

How Many Times Do I Have To Tell You? Luke 15

How often have us parents/grandparents used the line with our children...

- "How many times do I have to tell you..." or
- "I'm going to count to 3. 1...2...3..."

Having to say these words and repeat ourselves can be very frustrating, but sometimes it is the only way to show how important what is being said truly is.

This is what Jesus had to do here in Luke 15, in addressing the Pharisees & scribes in their grumblings about Jesus receiving & eating with sinners!

Jesus is the very manifestation of God, so receiving sinners & restoring them back into that covenant relationship with the Father is His primary purpose!

1 Timothy 1:15, Luke 19:10, John 6:38-40

However, receiving sinners is not always the priority of the Church!

Too often we lose the real reason we exist as "the Church" in the first place.

Whenever we start to think that we are any different/better than other sinners, we deceive ourselves, and lose sight of our purpose in this world!

The fact that God receives us in our sin, ought to lead us to seek out other fallen sinners & rejoice when they repent & are brought into the fold of God as well!

This is what Jesus taught, what He modeled, who He is, as well as what He expects from us as those who bear His name & join in His mission in this world!

This one parable, spoken 3 times in 3 different ways, is Jesus' way of saying "How many times do I have to tell you this? This is why I came!"

- 1) If you are a shepherd and you lost a sheep, what would you do? You would search for it until you found it, and then you would rejoice!

After Jesus gave this parable, He received no response from the Pharisees & scribes. Why? Did they not understand or simply not like His analogy?

Maybe they thought, "Sheep are not like these sinners! Sheep are dumb, they wander off out of ignorance. Sheep have an excuse – these tax collectors & sinners know better & their actions can't just be overlooked!"

Do we ever think this way? Do we ever hold other people to a higher moral standard than we would ever want God, or others, to hold us to?

Maybe their focus (& ours too), is too often on the sinner & his/her sin & not enough on God, and who He truly is. Maybe that's why Jesus gives the parable again but this time using a different analogy.

- 2) If a woman who has 10 silver coins, which was an outward display of the covenant relationship of marriage between her & her husband, loses one what would she do? She would "light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it." She too would then rejoice with friends!

In Jesus' 2nd analogy, He speaks of an inanimate object to show that it is not the actions of the lost that matters most, but the actions of the possessor!

If all the focus is on what's lost, & not on the One who is doing the seeking, then they/we will never understand the reason for Jesus' actions!

Do we ever lose sight of God and His amazing grace simply because we are too focused on "those sinners" around us and what their actions deserve?

God has entered into a covenant relationship with His people, and He will not allow His reputation as a covenant making/keeping God be questioned!

What Jesus is doing here with these tax collectors and sinners is what God does with each one of us. He takes people who are unable to find Him on their own, and He does the finding! We are all in the same boat of need!

Still the Pharisees say nothing! Why? Maybe now they're thinking "If that is the way it is, then why would anyone be held responsible for their actions?" Jesus repeats the parable once more with yet a 3rd analogy for clarity!

- 3) A father has 2 sons & the younger one chooses to demand his inheritance and then squanders it all away. There were real consequences, but those consequences still did not include rejection from his father upon his return.

If there's anyone who should reject this son, it's the father, but the father's response leaves no credible reason for anyone else to respond differently!

But the older brother still chooses not to accept the return of the younger. Can you guess who the older brother represents in this Jesus story?

But the Pharisees/scribes still say nothing, just as the older brother said Nothing at the conclusion of the story! Did the older son ever go in & receive the younger? We don't know! Did the Pharisees ever change their view of sinners? Only God knows!

The Question is, "Who will we be in Jesus' story?"

How Many Times Do I Have To Tell You? Luke 15

How often have us parents/grandparents used the line with our children...

- "How many times do I have to tell you..." or
- "I'm going to count to 3. 1...2...3..."

Having to say these words & _____ ourselves can be very frustrating, but sometimes it is the only way to show how important what is being said truly is.

This is what Jesus had to do here in Luke 15, in addressing the Pharisees & scribes in their grumblings about Jesus receiving & eating with sinners!

Jesus is the very manifestation of God, so receiving sinners & restoring them back into that covenant relationship with the Father is His _____

1 Timothy 1:15, Luke 19:10, John 6:38-40

However, receiving sinners is not always the priority of the _____!
Too often we lose the real reason we exist as "the Church" in the first place.

Whenever we start to think that we are any different/better than other sinners, we deceive ourselves, and lose sight of our purpose in this world!

The fact that God _____ us in our sin, ought to lead us to seek out other fallen sinners & rejoice when they repent & are brought into the fold of God as well!

This is what Jesus taught, what He modeled, who He is, as well as what He expects from us as those who bear His name & join in _____ in this world!

This one parable, spoken 3 times in 3 different ways, is Jesus' way of saying "How many times do I have to tell you this? This is why I came!"

- 4) If you are a shepherd and you lost a sheep, what would you do? You would search for it until you found it, and then you would rejoice!

After Jesus gave this parable, He received _____ from the Pharisees & scribes. Why? Did they not understand or simply not like His analogy?

Maybe they thought, "Sheep are not like these sinners! Sheep are dumb, they wander off out of ignorance. Sheep have an excuse – these tax collectors & sinners know better & their actions can't just be overlooked!"

Do we ever think this way? Do we ever hold other people to a higher moral _____ than we would ever want God, or others, to hold us to?

Maybe their focus (& ours too), is too often on the sinner & his/her sin & not enough on God, and who He truly is. Maybe that's why Jesus gives the parable again but this time using a different analogy.

- 5) If a woman who has 10 silver coins, which was an outward display of the covenant relationship of marriage between her & her husband, loses one what would she do? She would "**light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it.**" She too would then rejoice with friends!

In Jesus' 2nd analogy, He speaks of an _____ object to show that it is not the actions of the lost that matters most, but the actions of the possessor!

If all the focus is on what's lost, & not on the One who is doing the seeking, then they/we will never understand the reason for Jesus' actions!

Do we ever lose sight of God and His _____ simply because we are too focused on "those sinners" around us and what their actions deserve?

God has entered into a covenant relationship with His people, and He will not allow His reputation as a covenant making/keeping God be questioned!

What Jesus is doing here with these tax collectors and sinners is what God does with each one of us. He takes people who are unable to find Him on their own, and He does _____! We are all in the same boat of need!

Still the Pharisees say nothing! Why? Maybe now they're thinking "*If that is the way it is, then why would anyone be held responsible for their actions?*" Jesus repeats the parable once more with yet a 3rd analogy for clarity!

- 6) A father has 2 sons & the younger one chooses to demand his inheritance and then squanders it all away. There were real consequences, but those consequences still did not include _____ from his father upon his return.

If there's anyone who should reject this son, it's the father, but the father's response leaves no credible reason for anyone else to respond differently!

But the older brother still chooses _____ the return of the younger. Can you guess who the older brother represents in this Jesus story?

But the Pharisees/scribes still say nothing, just as the older brother said Nothing at the conclusion of the story! Did the older son ever go in & receive the younger? We don't know! Did the Pharisees ever change their view of sinners? Only God knows!

The Question is, "Who will we be in _____?"