

LIFE ILLUSTRATED: The Runaway Pt.1

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- *“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them. 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. Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’” Luke 15:1-9*

A. The Getaway.

- *“Jesus continued: ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of your estate.’” Luke 15:11-12a*
- But in that day, a Middle Eastern dad would follow a thousand-year tradition of holding on to all of the land and the livestock and the belongings he’d acquired over a lifetime. Then just before he died, there would be a kind of ceremonial transfer of the bulk of it to the oldest son and then to the rest of the members of the family.
- There was no greater insult, no greater pain a son could inflict on his father because in the culture of that day what the son has basically said by asking for his inheritance now is – “Dad – I wish you were dead!”

B. The Giveaway.

- *“...So he divided his property between them.” Luke 15:12b*
- Not only does the father not have to do this, no father ever would. Never would a son ask such a request and never would a father respond like this.
- Jesus is determined to demonstrate that the prodigal’s father is not your typical Middle Eastern father and the FATHER in heaven, about whom this story is really being told, is not your average God.
- *“No long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.” Luke 15:13*
- He turns temptation into action.

C. The Castaway

- *“After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.”* Luke 15:15-16

D. The Turn Away.

- *“When he came to his senses...”* Luke 15:17a
- He’s got to face the truth about himself, his life and his future for the very first time.
- This response is totally up to the son. He chooses – He comes to his senses.
- *“...the pain caused you to repent and change your ways.”* 2 Corinthians 7:9
- *“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!’”* Luke 15:17
- How long are some of us going to keep feeding on stuff that does not satisfy the soul? At some point you’ve got to come to your senses and courageously stop, face the reality in your life and ask “What am I doing here?”
- *“I thought about the wrong direction in which I was headed, and turned around and came running back to you.”* Psalm 119:59 LB
- The Hired Servant Plan (B)
 - *“I will set out and go back to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired servants.’ So he got up and went to his father. ‘But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him.”* Luke 15:17-20

E. The Runway

- *“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”* Luke 15:20
- He never thought that the tears flowing like water would not come from his eyes but rather the eyes of his father.
- He never considered the possibility that his father would be the one to run to him.
- The Grace Plan
 - *“Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”* Luke 15:21
 - The son is shattered by this unimaginable expression of love from his father

F. The 'Make A Way'

- *"God saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."*
Titus 3:5

G. The Take Aways:

1. Something is Lost

2. What was lost really mattered.

a) People without Christ are lost.

b)) You are precious to God.

"For God so loved the world that gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

c) You have never laid eyes on someone who doesn't matter to God – for whom Jesus did not die."

3. Being found brought rejoicing!

a) The Shepherd:

"Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. I (Jesus) 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 15:7

b) The Woman:

"Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I (Jesus) tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Luke 15:9-10

c) The FATHER:

"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it, Let's have a feast and celebrate.'" Luke 15:22-23

"For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." Luke 15:24

- I don't think most of us have any idea what it means to God when we come home.
- Whether you're rich or poor, male or female, young or old, educated or uneducated, scarred or wounded or squeaky clean, you matter to God more than you could ever imagine. And the reality of that truth ought to just do something to your heart.

- May we not only take that truth to heart but also realize that it also means that everyone else matters that much to God too!.