



Tuesday: October 20, 2015

Lost Sheep

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

Luke 15:3-7

It may seem foolish for the shepherd to leave 99 sheep to go search for just one. But the shepherd knew that the 99 would be safe in the sheepfold, whereas the lost sheep was in danger. Because each sheep was of high value, the shepherd knew that it was worthwhile to search diligently for the lost one. God's love for the individual is so great that he seeks each one out and rejoices when her or she is found. Jesus associated with sinners (Luke 15:2) because he wanted to help the lost sheep-people considered beyond hope-the good news of God. Before you were a believer, God sought you; and he is still seeking those who are yet lost.

We may be able to understand a God who would forgive people who come to him asking for mercy. But a God who tenderly searches for sinners and then joyfully forgives them must possess an extraordinary love! This is the kind of love that prompted Jesus to come to earth to search for lost people and save them. This is the kind of extraordinary love that God has for you. **Jesus** concluded the story: "...There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

Prayer: *God, thank you for sending Jesus to search for me and find me when I was lost. As I begin this Built to Last journey I pray this focus sparks in me a passion for those around me who need to find and follow you.*