

Joy in Heaven

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, and the importance of seeking restoration and fellowship with God and others through godly sorrow and humility.

Duration: 1:04:16

Scripture: Luke 15:1-10, Luke 15:20, Luke 15:32

Topics: "Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses two parables spoken by Jesus. The first parable is about a prodigal son who returns home and is criticized by his older brother. The preacher emphasizes the importance of not judging others and instead seeking help and forgiveness. The second parable is about a woman who loses a silver coin and diligently searches for it until she finds it. The preacher highlights the joy and celebration that comes from finding something that was lost. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the need for grace, forgiveness, and the importance of not forsaking the church or the community of believers.

Transcript

Shall we pray? We ask you Lord Jesus to be with us. To us through your word. Touching our hearts.

Changing our lives. Amen. We find our text in Luke 15.

From verse 1. Until verse 10. Then all the tax collectors and sinners drew near to him to hear him. And the Pharisees and them complained saying, this man receives sinners and eats with them.

So he spoke this parable to them saying, which one of you having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them does not leave the 99 in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it. And when he has found it, lays it upon his shoulders. And when he comes home, he invites all his friends and neighbors and says, rejoice with me for I found my sheep which was lost.

And likewise I say to you there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 just persons who need no repenting. And what woman having silver coins and if she loses one does not light a lamp, sweep the house and search until she finds it. And when she has found it, she calls friends and neighbors together saying, rejoice with me for I have found the peace which I lost.

Likewise I say to you there is joy in the presence of angels of God over one sinner who repents. Here the Lord relates a parable to the crowds. A parable about the lost sheep and the shepherd and then a parable

about the lost coin.

And we need grace to fathom these parables properly. Looking carefully at why the Lord Jesus should speak in this manner. For not one word was in vain spoken by our Lord.

Then the Lord relates this parable, Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and loses one, Does not forsake the ninety-nine to go seeking after the one lost one? The one lost one? That's all. Until he finds it. Nothing about a desert or... Oh, in the wilderness.

In the wilderness. In the wilderness. This is to do with something on earth, For in heaven there is no wilderness.

So we need to pay careful attention to what the Lord is speaking about here, Because the Lord refers to the sheep being lost in the wilderness on earth. And then finding the sheep that he has sought, Calls and rejoices, calls all his friends, So that they would rejoice together with him. And then he says, I say unto you that in heaven there is much joy over the one sinner who is found on earth.

Now it says Jesus was in a certain place. The tax collectors, the scribes, O Pharisees, The Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, This man receives sinners and eats with them. When I read this matter, I was astonished at the joy and celebration there is in heaven over one sinner who repents.

It is amazing. And it says there were tax collectors and sinners. And when the Pharisees and the scribes came, They saw Jesus sitting down with them and eating with them.

And with sinners. Now, what type of person was a tax collector in that day? When the tax collectors and sinners came, They saw Jesus sitting down with them and eating with them. And when the Pharisees and the scribes came, They saw Jesus sitting down with them and eating with them.

The tax collectors in Jesus' days would stand along the road and tax people who moved from one area to another and whatever property they had on them. The government of the day was Rome. And the money went to the Roman government.

And so the tax collectors were in that department taxing the people and then sending it on to Rome. And so they would tax a whole lot of money and when they got the amount, would send it on to Rome. Nobody liked them.

For when they taxed a person, They would, for instance, if the cost was two rand, they would charge the person or tax them four rand or five rand. They were thieves. Charging more than the amount.

But though the Roman government required a certain amount and yes, the tax collectors would send it on to Rome, but they overcharged. They were scoundrels. As you know that even now, there are such people in this world.

And so you get those who charge money, but they charge more than is required. And they pass on what is meant for the government, but they pocket the rest. So they were certainly not liked by the people, known as being corrupt and thieves.

And the tax collectors were looked down upon, regarded as unrighteous and unfaithful with money. And so Jesus was sitting with them, for they wanted to hear Jesus. He also ate with them.

He would not eat with them, but he would eat with them. He would sit in his carriage and eat with them. He would eat 130, but he would eat 230.

person at the garage attendant who overcharges or a mechanic who overcharges should be 100, he charges 200. And the community disliked such people. And the sinners would have included those who divorce, who are adulterous, drunkards, blasphemers of God, evil people.

They were all categorized under this one name of being sinners, together with the tax collectors, all put into the same pot. Infamous for their wickedness and corruption, those who are bloodsuckers. If it speaks about tax collectors and sinners, it refers here to major sinners.

Fraudsters, addicts, people who live like dogs. Those were the ones who came to Jesus with huge sins. They sought out the Lord.

