

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“They said of Jesus: ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’”

Luke 14

In the gospel of Luke today Jesus tells three stories about losing things. The first is about a shepherd losing one of his sheep. The second is about a woman losing some of her money. The third is about a father losing one of his sons. Responsibility. Resources. Relationships. As human beings we have all experienced loss in each of these areas. And when we lose something we are responsible for or something that we have saved for or a friendship or love for a particular person, it has a significant impact on us as a person. Jesus uses these common experiences to make a few points and to illustrate our understanding of what it is like in the kingdom of God.

The shepherd goes seeking that which is lost. Our God does that too. He sent his beloved Son to go looking for us—for each of us—in our waywardness. We have all experienced waywardness. We have all gone off on our own way at times and then lost our way. Jesus tells us that our God knows this and not only knows this but comes after us looking for us.

And when we lose some of our resources the Lord encourages us and helps us to look everywhere so that we will find what we have lost and recover what we have lost. And what if what we have lost is our innocence, or our integrity, or our sense of caring? He helps us to find these things again.

What about when we lose a loved one? Or a dear friend or when we lose ourselves? The Lord goes looking every day for us to show ourselves and as soon as we do He comes running down to us and hugs us and puts a ring on our finger and sandals on our feet and a cloak around our shoulders and he welcomes us home. Then he prepares a feast for us—and all of that before we ever even say we are sorry. He so wants us back. These are the points He makes in the stories he tells today. Can you dare to believe that this simple truth applies to you? That is the question of the week.