

03 – The Two Sons: which was lost? **Luke 15: 11-32**

Step 1: Link (back to the reason why)

We're reading Luke 15. In this chapter the Pharisees complained about Jesus' friends. Who were Jesus' friends - ? (... tax collectors¹ and sinners) What are "sinners" - ? (...) Sinners are the bad people. Good people stay away from sinners.

Does the Bible teach that there are good people and bad people -? (...) No, it doesn't. The Bible teaches that – who? – has sinned - ? (... All!) That's what we call the bad news of the Bible. That's like going to the doctor and he says that you have cancer. Not good news. Did the Pharisees think that they themselves were sinners - ? (...) No! They really were very good people. But the Bible teaches that ALL have sinned, so that means the Pharisees have sinned too. Jesus told three stories in Luke 15 to help the Pharisees understand.

The stories Jesus told were about being lost and found. What was lost in the first story - ? (... a sheep) How about in the second story - ? (... a coin) People usually think that the lost thing in the story means a sinner. But, is that true? These stories are the introduction to the third story. The third story will answer that question. The third story is very important. It is also very long. Let's get started.

Step 2: Background (not needed)

Step 3: Key Questions

- **Which son was the "sinner?"** (*the younger son*)
- **Which son did the father go look for?** (*the older son!*)

Step 4: Read Luke 15: 11-32

Step 5: Answer the questions

¹ Tax collectors were hated because they cheated people out of money. They collected taxes for the Romans, who had beaten Israel. But they collected more money than the taxes, and there was nothing the people could do – it was *shi-gata-ga-nai*.

Step 6: Talk about it

The younger son was the “sinner.” Was he lost - ? (. . . *yes, his father said he was lost*) But the younger son came back by himself.

The older son was the “good” son, the “Pharisee”. But the older son was the one that the father went looking for. The older son was like the sheep and the coin. He was also lost! But because he was “good” he didn’t realize that he was lost.

The man had two sons. They were both lost! One son was lost because he was bad. The other son was lost even though he was good. We’ll stop here because we’re going to spend a few more weeks on this important story.

Do you have any questions or comments?

(Don’t hesitate to answer questions that “give away” the conclusions of upcoming Bible times on this story. Repetition is great, both for English learning, and for having these Bible truths sink into hearts.)