 (29m 28s):

Right? We bargain with God, God doesn't care about that at all. He says, come home. I love you. You're my son. You're my daughter right now come, as you are. See, I felt this way. I had been saved as a young boy. I went to church. My parents raised me, right? I knew right from wrong. I even got baptized in yet. When I was in high school, I was not walking with Jesus. Like I should. And I've told this story again, but I spent a night when I was 18 years old, a freezing cold night in jail because I, the vandalism and the illegal activity I had been involved in. And I was literally, I was expecting this divine spanking, like, you know, better, like as I'm praying to God and crying out to him in that moment.

1 (30m 11s):

And instead I experienced his grace and mercy, like never before I knew in that moment, I was forgiven and I was his child. He loved me.

3 (30m 22s):

That's how our father is for us right now. I don't care how lost, how far you've gone.

1 (30m 27s):

I don't care if you've done the same thing over and over, over again. I don't care how much you know, and you still are living stupidly, come home. I love you. You're welcome home right now.

3 (30m 38s):

Come out.

1 (30m 40s):

This is the message that Jesus teaches us. This is the message of the gospel. The good news that no matter how lost we are, he says,

3 (30m 48s):

Come home.

1 (30m 50s):

Some of you need to hear that today because you are lost. You've been living in sin.

3 (30m 56s):

You knew better.

1 (30m 58s):

You know, you're not doing what you're supposed to do. And you have been wasting your money, wasting your time, sleeping around. I don't know what it is, but our father in heaven right now is saying, come home.

3 (31m 7s):

I love you. You are my child. Come home.

1 (31m 17s):

It would be nice if the story ended right there. But it doesn't. If you've ever read this story, you know, it doesn't end right there because there's still another brother. There's the older brother. And this is an interesting fact. So the older brother would have gotten two thirds of the inheritance. So he had a double portion. But now that the younger brother's back, it means he's going to have to share some of his portion, but this younger brother's back.

3 (31m 46s):

And when everybody's

1 (31m 47s):

Going inside, when they're there, start roasting this, this fattened calf, though, everybody's starting to

celebrate there. They're playing some music parties going on. The older brother is out in the field,

3 (31m 57s):

Pouting, angry. I'm not going in there.

1 (32m 5s):

I've been here this whole time, doing what I'm supposed to do. I've been the good son. I've been obedient to my father. I've been righteous. I've been obedient to my God. I haven't left him.

3 (32m 17s):

He's angry

1 (32m 18s):

Because the father has never thrown a party for him.

3 (32m 24s):

The father,

1 (32m 25s):

It goes out to him in the field. He says in verse 31, my son, the father said, you are always with me and everything I have is yours,

3 (32m 38s):

But we had celebrate and be

1 (32m 40s):

Glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive. Again. He was lost and is found. And that's the end of the story. What's really interesting. Here is the fathers out in the field, pleading with the older brother to do the exact same thing. But the younger brother come home, come inside. He would still get to take part in the celebration, just like the younger brother, right? He would get to eat some of the fattened calf and have a grand grand old time. And as young, this older brother has been able to be with the father the whole time, have a relationship, have fun, or have all the inheritance. They're eating good. Not having to worry about what the pigs are eating. Okay? This older brothers had everything the whole time, but he's out there in the field, not wanting to go in.

1 (33m 24s):

Do you know why? Cause he is just as lost as the younger brother. He doesn't even realize it. And his self-righteousness and pride. He thinks he has it all together. At least I'm not like that prodigal son of yours, but the father goes out to him with the same invitation. Doesn't he come home. Come on in. I love you. You

are my some it's really interesting at the very beginning of this chapter, we're told the audience that Jesus had as he taught this one parable in these three stories skipped over it. But I want you to look at this in verse one.

1 (34m 7s):

It says now, now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. The tax collectors were the rich centers and the centers where the poor sinners, okay? These are the bad dudes. Everybody knew they were lost. They knew they were lost. And here they are talking to Jesus. You should throw a party for this. You should celebrate. You should be excited. Verse two, but the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, the religious people that have been faithful, going to church, reading their Bible, doing all the things they were supposed to do, honoring their father and mother muttered. This man welcomes sinners and eats with them. So Jesus was talking to both of these audiences that day he was talking and the sinners come home. The father's waiting for you.

1 (34m 46s):

You're lost and you can be found and we'll throw a party. There's grace for you and forgiveness and mercy come home. You're part of it. But he had to talk to the religious people to the older brothers in the crowd. You think you're found because of how good you've been living, but you are just as lost Jesus. The saying, and still the invitation remains come home, come home, repent of your pride and find a grace that is found only in our father in heaven. Come home Jesus saying, because there are a lot of us here who have grown up in church that you've done what you're supposed to do.

1 (35m 28s):

You've seen other people around you, legally sinful lives make bad decisions. And you're looking down your noses at them while you are just as lost as them sinners, but still the father says, come home. I love you. You're my child. We're not told what the older brother did. Jesus kind of leaves it on a cliffhanger. They're still out in the field. And I think in the same way, Jesus was saying to the Pharisees, the religious leaders, are you going to come home? Are you going to celebrate that are, that the lost are found just like our father in heaven and the angels in heaven are celebrating or are you going to be out there grumbling? Because you've lived a better life than other people. How come they get the same reward that I get?

