

MAN'S CONDITION IN A SINGLE WORD - LOST!

Luke 15:1-24

Introduction: The one word Jesus chose to describe the condition of every person in this world who has not been born again and washed in His blood is L O S T. Jesus meant every person. It matters not who you are, nor what your background is. Whether a "pastor" or "deacon" or Sunday School "teacher," if you have not been born again and washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, you are lost. One may be faithful to the church, tithed, be deeply religious, yet without Jesus Christ, one is still lost.

There is a vast difference between religion and salvation. People everywhere are lost without Jesus Christ yet people do not believe it. Most church members do not believe it. Most believe that if they are good, they will somehow go to heaven. Ask people what kind of people go to heaven and they will tell you, "good people." God says differently. God says only "saved" people go to heaven. *"...for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.."* *"...There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one..."*

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "LOST?"

1. It means that all are under condemnation.

- It means that that person has not been born again and is even now under condemnation.

"He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God..."

- It is an awful thing for a person to be condemned to a physical death by our courts, how much more awful for a soul to be condemned to hell.

2. It means that all are under the wrath of God.

- What does it mean to be lost? It means that every person who has not been saved is even now under the wrath of God. *"..He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him..."*

- *"...And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace..."* *"...He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.:"*

3. It means that all are under the curse of God.

- What does it mean to be lost? It means that even now, this very moment, the soul is under the curse of God. *"...For it is written, cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them..."*

- Every living soul today without salvation in Jesus Christ is even this moment under the curse of God.

II. THREE REASONS WHY ALL ARE LOST WHO ARE WITHOUT JESUS CHRIST

1. People are lost because of what they are.
 - Why are people lost? Many think that a person is lost only if he/she does certain wicked, ungodly things.
 - People are lost because of what they are. God's Word teaches that we are all by nature the children of wrath.
 - People are lost because of what they are. People are fallen creatures, sinners by nature, aliens to God, strangers to grace, without God, without hope.
 - This is the condition of the world today.

2. People are lost because they have all sinned.
 - People are lost because of what they have done.
 - Every person in this world is a sinner and in the heart knows it.
 - Who would dare stand and say that he/she has never sinned?
 - If one would not stand before another and say that he/she had never sinned, who would then dare stand before God and say that?
 - We are sinners and we know it. There is no use to try to dodge it or try to deny it or try to hide behind the hypocrites in churches.
 - People are in sin and know it. Sinners by nature, sinners by choice and by practice.

3. People are lost because of what they have not done.
 - **"...He that believeth not is condemned already..."**
 - Not because of what one has done but **"...because he/she hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God..."**
 - Paul tells that the judgment and vengeance of God will come upon those that know not God and that obey not the gospel.
 - People are lost because they have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. THREE REASONS WHY PEOPLE GO TO HELL

1. People are lost because of their heedlessness.
 - Jesus' parable about the lost sheep well describes people.
 - Not on purpose did the one sheep become lost but because of thoughtlessness and carelessness it became separated from the rest of the flock.
 - People are on their way to hell, fully intending on becoming a Christian some day.
 - Hell has countless souls already in it who intended to go to get right one day and go to heaven.
 - Jesus' little wandering sheep saw a patch of grass over there, and then another one a bit farther away, and so on until it became separated from the rest of the flock.
 - The same with people. "What harm is in my having a little fun?" Little by little people go farther and farther from what is right and good until the first thing they know, they are by themselves, lost, separated from the Shepherd.
 - There is no one who ever intended to go bad. It happened little by little.
 - No one ever intended to turn his/her back on God, but it happened, bit by bit.

- No one ever went to Hell all at once but it was through carelessness, heedlessness and thoughtlessness.
 - Putting things off is what send most people to Hell.
2. People go to Hell through the fault of someone else.
 - Jesus told of a woman who lost a coin. The coin didn't lose itself.
 - Children are lost because their parents never told them about Jesus or because of their example which was worldly, and godless.
 - How many parents are responsible for the damnation of their children?
 - People follow the example of those they admire.
 - People will go to hell stumbling over hypocritical church members. Church members in name only who were watched, imitated, and admired by the unbelievers, thinking if they acted like the church member, all would be well.
 - Christian, be sure to act like you are supposed to for there is someone watching you and wanting to be just like you.
 3. People deliberately want to try out the world and end up in Hell.
 - Jesus told a story about a young man who left his family to go see the world and became entangled and lost everything but eventually made his way back home.
 - *"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap..."*
 - Satan offers to every person what he offered to that prodigal son but hides what the end turns out to be, disaster, ruin, brokenness, separation, and eventually Hell.
 - The world is very inviting and it seems natural for every person to want all the world has to offer but always the end of what the world has is disaster and Hell.

CONCLUSION: THERE IS A WAY BACK

1. The wayward, prodigal son tried the world and ended up losing everything and began to think of what he had left behind and began to want to go back.
 - People cannot wish themselves into heaven.
2. The prodigal son realized what he needed to do so he made up his mind to leave where he was and go back home. He got up and made his way back toward his home.
 - Here is the example for people who realize they need to make a change. Make that change!
3. People cannot wish themselves into being saved. They must do what the prodigal did, do what they know they need to do Get up, start out, then the Holy Spirit will step in and direct in the right direction.
4. The father of the wayward son was watching and when he saw his son coming home, he ran out to meet him. This is what God the Father does. He watches and when a wayward, lost child starts toward Him, He rushes out to meet that wayward person.
5. People are lost. Jesus Christ is their only hope of escaping Hell. They must turn to Him.