God’s Big Story: Finding the Lost

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| scripture focus |
| Luke 15 |

big picture

There are three parables in Luke 15, and they’re all about finding lost things: a lost sheep, a lost coin, and two lost sons (one who ran away from home and one who stayed). Jesus was responding to religious leaders who grumbled because Jesus welcomed “sinners” (like Zaccheus) and hung out with them. Jesus told them three stories that illustrate God’s heart of love for those who are lost: a love that is not passive but actively searches for, rescues, welcomes, and celebrates the return of each of God’s beloved children. This story isn’t about fairness. Instead, it’s about God’s overflowing grace and mercy which transform death to life.

|  | storybooks | bible readings |
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| read aloud | *Jesus Storybook Bible:* “Running Away”, p.272-279  *Favorite Parables:* “The Lost Sheep” p.6-31, “The Ten Silver Coins”, p.110-135 | Luke 15 |
| discuss/ ask | Why do you think the younger son left his home and decided he was better off away from his family? How have you deliberately chosen to go your own way, away from where you know you belong or what you know you should be doing?  The younger son thinks up a “deal” before he returns – a way that he can work for his father and earn his place as a servant. However, the father welcomes him as a beloved son and throws a party for him. Have you ever tried to be good enough so that somebody would like you or accept you?  What do you think the villagers thought as they saw the father racing towards the runaway son when he returned and embracing him? How do you think the son felt? Do you think there is anything you could do that would keep your parents from loving you? That would keep God from loving you?  Why was the older son so angry? Have you ever felt angry when you saw somebody getting something good that they didn’t deserve? What would you have said to the older son, if you had been there?  What do you think happened to the 99 sheep who were left behind when the shepherd went to look for the lost sheep? Did God care about them, as well? Why or why not? Do you feel more like the lost son/lost sheep, or the ones who never ran away?  Which is your favorite story – the lost sheep, the lost coin, or the lost son? Why? | |
| do together | Throw a party for your child(ren) – just because you love them! Serve up their favorite food and celebrate them, just as they are.  Hide a coin or a toy sheep and have your child search for it. Cheer and celebrate/ dance when they find it. | |