

Week of March 25-31

## **LOST AND FOUND**

**Scripture Reading:** Read Luke chapter 19

This August will mark the sixteenth anniversary of an event I would prefer not to repeat. I took our oldest son to the county fair and somehow lost him. We were standing near the sky ride and when I turned to look at him he wasn't there! I frantically began searching for him all around the area but I couldn't find him anywhere. It's a parent's nightmare to be sure. A few minutes later, I heard a voice come over the public address system requesting that I come to the secretary's building. When I got there, my son looked up at me and the first line out of his mouth was something to the effect, "Daddy, you lost me." Fortunately, when he lost me, he had the presence of mind at four years of age to look for one of the fair officials to help him out. They did and we were reunited.

The gospel of Luke has a lot to say about lost things. You recall from chapter 15 that Jesus told parables about the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. In each case, the lost item was retrieved and there was great rejoicing.

In today's chapter reading, the idea of lost and found shows up again. In this case, the lost item was Zacchaeus, the tax collector. Jesus made a point to search him out and he found him up a tree. They had dinner together and the long and short of their conversation is that Zacchaeus experienced salvation. His transformed heart was evidenced by his willingness to give half his goods to the poor and to repay anyone he cheated by four times the amount. The account concludes with what could be the theme verse of Luke as Jesus declares: *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."* What a declaration! Jesus came for the express purpose of seeking out and saving lost souls.

If you're not a Christian today, then the Bible declares you are lost. You may not like this fact but that doesn't change the truthfulness of the statement. The Bible says that apart from Christ we are dead in our sins, under God's wrath, and destined for judgment. We are lost. The good news is that God has made a way to restore us to the Father. He sent his son Jesus to die in our place. It is this Jesus who has been searching for us...and for you. It's time to be found and no longer lost. It's time to be restored to the Father. It's time to experience God's marvelous gift of salvation.

When my son and I were reunited at the fair, I was so relieved. This pales in comparison, however to how the Father rejoices when lost sinners are restored to Him.

**Action Step:** If you're not a Christian, it's time to be found by Christ and acknowledge your sin in repentance, believe the gospel, and commit your life to Christ. If you're a Christian, rejoice that he has found you and become part of his search-and-rescue operation to find other lost souls.

**Prayer Focus:** Pray for an unsaved loved one today that they would be found by Jesus.

**Take-away:** *The Father launched the greatest search-and-rescue operation ever recorded when he sent Jesus to earth to find lost sinners.*