

## **“Are you happy others become Christians?”**

### **[Parable of the Lost Coin - Luke 15:8-10]**

Similar to the parable of the lost sheep is the parable of the lost coin. The main difference is that in the parable of the lost coin, the ratio is 1 in 10 whereas in the parable of the lost sheep it is 1 in 100. This means that the percentage of loss has gone up tenfold. The value of the lost coin would be more painful to the owner. This is more so if the lost item was of some special sentimental value that money cannot buy. This means that it is one of a kind.

To lose something of value within your own home is a common experience. You know it is there somewhere but not exactly where it can be found. You retrace your steps hoping against hope that you can recall where the precious item is. You know approximately when you last had it in your possession. You wreck the innermost recesses of your mind to recall where you last saw the item. However, all efforts are to no avail. You are angry with yourself. You chide yourself for being so forgetful and careless. But the more you search, the worse you feel because you cannot find it. Then when you finally find it after a long and exhausting search, the joy you feel is indescribable. You jump for joy and cannot wait to tell your loved ones that you have finally found your lost item. The joy they feel must be overwhelming too especially if they love you very much and felt your loss.

This parable deals with our reaction to a soul who comes to know Christ.

**The Elements of the Parable** – The ten coins represent something precious; the lost coin represents a lost soul; the woman who owns the ten coins represents God; the searching represents the manner in which God looks for the lost.

**The Explanation** – The woman was probably quite poor. This is seen in the house that she lived in, which probably had no windows but only a door. She lit only ONE candle. The floor was also dusty as she had to sweep the floor in her search. The ten pieces of silver were probably all she had. The value was not much in terms of monetary value. The Greek word is “drachma” which was superseded by the Roman denarius after the Romans conquered Palestine. One denarius was equivalent to a labourer’s daily wage. The value of her ten coins was equivalent to about 10 days of wages. But if the ten pieces of silver were all that she had, then to her, it was of immense value. To lose just one of these ten coins was not acceptable at all.

The parable seeks to answer the question of what a poor woman would do if she loses one of her ten coins. The parallel is: “what would God do if there is one lost sinner”?

Would not the woman light a candle? In those days there were no electricity or gas lights. Candles were all they had to light their homes. She would surely use all the means available to help her find her lost coin. She would spare no effort. She lights a candle to help her see into the dark corners of the house. She sweeps the house. This ensures that she checks

every nook and corner of the house. In case dust has covered the coin, sweeping would remove the dust. She seeks diligently, which means very carefully and thoroughly, every part of the house. All three verbs are in the present tense implying that the woman continues her search till she finds it. She would not give up. She knows the lost coin is in her house. There would be no rest till the coin is found!

When she finally found it, great joy filled her heart. She could not keep the joy to herself. She called all her friends and neighbours. The declaration was most logical, *“Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.”* The joy is an emphatic imperative. She wanted all who cared for her loss to rejoice with her.

**The Application** – Likewise, Jesus says to all hearers, *“there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”* Like the lost coin, sinners do not know that they are lost and covered in spiritual dirt and sin. Immorality, lies, lusts of the eyes and flesh and pride of life are heinous sins which sinners delight in. They clamour after material things motivated by these sins as if they are good and noble for them. *“The more they possess, the greater the success,”* is the ‘truth’ bandied around in the world today. Like the lost coin, these sinners are lost, covered in dirt and hidden in some dark corner of the world and do not know that they are lost.

But God knows when a sinner is lost. He searches him out with His gospel of salvation. He spares no effort to find him. He sent Jesus Christ His only begotten Son to die for him in order to save him. God accepted what Christ did on the cross by raising Him from the dead for his justification. Whatever it takes, the sinner must be found by His grace. He who hears the gospel is saved to the uttermost. **Romans 10:9-11**, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”* This is God’s guarantee.

Great joy is found in heaven. These are the “friends” of God who rejoice with Him when a sinner is saved and brought into His kingdom. The salvation of a lost soul is not a simple or laughing matter. Saints who are “the friends and neighbours” of God must rejoice when a sinner becomes a saint. God and the angels rejoice when a sinner is saved.

Why are some people so upset that sinners are saved? Could it be that they are not “friends” of God? The enemies of Christ were not happy when Christ ate with sinners and publicans. They murmured against Him for “dirtying” Himself by sitting at the same table to eat with them. Filled with their pride and sin they could not see the goodness of God in seeking out sinners to be saved through Christ Jesus.

If we rejoice when we find a lost coin, how much more should we do so when God finds a lost sinner! Do you rejoice?