

SEPTEMBER – IF I DON'T FEEL LOST, WHY DO I NEED TO BE FOUND?

LUKE 15:11-24

-SLIDE 1 CONTINUING WITH BACK TO THE BASICS

Today we are looking at **If I don't feel lost, Why Do I Need To Be Found?**

SLIDE 2 A few years ago Donna and I took the train from Philadelphia to Boston

We got our train tickets and looking at them I discovered they were jointed.

One half is yours the other half the conductor tears away and keeps.

They had a notice: **"Not good if detached."**

Both sides were made of the same material,

printed with the same ink,

the same press,

from the same office, by the same company.

But the ticket was no good if detached.

Its usefulness, to take you places, was dependent

upon its relation to the rest of the ticket.

This is true of most all of life.

Ants, bees, termites, and other insects live and thrive in communities;

That's what holds them together, maybe that's why 80% of living things are insects.

People are no different God has given us a herd instinct,

Notice if driving at night teenagers in Aberdeen like to group up at the same parking lot.

Or go to the same club, or dance.

If one girl goes to the ladies room they all go.

We want to feel like we belong:

We even have support groups to help in our attachments.

IF I DON'T FEEL LOST WHY DO I NEED TO BE FOUND?

SLIDE 3 IN THE SCRIPTURE THE PRODIGAL SON SHOWS US THAT

I. WE CAN BE BLINDED BY SELF-CENTERED LIVING

SLIDE 4 **There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. Luke 15:11-12**

Son said: 'GIVE ME"! Give me my share!

There is a spirit of rebellion in all of us.

Jewish law said the Elder son received twice as much as the younger sons. Deut 21:17

It also said the younger son could ask the father for his share and even sell it.

But it was certainly not a loving thing

It was like saying to his father: I wish you were dead!

What the prodigal son forgot was that :

Living together requires putting the welfare of others

ahead of our own personal pleasure.

He thought dad owed him a living.

SLIDE 5 Thomas Huxley said:

A man's worst difficulties begin when he is able to do just as he likes.

Sure it takes work to live together.

One person said:

"My father was a dentist and my mother was a manicurist...

for most of their married life they fought tooth and nail."

GIVE ME "Attitude" left untended will destroy any relationship.

Selfishness blind us and cuts us off

SLIDE 6 From the family, from the Father, and from the faith.

Little children are a perfect example of this.

They see a bowl full of chocolate and they want it...Give me.

They see a tool that dad is using and its sharp... Give me.

They are consumed with self and not aware of the danger.

And soon they are sick, hurt, burned, or lost.

My little granddaughter Katrina was in her mommas bathroom while

Heidi was getting dressed.... Katrina was playing with a comb,

Heidi took her eyes off her just a minute and

Katrina was eating Tums she had gotten the bag out of Heidi's purse.

If she wouldn't have caught her she would have eaten the whole bag.

We need parents who will lovingly discipline and direct their children.

A psychology professor who had no children would scold

his neighbors for spanking their children.

"You should love your kids, not punish them."

One day the professor put in a new cement sidewalk.

worked long hours troweling it smooth.

Just as he was finishing, he saw the neighbors little boy

making handprints and writing in the cement.

He rushed over, grabbed the boy by the arm, and drug him to his parent's home.

"Madam, would you please spank your child!"

The surprised mother said: But I thought you said we must love the child?

The psychologist said: "I love him in the abstract but not in the concrete!"

If the younger Son would have waited.

He could have gotten part of the farm,

He could have even had a vacation to the far country

and returned with dignity

But he burned his bridges, along with his relationship.

To his father and brother.

THE REASON WE DON'T FEEL LOST IS THAT

SLIDE 7 I. SELF CENTERED LIVING BLINDS US TO OUR LOST CONDITION.

**The Second reason we don't feel lost is :
IN THE FAR COUNTRY**

II. WE CAN BE BOUND BY OUR SIN

SLIDE 8 -"Not 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

I submit to you the younger son was in the far country BEFORE HE LEFT HOME.
The far country is not a place to which we must travel,
Because it exist first in our hearts.

The far country began in his dreams.

He fantasized about it.

Enjoying the thought of wild women and loose living.

Of being done with his father's discipline and his brother's rights..

-James 1:14-15 says: The temptation of the thoughts brought the captivity of the heart.

SLIDE 9 But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:14-15

SLIDE 10 If the sheep was lost through **foolishness**

The coin through **carelessness**

Then the son was lost because of **willfulness**.

He thought, He chose, He acted, He died

SLIDE 11-His father said:²⁴For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' Luke 15:24

What you think is what you become.

