

REASONS FOR BEING LOST

By Jerry L. Henderson

Have you ever been lost? If you have then you can probably discover a reason for being lost, if you look hard enough and are honest with yourself. This same thing is true in the spiritual realm. If a person is lost there is a reason for them being lost. In Luke 15:3-24 Jesus relates three parables that illustrate three different reasons for individuals being lost.

In the first parable about the lost sheep (3-7) one is lost as a result of ignorance. Anyone who has had any dealings with sheep will tell you that sheep are prone to wander off and not be able to find their way back, someone has to find them. They, in fact, may not be very far from the flock, yet they simply do not know how to get back. Many today are ignorant of the fact that they are lost. It is our responsibility to go and find them and bring them back to safety. This parable also shows us the value of one lost individual. Remember, Jesus said a soul is worth more than all the world Matt 16:26.

A look at the next parable (8-10) will show an item lost by being mislaid. This coin did not leave on its own, it had help. Thousands of people are, today, being led astray by preachers, elders, teachers and others who claim to be members of the Lord's church, not counting those being led astray through denominationalism. Paul warned the Colossians to "beware" of being spoiled or led away through various means Col 2:8. Yes, we can be led into error and be just as lost as the individual that led us astray. Note again, the diligence which was displayed in the search for the lost item. This should illustrate to us again our responsibility in searching for those who are lost.

Now as we take a look at the last parable in this chapter (11-24) we are made to realize that one can be lost deliberately. Here is one who intended to have his own way no matter what anyone said. He knowingly and willingly left the place of safety because of his own fleshly desires, like Demas in 2Tim 4:10. Many times today we see this same attitude demonstrated by those who are children of God. They simply decide to fulfill their own fleshly desires and so they forsake the teachings of Jesus Christ, which is the place of safety. Note, in this case, no one went to find the lost person. There was no use in going, he knew he was lost, therefore what could anyone say to bring him back. The text says: "He came to himself," that is, he realized his lost condition and returned to the place of safety. He knew the way home, but before he could return he had to humble himself and decide to do his father's will instead of his. Certainly, God doesn't want anyone to be lost 2Pet 3:9. But if one deliberately leaves, then they will have to decide to come back to the place of safety. There is nothing else left to offer them, since they have rejected the only place of safety there is. This is what is described in Heb 6:4-6.

If you are lost, it is a result of one of these three reasons. If you are lost through ignorance, there are many Christians who are willing to help you find your way back to the Lord. If you are lost because you have been misled by others, please stop listening to them and begin to listen to the Lord and those who are faithfully serving Him. If you are lost deliberately, many Christians are praying that you will realize where you are and that you will "come to yourself" and decide to return to the Father and submit yourself to His will.

I can think of no better time than right now, when we are about to begin a new year, for one to examine their life and see if they are faithfully serving the Lord. If you find that you are lost, then resolve in your heart to return to the Lord and through his providence He will provide the help you need to return to Him.