3 (36m 11s):

Jesus is saying to you, come home, come home.

1 (36m 16s):

One of the most interesting things about these three pair, these three stories, Jesus tells him this one. Parable is the difference of the last one. Seeing the first one and the first one, there was one loss sheet. So the shepherd left the 91 to seek. After the one loss sheet, when there was 10 coins, the woman looked everywhere. So she could find she sought after the one lost coin. But in the third story who sought after the

younger son, the prodigal son, no one is fascinating in that culture. A lot of scholars think that the father would have been old enough to the stage that he could not have gone out to seek after the lost son.

1 (37m 0s):

Do you know whose responsibility it was in the family structure in those days, the older brother, but the older brother is home the whole time, not caring about his younger brother. There's a, there's a story in was told in time magazine. It's a true story. About a, a man in Vietnam. His name was Lieutenant Daniel Dawson. He was in the army and his continece plane was shot down over the Vietnam jungle. And he was lost. So his older brother, Donald went out to seek after him. He sold a bunch of stuff and left his wife with \$20 so that he could go fly over to Vietnam.

1 (37m 43s):

He bought a bunch of army gear so that he could go out into the jungles just to look for his brother and find him. The Vietnamese even came up with a name that they called him, which basically meant the brother. And whenever they saw him, no one shot him. No one attacked him. They let him keep looking because he was the brother seeking after his younger brother. So what I think Jesus was saying to these tax collectors and sinners and what he was saying, especially to the Pharisees and the religious leaders. He was saying, no one is seeking after the lost, but I am see, Jesus was the one. Who's the true older brother who was the only begotten son of our father who left heaven, left everything good to spend time and eat with sinners and tax collectors.

1 (38m 33s):

He loved them. He spent time with them. He sought them. In fact, he said

4 (38m 36s):

His life mission statement in Luke 19:10 was to seek and save the last he came when nobody else would. He sought after us so much so that he went to the cross to die in our place. He would give anything that the lost would be found. That's what Jesus says he's willing to do for us. He's coming after us. You are lost. You are lost in your sin. You were lost in your self righteousness, but he's coming. He wants to put you on his shoulders, like the good shepherd and bring you home. Come home. He's saying repent today. You'll be welcomed into the father's house.

4 (39m 18s):

You are son or daughter of the King. So wherever you are today, I'm telling you to come home. And I'm also challenging us to, because this means as individuals and as a church, we need to seek the loss too. And it means we need to celebrate when the lost are found, that that when we've had some 20 people over the last couple of months, except Jesus Christ, Lord and savior, and in four people baptized, we celebrate, right? We celebrate that. We're excited about that because the angels are celebrating and we celebrate too, no matter how awful and sinful their pasts are, we don't care how many stupid things that they jumped back into the

ditch. Again, like that dump sheet, we still love them and say, come home, come home.

4 (39m 59s):

That's what we do as a church. So we do as individuals because Jesus did that for us. So wherever you are today, I'm saying to you come home, would you please bow your heads with me, Lord God. I'm so grateful for this teaching this teaching of Jesus that is so contradictory and different than what our world says. What other ones? And say, you don't say work hard, prove yourself. And then I'll accept you. Accept us as we are. You say calm and Lord God, we come, we come as awful. Sinners who gotten lost, wandered away from the truth.

4 (40m 39s):

Even though we know better that we have lived in wasting away our time. And you still say, come to us. And others of us are the, like the older brother that we have been self-righteous and proud because we have been good kid. We have done the right thing that we didn't go straight. When other people did, we have been faithful and Lord God, would you help us to repent of our pride today and come to you, knowing that we are welcome home. Just as much as the younger brother is, look out, welcome us home right now and let us feel home. But it's feel home with you now with eyes closed. If you're here today and you've never been made Jesus, your Lord and savior, I don't care whether you're the younger brother or the older brother, your law, today's the day to be found.

4 (41m 29s):

So I want you to say this prayer repeating after me, and this is just a simple prayer to accept Jesus as your Lord and savior, and you will be welcome home. You are a child of the King. You are welcomed into his household. So what we're going to do is I'm going to say this prayer. And if you're already a believer, say this prayer out loud to give courage to someone who needs to say it for the first time. Please repeat after me. Dear father, I admit I'm a sinner. I'm lost. I need a savior. So I'm coming home. I receive your grace in faith. I declare Jesus is Lord.

4 (42m 11s):

Fill me with your spirit. Help me to follow you. And sir, now with eyes still closed, I still closed for just a second. You said that prayer for the first time you declared Jesus as your Lord and savior for the first time, would you please just slip your hand up in the air? Would you please put your hand in the air? Praise God, let us celebrate with those who have made the decision to follow Jesus. Praise God. The angels are rejoicing in heaven. And that's why we celebrate that. Go to ride.denver.com/follow fill out that form. We'd love to encourage you and help you. Maybe take your next step of baptism to go public with your faith and Lord God. I pray for all of us. The sinners in a self-righteous, the younger brothers, the older brothers, welcome us home.

4 (42m 53s):

Pull us to yourself, draw us yourself, because you sent your son Jesus to chase us down, to seek us and find us. And we're so grateful for that. And because that we worship you, that you Jesus have left the 99 to come after the one and we praise your name. Amen.