A famous baseball pitcher was facing a batter he didn't know,
the pitcher called for a conference. The manager said:

"This guy likes hitting high outside pitches.

Now remember, don't pitch to the high outside corner."

The pitcher walked back to the mound repeating "**High and outside**"

Where do you think he pitched the ball?

High and outside, and over the fence in a home run.

Realizing a problem does not remove it.

Our thinking can often perpetuates and reinforces what is wrong.

We need to think about what is right.

"low and inside," about the "Straight and Narrow"

Even though the prodigal came back and was reinstated

The brother's relationship was never the same again.

our sin hurts those we love the most.

- our spouse, our children, our relatives, our church.

I have had parents ask me:

What can we do now that our children are legal age and independent?
We can't control them anymore!

SLIDE 12 -This father did four difficult things we would do well to follow.

1. Let them go
2. Let them make their own mistakes

SLIDE 13 3. Let them reap the consequences of their own choices

4. Love them unconditionally when they come back

SLIDE 14 Galatians 6:7 "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked."

Our hope is that through the bumps and pitfalls,
Pain and suffering of life,

That young person will come back to family and to God.

One man said as a parent, we must remember

"Sound travels slowly. Sometimes the things you say when your kids are teenagers don't reach them till they're in their 30s."

IF I DON'T FEEL LOST WHY DO I HAVE TO BE FOUND?

SLIDE 15 III. WE WILL BE BROUGHT TO OUR KNEES

SLIDE 16 ¹⁴After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

SLIDE 17¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

SLIDE 18 ¹⁶He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

You and I don't have to put a sinner down.

The world will do that for us.

IT is the law of nature.

We don't grow stronger every day in the carnal world.

SIN burns up our bodies

Dims our minds and

Destroys our spirits

Outside of Christ there is no life,

No renewal, or new beginning.

We just end up living in a body that slowly weakens unto death.

Any Senior Citizen here will tell you its no fun to grow old in this old body.

You can run out of breath walking DOWN a flight of stairs.

You may still feel like you have something on the ball, but you don't have the energy to bounce it.

The effects from living in a sinful world is one thing,

But **THE EFFECTS FROM LIVING IN SIN** in this sinful world is another.

You will wake up when the party's over

with a hangover of guilt, and remorse,

a headache of regrets

a fistful of broken dreams, and friendless.

buried in the pig pen.

SLIDE 19

But the young man on his knees in the pig pen
 Changed his mind.
 He realized what his father has done for him
 the freedom of the farm.
 the love of the family
 The care of his servants.
 And he turned around.

Christian in Africa have translated the word

Salvation as “ God took our heads out.”

We have retranslated it in America to mean “get your head on straight.”

God took the head out of the prodigal and

He confessed his sin against his **Father** in heaven, and his **father** on earth.

SLIDE 20 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. Luke 15:18

He accepted the sentence that sin had
 cut him off as a son and he
 asked to be make like a hired man.
 And remembering the generosity of his father.
 The prodigal son came to himself.

GOOD NEWS IS THAT REMEMBERING WILL

SLIDE 21 IV. WE CAN BOARD FOR HOM.

You remember that train ticket. Its good only when attached.

Once we reattach our heads and hearts to a loving God.

We get a do-over,

THERE IS A ROAD TO RETURN

SLIDE 22

¹⁷“When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

SLIDE 23 ¹⁸I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

SLIDE 24 ⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' Luke 15:17-190

I will set out ---I will go back--- I will say...I have sinned...

Our resolutions may be noble, but we must act on them to get anywhere.

The son remembered

SLIDE 25 Luke 15:20 So he got up and went to his father. But while he was 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

Unless we act we will never return home.

Many people are not sure which road to travel

Or who they should follow to come home.

Jesus said: **Follow me. Mark 1:17**
 He reattached the ticket of salvation by
 Sticking a cross in the skin of this world
 To show you how to get home.

Jesus died that we might have life and have it abundantly

SLIDE 26

**-So friend today if you find yourself in the far country separated from God.
 Maybe you have played the world and found it wanting.
 Maybe you have run with the loose living and seductive friends who sold you out,
 And now find yourself buried in the pods and pigsty of the world.**

SLIDE 27-You will experience death and God's judgment

SLIDE 28 **Paul writes I Timothy 2:5 LB God is on the one side, Man is on the other, and the man Christ Jesus is in between bringing them together.**

SLIDE 29 **But the prodigal son remembered what the father did.**

And we remember what our father in Heaven has done.

He **Loves** faithfully,

He **Accepts** unconditionally

He **Restores** completely.

So today as we come to the communion table,

Will you trust God today

We are lost, and we need to be found.