

TFTD 2025.20 Thursday March 27th

Lost and Found: Luke 15:1-10



Thanks to Revd Nick Thompson for today's reflection on a well-known parable.

So he told them this parable: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep

and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices."

When Pam and I were first married we bought a little terraced house in Reading. Young people could afford small houses in those days! This was before the property market took off in a ludicrous way. The whole area was full of streets of houses like ours. Huntley and Palmer's, the Biscuit factory, had built them all for their workers.

The area was popular too with students from the University. Mostly this was fine but in the summer after exams there were quite a few nights when the students would have wild parties all night! They had lots to celebrate. The days of work and endless revision were behind them and they would party long into the night. Much to the detriment of our attempts to sleep!

Reasons to celebrate are always welcome at different stages of our lives. In Jesus' parable finding that which was lost leads to a knees-up.

We are used to losing things all the time. Car keys, wallets, purses often go astray just as we are attempting to rush out of the house. Recently we had some friends to stay for a couple of nights. Rosemary announced suddenly one day she had lost her purse. Where had she last had it? A sickly panic began to brew but then her husband activated some tracker app on his phone and announced that it was somewhere in the house. It still had to be tracked down but at least we all knew it wasn't far away and nobody would be making off with it. We didn't have a party but we all felt very relieved!

The three parables in Luke 15 are told in part into the context of Jesus hanging out with the wrong kind of people - those some would describe as the lost. He chose to eat with good numbers of people who were not on respectable people's invitation lists. Tax collectors, people written off as sinners and others of doubtful moral character. Sensible followers of the law kept well clear of them to stay pure.

Jesus did not keep his distance from them. He sought them out and challenged them to turn their lives around and follow him. He gave them his time and valued their company. And he saw in their changed lives signs of God's Kingdom. What better excuse could there be for a party in heaven let alone on earth?

In God's economy nobody is to be written off because everyone else is fine. Every life is sacred and even the number of the hairs on our head are known. We are loved this much.

Dear Lord, seek out your lost sheep of today.
Enter the hard places of this earth, the places where hope seems to have died,
where faith is sometimes mocked,
where love is abused.
We thank you that in your heart no life is written off.
Find us all, we pray, lift us up and restore us
to wholeness and hope,
To the purpose you have for each of us.

Amen