

WHAT IS BEING "LOST?"

Luke 15:1-24

Introduction: Two friends went fishing late one afternoon and planned to do some night fishing on a small lake that had many trees, snags and bushes. They fished on into the night and then decided it was time to go home. They paddled around for a bit but nothing looked familiar, all landmarks seemed to have disappeared, they were lost. Finally they went to the bank, tied up their boat and walked up the way until they found a road and followed the road until they saw the boat dock, then they knew where they were. They went back to the boat and quickly paddled back to the boat dock. The two came to realize that they were lost, that they had to do something about it, looked for the way, found it and made their way back.

Jesus gave many parables but these three in the text have one thing in common - something was LOST - a sheep, a coin, a son. Jesus used the word - "lost" TO DESCRIBE every person on earth who has not accepted Him as Savior and Lord. Every person, no matter the background, position, race, male or female, young or old, every human being who has not been born again, washed in the blood of Jesus is lost.

Parents teach their children that if they are bad, the "boogie" man will get them and if they are good, they will be "angels" someday. Ask people what kind of people go to heaven and they quickly tell you that it is "good people." NO, NO, only saved people go to heaven.

"...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 IS INVOLVED IN BEING "LOST?"

1. All who are lost are under condemnation. Every person who has not accepted Jesus as Savior is condemned to Hell. *"...He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God..."*
 - "Condemned" is a legal term that means that the case has already come to trial, the evidence is in and the sentence has already been passed.
 - It is one terrible thing for a person to lose his/her physical life, but so much more terrible for a person to lose his/her soul as well.
2. All who are lost are under the wrath of God. Every person who has not accepted Jesus as Savior 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..."*
3. All who are lost are under the curse of God. Being lost means that even now, this very moment, one's 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 soul that is living today without salvation in Jesus Christ is under the curse of God.

II. WHY ARE PEOPLE LOST?

1. People are lost because of what they are. Many think that a person is lost only if he/she does wicked, ungodly things, but people are lost because of what they are and God's Word teaches that ALL OF US ARE BY NATURE, THE CHILDREN OF WRATH.

- People are lost because of what they are - fallen creatures, sinners by nature, aliens to God, strangers to grace, without God, without hope.
2. People are lost because they have sinned. Lost because of what has been done. Every person in this world is a sinner and knows it. There is not a living person who would dare stand before God and declare that he/she has never sinned. WE are sinners by nature, by choice and by practice.
 3. People are lost because of what they have NOT done. *"...He that believeth not is condemned already..."* They have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God - Jesus.
 - Paul reminds us 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. WHY PEOPLE GO TO HELL

1. People go to hell because of their heedlessness. Jesus spoke of sheep getting lost. It is not the nature of sheep to become lost, but because of thoughtlessness, carelessness, some sheep became separated from the rest of the flock.
 - The world is full of people who are on their way to Hell, fully intending to become a Christian someday. Hell will be full of people who had "good intentions."
 - The little sheep saw a patch of grass over here, then over there, then a bit further and so on. People are like that. No harm in this or that, and little by little, things take them further and further away and time passes.
 - Heedlessness, carelessness, thoughtlessness, putting things off are why most people are going to Hell.
2. People go to hell because of someone else.
 - The parable of the lost coin speaks of "someone" losing the coin, someone caused the coin to get misplaced.
 - How many are in hell because of their parents? Friends? Will your children, friends spend eternity in Hell because of your example, role model?
 - How many are "religious" but still lost?
 - How important are your children and friends? How much are their souls worth?
 - Church members will be the cause of people being in hell because of the way they lived and others saw them and thought if a church member can do that, then it's alright for me.
 - If Church members acted and lived as they should, like Jesus, people would be going to heaven and not hell.
3. People go to hell because they deliberately decide to live recklessly and without regard to anything "religious."
 - The prodigal son decided to leave home and go out on his own, so he ended up broke, friendless, living with pigs. He reaped what he had sown. He made his choice.
 - The only thing at the end of Satan's roads are broken homes, broken bodies, broken hearts, crushed lives, blasted hopes and hell.
 - Do you know someone who has told you to leave them alone, to mind your own business when you tried to tell them about Jesus? They have made their choice of living - and eternity.

CONCLUSION:

1. There is a way back to God.
 - The prodigal son came to his senses, thought about things and decided to make a change, so he went back to be with his family.
 - The prodigal son realized he need to make a change then he got up and took action, left Satan and made the change.
 - The prodigal son's father had been waiting for him to come home and saw him coming and ran to meet him.

2. Put yourself in the place of the prodigal son if you are lost. Somebody is waiting for you, your Heavenly Father. He has His arms wide open for you, for anybody, for everybody to come to Him.
 - Put your faith/trust in Jesus Christ and leave the way you have been going, come away from that lost way of life into the way to eternal life with Jesus.