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Hearing Heaving Rejoice: The Value of Leading One Person Back to God

A Commentary by Jason Curry



The Reverend Dr. Jason Richard Curry is Dean of the Fisk Memorial Chapel at Fisk University. He can be reached at jcurry@fisk.edu or www.fiskmemorialchapel.com.

"I say unto you, that that joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance (Luke 15:7)."

The Parable of the Lost Sheep, which is recorded in Luke 15:1-7, still stands as one of the most powerful and influential stories in the entire bible. Jesus was standing before a crowd of people who both loved and despised him, and he began to teach about the new covenant, new testament and new relationship that God has established with humanity. Jesus began to tell the story about a shepherd who lost one out of one-hundred sheep. Even though the shepherd only lost one sheep, he temporarily left the ninety-nine to find the one, and when he found it, the text says that he rejoiced (Luke 15:5). Through this short story, Jesus was saying that God is like the shepherd, for heaven rejoices over one person who accepts Christ as

Lord and Savior. In fact, Jesus goes on to say that the one person who was brought back in a right relationship with God, is more important than ninety nine people who have already accepted Jesus into their lives.

The world in which we live often places a tremendous value on the power of numbers. People are often celebrated because they are able to amass lots of money, lots of votes, lots of "friends" (on Facebook) or of lots of houses, cars or business. Within a secular context, the value of one seems to be insignificant; however, within a spiritual context, the value of one is all that is needed for heaven to rejoice. I am reminded of a poem that I wrote approximately ten years ago for a sermon: "It only took twelve disciples to change all that we see; it only took one God to forgive both you and me. It only took one sacrifice to save our souls; it only took one Savior to make us whole." I would like to encourage someone to continue to pursue the "one sheep" that got away. Continue to invite that

person to church, Sunday school or bible study with you. Continue to witness to that one person on Facebook or Twitter about God's love for every person. If the one sheep outside of this Christian fold happens to be you, please know that God values your spiritual life more than the ninety-nine who have already accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. Yes, let us all work diligently and fervently to bring one person back to God. Yes, let us attune our ear to hear heaven rejoice, and give glory to God for the great things that He has done.