

# I Once Was Lost

Luke: All Things New



## Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



## Sermon Text

Luke 15:1-10



## Big Idea

All of our activity—busy as we are, diverse as it is—has these same basic goals at the bottom: I want to be valued; I want to be pursued; and I want to be celebrated. Our attempts to get these things apart from God lead us into all manner of sin and heartbreak. The surprise of the gospel is that such things are freely given to us by God in Christ.

### (1) He Values Me . . . though I've Stolen from Him

To be created in the image of God means that you were created, intended by God to be like a kid to Him, to be a part of His family, to be His child, His son or His daughter. That's why you are valuable to Him! It is not because of what you can do or give but because of who you are, because of who He's created you to be, because He's put His image on you and you are His child, lost or not. This is why He notices when, like a sheep, you've gone missing from the fold, or when like a coin, you've somehow slipped out of His pocket. At the end of the day His valuing of me says more about the measure of His love than it does about the measure of my worth. He gets into a relationship with me, and I don't bring a credit, I bring a debt, I don't bring assets, I bring liabilities. But He loves me all the same.

### (2) He Pursues Me . . . though I've Run from Him

We can forget in these first two parables that you and I are not just cute, helpless little sheep or precious, shiny silver coins. And we also might mistakenly think that this idea of God losing us has to do somehow with his own haphazardness, carelessness, or irresponsibility—like God is somehow pictured here as that person who's always misplacing his keys or wallet or whatever. No, the issue in our lostness is not that God is haphazard, or careless, or irresponsible but that man is rebellious. Again, the parable of the Prodigal Son will bring this out unmistakably. We are lost because we have left.

### (3) He Celebrates Me . . . though I've Crucified Him

It seems to me that this idea of repentance is often misunderstood. Sometimes we think of it only as this somber, backlashing sort of thing. It's sitting in the dirt and feeling bad about yourself. Other times we see it in this legalistic sort of way, where it is turning from this list of bad actions and pledging to do a different set of good actions. It's moving from immorality to morality or something. But these parable put repentance in its proper and glorious context. Do you want to know what these parables are saying repentance is? Repentance is receiving God's invitation to enter the party. It's turning from the domain of death towards that of life. It's opening the door to the family room of God. Does repentance involve sorrow for sin and things? Certainly. But that is only the start of what repentance is. While the tears that fall will be tinged with grief over the great wrongs you have committed against your Father, they will, at the same time, be rounded out with hope and joy as you perceive the great extent to which God has gone to make those wrongs right!

## Reflection Questions



- How would you explain the idea that God values us? What texts would you use? Why do you think this is important to understand? Do you feel like God values you? Why or why not?
- Read Zephaniah 3:17 once more. Do you believe that God is singing over you in Christ? What sorts of things result in your life when you don't? What about when you do?
- How would you define and describe repentance? How does this text potentially redefine it for you? What new nuances are given to it? Where are you in need of it?
- Read the parables again. What do find most encouraging? What do you find most convicting? Where do you see shadows of the cross and gospel?