So these people looked for the Lord Jesus because they wanted help, they wanted the way of salvation. I those who lived among the graves, those who are addicts, those who lived in all manner of filth, and then there were those who said, what such people, this place is going to be defiled. Actually, a person who's in the darkness doesn't want to come to the light.

For they know that should their sins come to light, they will be punished. They will be experienced the hardships of the consequences of their sin. Remember? Remember the tax collector who came into church and standing there, beating his chest, he said, oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

And the Pharisee was standing there saying, oh God, I thank you that I'm not like that person. But the tax collector recognized he had a sense of and a conviction of his sinfulness before God. But other tax collectors and great sinners did not recognize their sin and their evil.

And so these self-righteous people said, we don't want to be associated with these evil tax collectors and sinners. We want nothing to do with them. And when the tax collectors came, when the Pharisees and the scribes came and they saw Jesus sitting with these people, they complained, criticizing him and saying, why does he eat with such people? Actually, no one is without sin and evil.

Jesus said, even if you're angry with your brother, you have murdered him. But now, you don't recognize your own evil, but another one who does the same thing, you have a sharp eye and you criticize him. Jesus said, he who looks lustfully after a woman has already committed adultery with her.

And so the people who were sitting with Jesus, eating with him, there was a reason for them coming to him. They wanted to hear him. He who is the light, they wanted to come to the light.

For they had a sense of their wickedness. They felt their evil and that they were bad people. They came to the Lord Jesus like that woman who came to the Lord, cleaning his feet with her tears and wiping with her hair.

Who was tired of her sins. Exhausted by her evil, having carried a heavy load. And had a sense of conviction and of remorse, a heavenly remorse about her evil.

Simon, who had actually been the one who invited Jesus to come and eat with him. He thought to himself and said to himself, what is this man supposed to be a prophet? Surely he should have realized that this is an evil woman. She is sexually immoral.

She runs around with the opposite sex. And so too, with these so-called righteous men who came seeing Jesus with the sinners, they had no sense of their own sin for they hid their sins. There is a remorse that is a godly remorse.

I don't know whether you have had that type of remorse, that godly remorse over your own sins and you draw near to Jesus because you know he can help you. Even though you have your own sins that you have hidden. But you see such people coming to Jesus and you look down on them.

And you get those who think and see themselves as being superior and better. Jesus answered them, if there is one who has a flock of a hundred sheep and loses one, will he not leave those 99 to go and seek out that lost sheep in the desert? Like the prodigal son. You see it's spoken here about sheep.

These are not outside things. You see, it can be that the true flock of the Lord Jesus Christ is the flock of sheep. His sheep who belong to him that after some time they begin to sin.

That is why we should be careful to examine ourselves often to see whether we are still on track or lest there should be something between us and him. Something which God is against us for. We might be in the position of the one who says in Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd and he leads me to green pastures.

But the problem is you might then leave those green pastures and head for the wilderness. Remember King David who was himself in those green pastures, but then Satan deceiving him, he went into evil, into that wilderness. He had been in those green pastures too, and God found him there and commissioned him and said, now Jonah, go to Nineveh to preach to them.

But Jonah, not listening, went into a ship going in the other direction. He almost died in it. Remember Peter who had been close to the presence of the Lord and then he still denied the Lord, but he had such remorse he cried and wept.

That is why I say even if we are his sheep, we should be ever so careful asking the Lord to protect us, seeking him lest there should be anything in between watching and praying. Lest something come upon us which came upon them. Lest something come upon us which has come upon them.

Lest something come upon us which has come upon them. Then we develop an attitude like the older brother of the prodigal son who when he came back criticized, he actually found fault with God saying he has fallen so low. How can he be received back again? Lest we drift and we become like them, those who criticize the Lord because such sinners and they held it against these sinners who came to the Lord, not seeing the log in their own eyes.

But these came to Jesus wanting to hear him coming to his light, they sought help, they wanted to be rescued from the things that were troubling them. But now let me pass on to the second parable. He says there was a woman, a woman who had a silver coin.

And so on that money you would have found the imprint of the king or queen. One could say that there is the imprint of the Lord Jesus stamped upon her. Which she then lost.

No wonder the Lord Jesus should warn us to watch and pray, lest we should lose what we have. She lost her silver coin. A piteous thing though if a child of God loses that which he had.

We might say, well who was this woman? She represents the church of the saints, the church of Christ. Often through the Bible and also right through to revelations, the church of Christ is illustrated with a woman. And the church of Christ illustrated as the bride.

