

Title: PARABLE OF THE MISINFORMED & MISLED SHEEP, LUKE 15:1-3, 11-32  
(Chatham, NJ; 03/10/13, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: People get lost because they are misled and misinformed.

Purpose: To explain how misinformation and lies lead people astray.

Introduction:

1. Jesus uses these stories to explain the nature of his work to his critics.
2. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, John 10.
3. He contrasts his role to that of the evil shepherds in Ez. 34:1-10.
4. They are not complete theologies of discipleship; they leave a lot out.
5. Today we will demonstrate that the sheep are lost but more specifically are misled by lies and misinformation.

#### I. Lost Sheep are Deceived Sheep, Luke 15:1-3

##### A. Misled by false teachings

1. By counselors who give false advice in Ezekiel 11:1-4
2. By the priests who teach falsely, Mal. 2:6-9
3. Timothy is told to gently correct his opponents, 2 Tim. 2:5
4. He is warned that some will not listen to the truth, 2 Tim. 4:3

##### B. Misinformation is the key (call it propaganda?)

1. Ephesians 4:14 – deceived by “every wind of doctrine”
2. Eph. 4:18 – ignorance caused by hardness of heart (don’t want the truth? Prefer to live with passions?)
3. Lies are always at the heart of sinful living
4. Some believe lies about our country: D. McCullough (World, 3/9/13, 20)
5. Another lie about the world: Bunch of Bears – polar bears have become the symbol of extinction and the apocalyptic weather scenario (World, 3/9/13, 23)
6. Still believe in the Law of non-contradiction: a thing can’t be what it is and not what it is at the same time

#### II. Lost Son a Wasteful (prodigal) Son

##### A. Why he leaves and returns

1. Looking for freedom? (2 Peter 2:19)
2. He “squandered his property” (13)
3. Following the dictates of his passions?
4. His friends desert him
5. “He came to himself” and went home
6. He becomes aware of his bad behavior choices
7. His father receives back his lost child
8. Note: his Father had money (think about this for next week) – this story wouldn’t work if his earthly father didn’t have resources

##### B. Not only lost but dead

1. Why not call this the Parable of the Dead Son?
2. Somehow lost has gained more traction
3. Sheep get lost when they just wander off
4. People get lost when the sign posts are gone, they don’t pay attention to directions, or they get bad directions
5. The son chose his wayward life
6. Perhaps he believed it would be good, fulfilling, or satisfying in some way
7. He learned that he had been mistaken

### III. The Rest of the Story

#### A. The nature of Jesus' ministry

1. Remember that Jesus seeks only to explain the nature of his ministry
2. He is less concerned with discipleship issues
3. He is concerned with repentance and the mercy of his Father
4. From a purely evangelistic point of view, we the rest of the story
5. Reconciliation is a beginning, a starting point for a new journey

#### B. What happens next?

1. Skip the older brother for now; that is another entire story
2. How did the repentant son address the things that got him into trouble in the first place?
3. After the hunger was gone, was he tempted to listen to and long for the lies again?
4. Remember Israel after they settled in the land, Deut. 6:10-12
5. Sinful entanglements are the lies we believe
6. Paul says, "...be renewed in the spirit of your minds," Eph. 4:23
7. This demands a major shift in thoughts and beliefs

#### Conclusion:

1. Lost means deceived and misled by lies.
2. Repentance demands a major overhaul in thinking.
3. We must learn to see the lies we believe and the pattern of corruption imprinted on us by those lies.
4. Today in Life Group we'll discuss how we recognize the thoughts that lead us astray as well as how to stop them.
5. Learn to recognize the lies and to change them; this is the sanctified life that leads to eternal life.