

Word notes Sunday 23/10/2010 Tony Hodge
Parables of the Loss and Restoration

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: Luke 15

The Bible contains many stories of loss and restoration. Indeed the whole story of the Bible boils down to loss of relationship between Man and God and God's work to restore it through Jesus Christ. In Luke 15 Jesus tells three parables of loss and restoration which increase in weight as they progress making it one parable leading the listener on to a greater understanding of Father God's desire to see the lost returned to the fold. First one in a hundred sheep (signifying both the "flock" of the shepherd and maybe also our livelihood) then one in ten silver coins (signifying something of value, maybe our security) and finally one of two sons – here the parallel with God the Father and his family is most obvious and that lost is the most precious of all.

Three obvious points to conclude:

1. This is how Father God feels and here's the celebration that He feels when the son is resorted.
2. This is how lost the son is, and how much he loses before realising – the state of Israel in C1st .
3. Other sons – watch out for jealousy, you always have the Father.

The last is the biggie – look at the opening verses of the chapter.

Lastly the parables tell us the extraordinary extent to which the Father will go to welcome back the restored son – ever would an elder male of the family run anywhere and certainly not out to greet a son who has so rejected and disgraced the family.

Father God went even further – He sent Jesus ahead to make the way possible even before any came to their senses and turned to him.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

Who were these parables directed at?

Do they say something to those already in the Kingdom, if so what?

What do they say to those not yet saved?

Ask folk to share how they can see Father God running towards them before they were saved. This might be in terms of provision, protection from evil, friends who witnessed or any number of other things.

Knowing how the Father is depicted in the parable of the Lost Son how should we relate to unbelievers both near to us relationally or strangers?

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Looking at the last question above – how can the cell do something active to show Father's love to the lost?