

## God's Amazing Grace

In Luke 15 we see Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners, while the Pharisees grumble that He welcomes such people.

At one level, their words are an accusation, but at another, they proclaim the gospel truth, because Jesus indeed welcomes sinners. In response, Jesus tells three parables: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. Today we focus on the first two.

To the tax collectors and sinners, these stories brought hope because it reminded them that God was seeking them.

To the Pharisees, they were a challenge, because Jesus was breaking social and religious boundaries. The Pharisees believed righteousness meant avoiding contamination from the unrighteous, leaving the lost as “lost causes.” But Jesus declared His mission: “The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10).

Again and again, Jesus associated with those despised by society: Matthew the tax collector, the Samaritan woman, the sinful woman who anointed His feet, and Zacchaeus. Each life was transformed by His love and acceptance. Jesus looked past labels to see individuals, offering mercy rather than judgment.

In our reading this morning, the main characters—a shepherd and a woman—were themselves outcasts, yet they illustrate God's heart: searching, finding, and rejoicing. God does not condemn but restores, showing His grace is for all.

These stories remind us of the church's mission. Like Jesus, we are called to go beyond our walls, reaching those who feel far from God. The Pharisees' attitude kept them apart from sinners, but Jesus died to bring the lost home. So, the heart of God is to seek, forgive, and rejoice over the found.

As His disciples, we too must reach out, embodying His love in our daily lives. For once we were lost, but now we are found—saved by God's amazing grace.