

Great Pictures of God

The God who loves **Luke 15:1-32**

"I do not believe in God" What do we say in response?

Ask – who is this God you do not believe in?

Often the answer reveals a false understanding of God

The occasion - Luke 15:2 Pharisees and religion teachers complained

That Jesus associated and even ate with sinful people

The problem was their view of God

The Answer - 3 parables of that which is lost

Lost Sheep - foolishly wandered away - Shepherd sought and found 3-7

Lost Coin - carelessly handled - Light a lamp, sought and found 8-10

Lost Sons - one rebellious and one self-righteous - only one found 11-32

Lost Rebellious Son

I. Rebellion **11-24**

A. Lawful but not morally right

B. Left all God had provided

C. Lost all he had

II. Repentance

A. Came to his senses Changed his mind - repentance

B. Committed to return Laid aside pride and rights

C. Confessed Sinned against and father / Not worthy to be son

III. Rejoicing

A. Anticipation -Saw him from afar - recognized his heart

Ran to him - embraced and kissed him

B. Acceptance - Heard his word and his heart

Lost Religious Son

I. Picture of Older Son

A. Marked Characteristics

B. Misguided Confidence

C. Miserable Condition

1. Pride – I have **never** failed to obey

2. Self-pity – you **never** gave me

3. Jealousy – he got fattened calf

– I did not get even a young goat

II. Problems of Older Son

A. Deep anger – refused to enter into the celebration

B. Self-righteousness - condemning his brother

C. Lack of compassion

D. Disrespect for the father

Picture of the loving Father

A. Compassion

A love that waited and never forgot – younger son

A love that went out and pleaded - older

B. Charity (love)

Assured him of his presence and restored him– younger son

Reminded him of his privileges – older son

C. Care without shame

Ran to meet dirty stinking son – younger son

When out and pleaded with – older son

D. Celebration

Explained the reasons, Dead has come to life - Lost is found

Offered for him to join the celebration

Signs of a faulty view of God

Desire to earn God's favor

Nothing we can do will make Him love us more

Nothing we can do will stop His love for us

Deep anger – Against God ultimately for our situation

Joyless obedience – Drudgery to practice Christian disciplines

- No joy in worship

Lack of compassion for others - No concern for the lost of the world

Lack of assurance in our relation to the father –

No sense of His presence, no concern with pleasing Him

What to do?

Repent of sins of pride and self-righteousness

Acts 20:21 I have had one message for Jews and Greeks alike—the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.

Seek a renewed relationship with the Father

Deuteronomy 4:29 but if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Rejoice in being a child of God

Romans 8:15-16 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.