



## **NEXT LEVEL HAPPINESS**

**Matthew 18:12-14**

- ***What would it take to make you and/or your family members happy?***
- **Some people think that having possessions, popularity, prestige or another person would make them happy, but that's not necessarily true.**
- *"God gives some people great wealth and honor and everything they could ever want, but then He doesn't give them the chance to enjoy these things. They die, and someone else ends up enjoying their wealth! This is all meaningless." (Ecclesiastes 6:2)*
- **One thing that would make most real Christians happy is seeing their friends and family members receive Jesus as their Savior or return to the Lord.**
- *"Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God." (Acts 16:33-34)*
- **In Matthew 18:12-14 Jesus is telling a Parable – a story told to make a certain spiritual point – in order to explain to us the joy that is experienced by individuals and by God when someone receives Jesus as their Savior or returns to the Lord.**
- ***What do we learn from Jesus' Parable of the Lost Sheep that will make us happier?***

***The Parable Of The "Lost Sheep" Reminds Us Of The:***

### **CONDITION OF LOST "SHEEP"**

- *"If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away . . ." (Matthew 18:12)*
- **The Bible teaches that people away from Christ are like "lost sheep."**
- *"Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls." (1 Peter 2:25)*
- *"All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God's path to follow our own." (Isaiah 53:6)*
- **Like sheep, when people don't have a close relationship with their "Shepherd" they make bad decisions and they face danger much of the time.**
- ***Why have I strayed away from the Lord at times in my life, and how has not being close to Jesus negatively affected me at times in my life?***

**The Parable Of The “Lost Sheep” Reminds Us Of The:  
COMPASSION OF OUR GOOD SHEPHERD**

- Jesus - *“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others on the hills and go out to search for the one that is lost?”* (Matthew 18:12)
- **The Bible tells us the Lord is the “good shepherd” who cares for His “sheep” and goes after “lost sheep” (people who don’t know Jesus or are away from Him).**
- Jesus – *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices His life for the sheep.”* (John 10:11)
- **What are some things that we need to know about our Good Shepherd?**
- **The Good Shepherd cares about all “sheep.”**
  - *“Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.”* (1 Peter 5:7)
  - **The Lord as our Good Shepherd wants to take care of the emotional, directional, critical, material and eternal needs of our lives (Psalm 23:1-6).**
- **The Good Shepherd searches for “lost sheep.”**
  - Jesus – *“The Son of Man came to seek and to save those who are lost.”* (Luke 19:10)
  - **Jesus was willing to leave the glory of Heaven and experience the rejection of humankind in order to help us become reconciled with God.**
  - *“Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but He died for sinners to bring you safely home to God.”* (1 Peter 3:18)
- **The Good Shepherd rescues “lost sheep.”**
  - *“And when he (the shepherd) has found it (the lost sheep), he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders.”* (Luke 15:5)
  - **When our Good Shepherd rescues us He saves us from spiritual death and depravity and a tragic destiny (Ephesians 2:1-7), He gives us abundant life on earth and eternal life in heaven (John 3:16, 10:10), and He secures us for all eternity.**
  - Jesus – *“My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from Me, for My Father has given them to Me, and He is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father’s hand.”* (John 10:27-29)
- **What do I most appreciate about what the Lord has done for me in my life?**

**The Parable Of The “Lost Sheep” Reminds Us Of The:  
COMMISSION OF GOD’S SAINTS**

- Jesus - *“In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father’s will that even one of these little ones should perish.”* (Matthew 18:14)
- **The Lord has called ALL CHRISTIANS to be involved in rescuing “lost sheep.”**
- Jesus – *“Go and make disciples . . . , baptizing them . . . and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”* (Matthew 28:19-20 NIV)
- Jesus – *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and will tell people about me everywhere.”* (Acts 1:8)

- We can be involved in rescuing “lost sheep” by: 1) Praying for them (Romans 10:1), 2) Living a godly life before them (Matthew 5:16), 3) Inviting them to join us for worship services and *Life Groups*, etc (John 1:40-42), 4) Serving them through our Church’s ministry, and 5) Sharing our faith with them (Acts 1:8)
- **Why are many Christians not more involved in reaching out to “lost” friends and family members?**
- 3 “lost sheep” in my life that I need to be reaching out and ministering to are:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

***The Parable Of The “Lost Sheep” Reminds Us Of The:***

**CELEBRATION OF GENUINE SALVATION**

- Jesus - *“And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he will rejoice over it more than over the ninety-nine that didn’t wander away!”* (Matthew 18:13)
- **When a person comes to faith in the Lord or comes back to the Lord, they have new joy in their lives.**
- Jesus - *“The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”* (John 10:10)
- Jesus - *“I have told you these things so that you will be filled with My joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!”* (John 15:11)
- **When someone returns to the Lord or is rescued by the Lord, they and their family members and friends experience much joy, as do the residents of Heaven.**
- Jesus – *“In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away!”* (Luke 15:7)
- **What steps do I need to take to implement the lessons from Jesus “Parable of the Lost Sheep” in my life?**