So often in the Bible we find that a woman is the illustration of the church of God. It is you then, you who are a member of the church of Christ. Be very careful lest you should lose and turn aside and leave the church.

Going your way, losing that silver piece which has that imprint of Jesus. Many there are that forsake the church of Christ, the genuine church of Christ. But have a look at where they end, at where you will end.

Why would a person leave the church of the saints? Is it that you seek the things of this world? What can you get out of this world? There is no joy, there is no real happiness, there is no reward. You just receive sorrow. Leave the church of Christ, you end up like the prodigal son in the pigsty eating its food.

If you leave the church of Christ, what happens to you when you die? Just behold what terrible, painful death it is of the one who has turned aside. Leaving the church of the saints, which is the church of Christ, and goes into the world. What is he looking for in the world? Can the world save him? And now that you follow Satan, can he provide you forgiveness of sins? Can he rescue you, redeem you out of evil? Can he save you, Satan? Remember when you first came to the Lord, what joy you had, that joy of salvation.

But what happens to you now if you turn aside and follow the devil? Remember the sweet fellowship of the saints when you could share with other children of God, and it was so wonderful. Now that you've gone into the world, what can the world offer you? It is foolishness to forsake the church of Christ, to leave the saints and go into the world, for you will finally have to say, oh, I was foolish, I got lost. This woman lost her silver coin.

She was so anxious about it. She swept in every direction. She looked behind cupboards, under beds, seeking that which she had lost.

But fortunately, at the end, she found that which she had lost. Then she turned, went to her friends, and said, come, rejoice with me over the coin, over that which was lost, and I have found it. If you backslide, you go and you drift so far, you might seek after it, you might not find the way back again.

You might seek that first joy, the fellowship of the saints, where you had sweet fellowship together, where you had a good fellowship. I know a person who told me face-to-face that the time that was the most wonderful time was when he was still together with the saints. Do not part.

Do not part from that heavenly woman, losing that glory, that joy, losing that happiness, that joy. When the Pharisees came, seeing Jesus sitting with sinners, they were very critical of him. And yet Jesus came for that very thing, to find what was lost.

For they had come to hear his words. These sinners had come to hear that and to find that which they had lost. What is heartbreaking, though, is this, that there are hypocrites, Pharisees, who make as if nothing has gone wrong.

They pretend that there's no problem at all with them. They act very righteously. They say, well, don't we still go to church? Don't we still tithe? Aren't we still happy at times? We sing the choruses, but still they have lost something.

Let each child of God here diligently seek out whether they have maybe lost something, that first love, whether it is still there. The joy you had, the joy you had when you could read the Bible, when you could witness, but it's gone. But today, you see yourself as just fine, and you say, I'm not like that person.

You accuse another person of being a thief, but don't realize that before God, he calls you a thief. You see another person as a murderer, yet you too are a murderer. Let each one examine himself today.

Am I bringing joy to the heavenly hosts? I read my Bible this morning. I took the Zulu one. And I read with great joy, as I read about the one who had been lost, and then who had been found, and I said, oh, so there's such joy over him.

May it be that if there is one in the church of Christ that has fallen into this condition where they are lost, that we would pray for such a person, seek him out to find him and her. Is David Kidd here? There you are, just stand up that they see who David Kidd is. That's David Kidd.

We spoke these days. And he shared with me the burden of all those that have left the church. He said to me, what can we do to reach out, to reach to those people, to win them? Look at the joy we have over him.

He was lost for such a long time. But how we rejoiced when he was found. And greater joy still in heaven over those that are lost.

I said in the beginning, we've got to understand this correctly. If you carry on with your sin, and you blind to it, and you carry on sinning, there's no joy, not in this world and in the world to come. I'm talking about godly sorrow and remorse because of your failure.

Not that you say, oh, I'm okay, I'm all right. Not that you say, oh, I'm fine, I'm getting along okay. That person is the problem.

But in heaven's eyes, you are the trouble. I would be glad if these few words would bring about much joy in heaven over you. Bringing joy even here on earth.

For remember in these parables, the person went to their friends and they rejoiced. And in heaven, there was joy. Woe to us if we have relatives, children who are lost, yet we don't see it.

Heaven sees it, but we don't. Let us pray for ourselves that the Lord would help us so that there would be much joy in heaven. Let us bow our heads and pray.

Be merciful to us, Lord, so that we would have eyes to see and ears to hear that which you are saying. So that we would bring about much joy on this earth and in heaven. And not be like the Pharisees and Sadducees and them who saw themselves as being righteous, and yet they were the sons of perdition.

Amen.

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