



# The Heart of the Matter

#NPNPCC

Week 1

1 of 1

June 26, 2016

**Bottom Line:** If God cares about the lost, the people of God better care about the lost.

**Icebreaker:** What is the best event you have ever been invited to?

**Key Verse:** *Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”* Luke 15:1-2

Every line in the Bible is there for a reason. Sometimes, when we are looking to get into the meat of the story or into the main point of an argument Paul makes, we skip over little details that unexpectedly give meaning to the story or argument.

When Jesus delivered the parables of the lost sheep, lost coin, and lost sons, He did so in response to the grumbling of the scribes and Pharisees. Why were the Pharisees mad? It was the company that Jesus kept that caused the grumbings. Sinners and tax collectors were flocking to Jesus. Why? They understood that though the religious leaders of their day would reject them, Jesus would accept them. They saw that Jesus cared about them, so they wanted to be around Him.

As we talk about investing in and inviting our lost friends, we must make our attitude that of Christ's. He had a constant following of “tax collectors and sinners.” He invited them in while the religious elite turned their noses up in disgust. What the religious leaders did not realize about God is His love for and devotion to the lost. Jesus hit this devotion home by giving three parables about lost objects of increasing worth – a sheep, a coin, and a son.

The church is not on a mission to make religious people better, but lost people found. For this to happen, we have to look at Jesus' audience and realize that He wanted the sinners to hear His stories as much if not more than the Pharisees. Jesus' concern is always for the lost.

## THINK IT OVER >>>

Thinking back on Brandon's message, what stood out to you?

Brandon said . . .

- The lost seep matters because the lost sheep is in danger.
- The lost coin matters because the lost coin is valuable.
- The lost son matters because the lost son is hurting.

Are the lost valuable to you in the same way that they're valuable to Jesus? Explain.

What are some ways we ignore concern for people who do not know the Lord?

## LOOK IT OVER <<<

Part of the reason Jesus had the impact that He did was because He placed Himself in the company of lost people. What would it look like for you to develop real friendships and relationships with people with whom you disagree?

Where else in the Scriptures do we see God's concern for the lost?

Where are those places you come into contact with people who are unchurched or do not know the Lord?

What hobbies or interests do you have that you could share with people for the purpose of forming relationships to invite to church and share the gospel?

How are you investing in people and inviting the lost into a relationship with Jesus?

# NEXT STEPS

This week, consider taking some next steps together, as a group:

1. Think through a list of all the places you go week to week. How could you develop relationships with the people in those places? Do you go to the same coffee shops or restaurants? With whom do you work? Do you know your neighbors? All of these provide valuable pathways to develop relationships with unbelievers.
2. Pray that we would be a people whose concern for the lost is evident in our actions. Ask that your beliefs would work themselves out in your life so that you are salt and light in the places God has put you. Pray that you would develop confidence and boldness as you seek to share Christ with those around you through your relationships.

## EVALUATION/ACTION Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

**Bottom Line:** If God cares about the lost, the people of God better care about the lost.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

## PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

## DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at [newpointe.org/daily](http://newpointe.org/daily):

Day 1: Luke 15:3-7

Day 2: Luke 15:8-10

Day 3: Luke 15:11-16

Day 4: Luke 15:17-24

Day 5: Luke 15:25-32

***Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.***

*(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)*