



**Passage for
Consideration:**

8-10: Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, does not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find

it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents...

Context:

Earlier the disciples had been asking who was greatest in the Kingdom. Jesus in his response showed that such a question was inappropriate, that being great in the Kingdom was not important, but that being IN the Kingdom at all was what was most important. That the idea of being great should be far from the minds of disciples, instead humility and a realistic understanding of what we are actually like is preferred to dreams of grandeur and greatness.

So by way of illustration Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, he emphasised the point by saying Except you be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the likelihood of being great in the Kingdom was dependant upon the readiness to be humble in this life now.

The Lord taught strongly that he expected his disciples to adopt that childlike disposition, by converting, and repenting from a former way of life, and being humble.

The Seeker

The parable, shows Jesus telling a simple story, illustrating the lengths that the Lord Jesus, and by extension, His Father, the Almighty God, will go to, to rescue and save an individual. In the previous parable, such a person is compared to a lost sheep, and now, in this case, a lost coin. The focus is not on the sheep or the coin, but on the one who is looking for the sheep or coin.

In this it is humbling. It must be. All glory, all credence must be given to the seeker, and not to that which is lost. The recognition of being lost, knowing that we are lost, is that which is humbling as well.

Do you think you are lost?

Do you think you have ever been lost? If you are not lost, you can't be found. If you've never been lost, then you've never been looked for. John Newton was the one who said "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see..." The truth is we are not lost just once. We are lost and found many times.

The truth is – as in the parable of the lost sheep, and the tendency is for human beings, even those who have been found, and placed in the sheepfold carefully, and stay there, they soon find a way to escape and wander off again. So it is with those who are worth looking for. The best disciple – one who is supposed to follow – is one who knows he has a tendency not to follow!! Because this disciple will appreciate so much more when he is brought back into line, and will love the more, as he has been forgiven the more. This is not to say that wandering off is good, it is foolish, but – and sticking to the allegory – the truth is – that the more faithful, and honest we are, the more we realise how often the mind wanders, and sin is so

corrupting. The more we follow, the more sensitive we become to the ease with which we can lose our way. When we sin, we have lost our way. Until we repent, and cry for forgiveness we remain lost. How we need to be humble!

The coin

But with the parable of the lost coin, the Lord Jesus cranks up the ratchet a bit more, in teaching this need to have a humble mind, and be sensitive to the ease with which we are lost. Because the simple fact is a sheep knows when it is lost, and bleats for help. But in the parable of the lost coin – a coin has no such knowledge. A coin, a little lump of metal, with a value, it has no appreciation of, it has no knowledge, and most certainly does not know it is lost!

This is also true to the human condition.

The coin is valuable to the owner, but is of no use to the coin itself. What does the owner see in the coin? We must ask the question what is it in me, that God values? Is there anything in me, worth looking for and saving? We must ask ourselves again, are we lost? The truth is, that often we lose ourselves, in sin, and in a wrong mind, and outlook, and take a wrong path, we can allow our mind to spiral out of control, and drop downwards, and spin along its own merry way, until it gets stuck in a dark crevice somewhere, just like a silver penny, or coin. We might not even realise it.

Somehow, without even realising it, an unseen hand, collects us from the dust, and lifts us from the filth, and reinstates us with the rest of the treasure, and secure again. The seeker, knows our value, even though we don't. Must this make us proud – if so, next time, the seeker won't look for us as he will realise we are a fake, a cheap piece of tin, which has no value, because of pride.

The seeking

In Jesus' parable, we see how the seeker is described as a woman, who has ten pieces, and one is lost. The loss makes a big impact, She

noticed it, and was not content to leave it. Jesus made a big thing about the effort then put into looking for this wayward coin. Such a small object – could be anywhere!

She lights, sweeps and seeks.

Lights a candle, to make it easier to see, get rid of the darkness. This is always a good first step. The darkness obscures, shadows hide many a dark thought. But the light, the truth, the illuminating power from the Word of God, shines into even the blackest corners of the human mind. Next up, the lady grabbed a broom, and began sweeping. We recall another parable which Jesus described in Matthew 12:43-45, describing the cleansing of the mind of men, and the act of sweeping out all evil thoughts. In Isaiah 28:17, the prophet describes the action of sweeping to clean away the refuge of lies. Sweeping, all before her, the woman began the act of cleaning out the whole house, in the hope that her broom, might just catch the coin in its bristles, amongst the rest of the worthless rubbish, to *unearth the Truth from the accumulated rubbish of human tradition.*

After sweeping, a large mound of detritus, and fluff, dust and gunge is there in the middle of the floor. Somewhere in that mess, must be the little coin. So we read she did *seek diligently*. Greek *epimelos* – carefully! In that pile of muck there would be other bits and pieces, turned up by the broom. Long lost thimbles, bits of wire, nails, perhaps buttons, and hairpins! Easy to be distracted, and allow the eye to pass over the soft glow of silver in the flickering candlelight!

The finding

But not so the eagle eye of justice of the Lord Jesus, who through the power of God sees all things, even the thoughts and intents of the heart! We must be grateful for that! It must not be an easy task sifting through all of human kind, millions of people, throughout generations, to look for those rare items who have a small piece of value, buried and perhaps tarnished through years of neglect.

And there it is! The swept pile of rubbish immediately abandoned, the woman, straightens her back with glee, holding the coin with both hands admiring it, how against all odds, though sheer hard work, she has recovered it!

She goes next door to the neighbours: *Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost!*

And so much happiness followed, all because the that which was so valued had been reinstated to its rightful place again. Jesus immediately opens the parable and shows it's interpretation, showing the emphasis is on the seeker, and the glory does not belong to those who are lost, those who didn't even know they were lost, but the glory belongs to the one who did all the looking.

This is truly humbling, and so uplifting to know how much God cares for those, in which He has planted the seed of the Gospel, because it is that – The Knowledge of the Word of God, and our reception to it, that gives us any worth, any value. Without that Word, we are all utterly worthless, and amount to nothing more than the fluff and dust found on the floor. But The Almighty will see that little glint, the reflection of the light, which is our acting upon the Word.

Finding a sinner – someone who gets lost, is very difficult, because so few actually have a little sparkle, and reflect the light. It is only that tiniest of glint though much tarnished that will attract the eye of the All-Seeing God. That is the one God attaches value to. That reflection of light, is the act of repentance, when we realise, that we have been lost after all, our stubborn mind would just not admit it.

The Lord Jesus described *there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.* Let us think as diligently as the one who is looking out for us.

Brother Terry