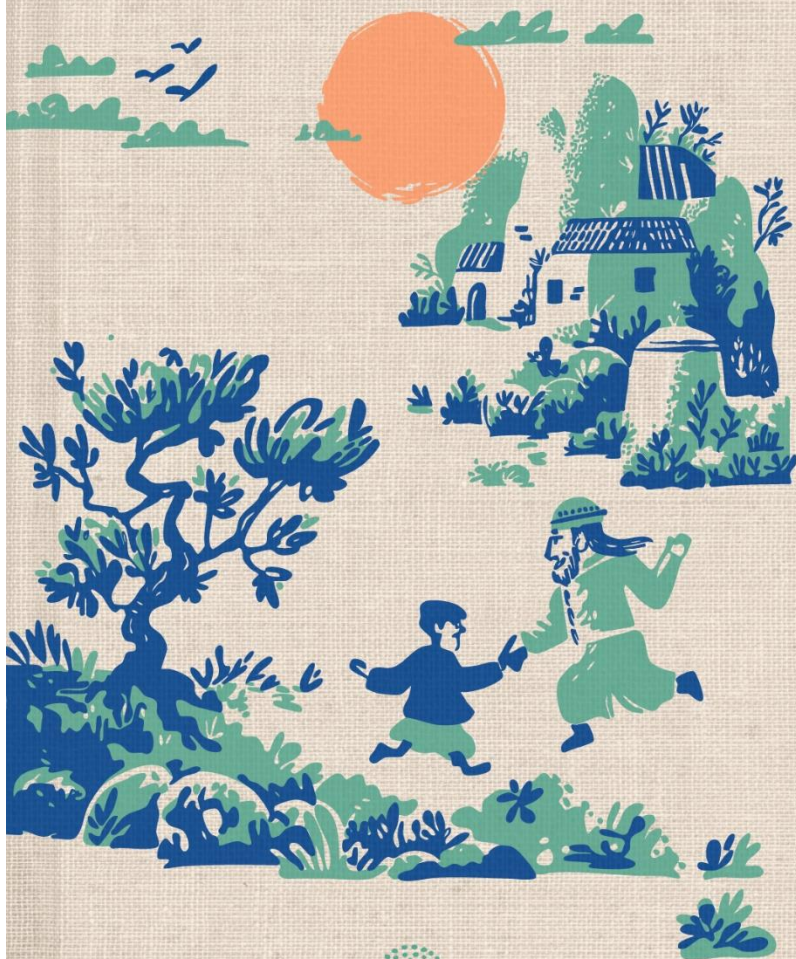


the lost and
FOUND



**FAMILY
CHURCH**

The Lost and Found

The Parable of the Lost Son

The Urgency of Lostness

Every human being carries within themselves a deep sense of belonging. We were created to live in communion with our Creator, to walk in His presence, and to be at home with Him. Yet, the reality of life reveals something different: many are lost.

The Bible doesn't treat the concept of "lost" as something harmless, like misplacing an item. The original word used (*Apollumi*) carries a weight of urgency: doomed for destruction, perishing, useless, separated from life itself. To be lost is not simply to wander off but to stand at the edge of ruin.

And yet, the good news is this: what is lost can be found. What is separated can be restored. What is broken can be healed.

The God Who Seeks

Through three parables, a profound truth unfolds: God values the lost and relentlessly seeks them out.

- **The Lost Sheep**
A shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep to pursue the one that wandered away. The point is clear: heaven rejoices over one sinner who turns back, more than over ninety-nine who believe they need no repentance.
- **The Lost Coin**
A woman turns her house upside down to recover one silver coin. What seems insignificant to others becomes priceless to her. In the same way, God turns the world upside down to reach those who feel forgotten.
- **The Lost Son**
A rebellious son demands his inheritance, wastes everything in reckless living, and ends up destitute. Yet, when he decides to return home, his father runs to meet

The Lost and Found

him, embraces him, restores him with robe, ring, and sandals, and celebrates his return with a feast.

These stories share one message: the lost matter deeply to God. Each soul has immeasurable worth, and no cost is too high for God to bring them home.

Understanding Lostness

There are different ways a life becomes lost:

1. By Wandering – Like the sheep, some follow instincts of hunger, comfort, or desire and drift away without realizing the danger.
2. By Circumstance – Like the coin, some are separated by situations, trauma, or environments beyond their control.
3. By Rebellion – Like the son, some knowingly reject love, guidance, and truth, choosing their own way.

No matter the path into lostness, the condition is the same: vulnerability, emptiness, and a separation from true life. But no matter the reason, the response of heaven is identical when one is found: joy, celebration, and restoration.

The Father's Heart

The heart of God is revealed most vividly in the figure of the father who welcomes the returning son. While the son is still far away, the father is watching. He doesn't wait passively; he runs, embraces, and restores.

Notice what the father does *not* do:

- He doesn't shame the son.
- He doesn't demand repayment.
- He doesn't list the failures.

The Lost and Found

Instead, he shows compassion, forgiveness, and unshakable love. This is God's heart toward every human being: not condemnation, but reconciliation.

The Way Back Home

The return of the lost son shows us the model of coming home to God:

1. Coming to Our Senses – Recognizing the emptiness of the path we are on.
2. Confession – Acknowledging that sin is ultimately against God, not just against people.
3. Humility – Approaching God without entitlement, willing even to be a servant rather than demanding status.
4. Taking the First Step – The son left the pig pen and began walking home. In the same way, each of us must decide to turn back toward God.

God responds not with rejection but with restoration. His reckless love takes risks, overturns traditions, and shatters walls to bring us home.

The Gospel of Rescue

The story of humanity is simple: we were created by God to live with Him forever. But sin entered the world, creating separation and leaving us lost.

So what did God do?

- He took on flesh in Jesus Christ.
- He lived among us, experiencing pain and temptation.
- He died the death we deserved, carrying our sin on the cross.

The Lost and Found

- On the third day, He rose again, proving that death is not the end.

Through Jesus, the lost are found. Through Him, the separated are reconciled. Through Him, we are given a new name, a new identity, and a home that can never be taken away.

Living with the Found

Being found is not the end of the story; it is the beginning of a new life.

- For Ourselves – To live free from shame, free from bondage, and confident in God’s love.
- For Others – To carry the Father’s heart into the world, actively seeking the lost, interceding in prayer, and welcoming them with open arms.

Every person you encounter carries eternal value. They are not interruptions or inconveniences; they may be someone God is calling you to point homeward.

Come Home

We are all lost without God. Some wander, some are displaced by life, others rebel outright. But every path of lostness can end the same way: in the embrace of the Father who runs to meet us.

The invitation remains open:

- Come to your senses.
- Confess your need.
- Walk back toward Him.

God is waiting. The celebration is ready. The lost can be found, and the dead can live again.

Come home.

The Lost and Found