

Sermon ~ Sunday, May 23, 2021 by Pastor D. Benoit

Text: Luke 15: 4

Title: "Only *One* Lost!"

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?"

So begins this matchless *parable* of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST.**"

What is the fuss about one, seeing the man had ninety-nine left? I wonder, if he had only *two* sheep, and one of them became lost, could *we* excuse his concern and trouble over the lost. But to lose *one* out of a hundred seems an insignificant loss. Yea, but that is how most of us think, but not **JESUS!**

Since this Pandemic, many have left "The Fold—The Church" in which they were nurtured in early life and have gone over *bleak mountains* and through *tangled brush* and find themselves in this exquisite *parable*; **The LORD JESUS** is on their track. **HE** cannot abide happily with the rest, while *one* sheep is liable to be torn by beasts of prey or caught away by eagles.

JESUS goes after them "*one by one*," till **HE** finds them (that *one*).

"Only *One* Lost!"

The immediate occasion of this *Parable* was to vindicate (clear up the *blame* and *suspicion*) of our **LORD'S** *conduct*, in associating with *outcasts*! The scribes and Pharisees were the unfriendly critics, and this *parable* was spoken v. 3, "unto them..." **JESUS** reminded them how **The SHEPHERD, The CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST** invariably, that is, in every case and on every occasion, always act... that is, *receiving, forgiving* and *restoring*, the wanderers.

JESUS likens wayward men and women, boy and girls to "*sheep*", a suggestive and tender figure. For no "*sheep*" goes intentionally astray. It just wanders thoughtlessly *on* and *on*. The absorption in the quest for food, more, want, lustfully, desiring, never having enough, is one of the causes. But "*sheep*" are always with their *heads down*, and seldom looking up, they wander *on* and *on*, far away from the safety of **The SHEPHERD—The Church, The Fold.**

Absorbed in the quest for more, for pleasure, for gold, the majority, of mankind just wander through life, hopelessly lost.

Back to the question, "Why make all that fuss about *one*? There were ninety-nine left! Behind such a question is a devastating thought. What about those 'large families?' (10, 12, 15 family members... Pop/Mom, they have children, the children have children and the children's children, have children...) The always have funerals. Some think, they have great lost, when one dies. Is that so?

If that is so, then the thought saddens and disturbs me, for I shall be only "a needle in a haystack when I die. (That is a false philosophy) For the size of **GOD'S Family** does not affect my *preciousness* to **HIM!**

What a comforting thought this is. Though **GOD** has “*infinite numbers*” of children (John the Apostle counted 144, 000, but then looked again and saw a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before The Thrones and before **The LAMB**, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands.” (Revelation 7: 9) **GOD cares** for each individual as if that individual was the only *one* in the whole wide-world.

This leads to another thought. It is the *greatest peculiarity* about our **CHRISTian** Faith, that is, **GOD** seeking man! Other *religions*, represent ‘*man seeking GOD,*’ which is not true. This is tragic yet true, **The SCRIPTURES** says, that “...there is none righteous, no, not one. No *one* is truly wise; no *one* is seeking GOD. *All* have turned away; *all* have become useless. No *one* does good, not a single *one.*” Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies. Snake venom drips from their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. They rush to commit murder. Destruction and misery always follow them. They don’t know where to find peace. They have no fear of **GOD** at all. (Romans 3: 10-18) Verse 22 goes on to say, “We are made right with **GOD** by placing our faith in **JESUS CHRIST**. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who they are. For *all* have sinned; we all fall short of **GOD’S glorious standard**. Yet **GOD**, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. **HE** did this through **CHRIST JESUS** when **HE** freed us from the penalty for our sins. For **GOD** presented **JESUS** as the sacrifice for *sin*. (Calvary!!!) We are made right with **GOD** when we believe that **JESUS** sacrificed **HIS Life**, shedding **HIS Blood**.”

Church apart from **G. R. A. C. E.**, no *one, none*, desires **GOD**. So when we find within us, longings for **GOD**, we know, it is proof, that **The HOLY SPIRIT of GOD** is at work. “No man, said **JESUS**, can come to **ME**, except **The FATHER** which hath sent **ME** draw him: and **I** will raise him up at the last day. (John 6: 44) “And **I**, if **I** be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto **ME**.” (John 12: 32) How helpless is the wandering sheep. Man, apart from Divine Aid, can never find his way back to **GOD**.

OH, but **The GOOD SHEPHERD**—goes after the one lost... **HE** seeks until **HE** finds it! OH, what *patience* and *perseverance*! And when **HE** finds it (**HE WHO** is **Omniscient**—**HE WHO** is **Omnipresent**) ... When **HE** finds it, **HE** layeth it on **HIS Shoulders** rejoicing—**The Shoulders** is the strongest part of man, teaching that all **The Strength of Omnipotence** is exerted on behalf of every found *one*, and that until “**HE bares us home...**”

Amazing GRACE—how sweet the sound—that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.
Twas GRACE that taught my heart to fear, and **GRACE** my fears relieved;
How precious did that **GRACE** appear, the hour I first believed!

“Only One Lost!”