



Date: _____
Series: Great Chapters of the Bible
Winter Year 2, Lesson 46

Party Chapter: Luke 15

Take Home Point: *Heaven celebrates when people turn to Jesus and believe.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Luke 15

Key Verse: Luke 15:10, "So I can guarantee that God's angels are happy about one person who turns to God and changes the way he thinks and acts."

We will help kids know:

- God cares about lost people—people who don't know Christ.
- God reaches lost people through their witness.
- There is great rejoicing in heaven when people turn to Jesus and believe.
- In Luke 15, three parables describe when the lost are found.




We will help kids feel:

- Compassion for people who don't know Christ and are living apart from God's will.
- Motivated to share Jesus with their friends and acquaintances.

We will help kids do:

- Talk about items they have lost and how that makes them sad.
- Talk about lost items they have found and how they are glad.
- Have a party to simulate rejoicing in heaven whenever a lost person comes to know Jesus.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	Talk about special items that have been lost and never found, and things lost but later found.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
Large Group 	3 6	Overview Parables: The three parables in Luke 15, the Lost Sheep; the Lost Coin; and the Lost Son are told with interactive drama or illustrated with a game. Kids earn party supplies to be used in small group. This is to enhance the idea of a party (or rejoicing) in heaven whenever a person who was lost is found.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • party poppers—three of them • shepherd's robe • hat or basket to draw paper slips from • small slips of paper, one per kid—with the number 2, 3 or 4 on them. <i>Only one of these slips of paper should have a 4 on it.</i> • coin to be hidden in the room • broom • balloons—one per kid • noise makers—one per kid • party poppers—one per kid • sign, "You must have a party!" • three face frames (see appendix)
Small Group Application 	3	Kids discuss times of feeling close to God or times of feeling far from God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • party favors from large group • party snack such as party mix or cupcakes

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

As kids gather: Listen to memory verses from last week and give coupons for memory verses, remembering to bring your Bible, and bringing a guest.

Begin discussion by encouraging kids to tell about something that they lost and never found.

Can you remember what that felt like? Describe that feeling.

Then encourage kids to tell about something they lost but did find.

What did you do when you found it?

Today we will discover how God is so happy when lost people (people who have turned from him or do not know him) have turned back to him and are found. **Heaven celebrates when people turn to Jesus and believe.*

Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says.* Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.

Parables: The three parables in Luke 15, the Lost Sheep; the Lost Coin; and the Lost Son are told with interactive drama or illustrated with a game. Kids earn party supplies to be used in small group. This is to enhance the idea of a party (or rejoicing) in heaven whenever a person who was lost is found.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives.* Use the questions to stimulate discussion, but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened? / Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Have kids refer to Luke 15 in their Bibles. Explain that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

Have someone summarize the Parable of the Lost Sheep found in Luke 15:1-7.

What is the heavenly meaning for the shepherd celebrating over his one lost sheep? *(It can be summarized with Luke 15:7. There is more happiness in heaven over one person who turns to God than over 99 people who already have turned to God and have his approval.)*

Have another student summarize the Parable of the Lost Coin—Luke 15:8-10.

What is the heavenly meaning for the woman celebrating over her one found coin? *(Luke 15:10. God's angels are happy about one person who turns to God and changes the way he thinks and acts.)*

How are these two parables similar? *(There is more celebrating over the one that was lost and is found than over the others that were not lost.)*

Does that seem fair to you? What do you think God is trying to emphasize with the celebrations?

Have someone else summarize the Parable of the Lost Son—Luke 15:32.

How is this parable different than the first two? *(It goes into more detail. It is about family relationships. It explains more about what the lost son was experiencing and how he was feeling. It shows more emotion of the father and his happiness.)*

Were you surprised about the way the father responded to the lost son? How so?

Think about our discussion in Warm-Up. Think about how you felt when you lost something important to you and how it felt to find it again. Can you identify with the father a little? How much stronger do you think a father would feel about losing and finding his own child?

Who does the father in this parable represent? *(God, the Father.)*

Who does the lost son represent? *(Those that have rejected the Father.)*

Who does the faithful brother represent? (*Those that are faithful to God.*)

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?
Today's key verse Luke 15:10 says, ***"So I can guarantee that God's angels are happy about one person who turns to God and changes the way he thinks and acts."***

Should we be jealous like the faithful brother about our father's celebration over a lost brother being found?

Read Luke 15:31-32.

What was the benefit for the faithful son? (*He was always with his father and never experienced the terrible hardship of being lost and on his own.*)

Do those of us in Christ also experience this benefit?

Supplies: the party favors earned in large group, party snack such as party mix, or cupcakes

Take just a few (no more than three) minutes to blow up balloons and decorate the small group area for a party. Pass out snacks and discuss the following.

As we enjoy our party, I would like each of you to share a time when you felt far away from God and how this felt.

Share a special time when you felt very close to God because of the promise of his forgiveness. How did that feel?

Do you know anyone who does not know Jesus as Savior? How could you introduce him/her to Jesus?

Let's remember when we pray that all **Heaven celebrates when people turn to Jesus and believe.*

Closing Prayer:

Have kids pray specifically for someone who does not know Jesus or who has walked away from God. Pray that they would come "home" and not be lost. Close by thanking God that he is such a loving Father who always welcomes us home.

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Large Group Presentation

Great Chapters of the Bible

The Party Chapter—Luke 15

The large group presenter will assume the role of a librarian. His/her name will be either Ms. Freda Rita or Mr. Gutenbuch. Costuming might include reading glasses (if you wear you own, place a piece of tape on the bridge), bow tie or special librarian hat. The presenter should portray the caricature of a “bookworm.”

Ms. Freda Rita or Mr. Gutenbuch will introduce the favorite chapters in the best book in the library, the Bible. This librarian operates with a different set of rules than what is typical. Instead of the rule “no chewing gum,” now kids must chew gum and play with it. Every week a new goofy rule will be revealed.

The stage for large group should be set up to look like a library: a bookshelf with some books, maybe a desk, and an old computer. Make it as elaborate as you would like. A sign should be hung somewhere that says “RULES of the Library.” Each week a new rule will be revealed.

Supplies: sign: “You must have a party!”, three party poppers, shepherd’s robe, hat or basket to put slips of paper into, one small slip of paper per kid – on one of the slips write the number 4 and write the number 2 or 3 on the rest of the slips, coin hidden on the floor before large group begins, and a broom. The following supplies need to be divided out for small groups, as they will be receiving them in large group to take back to small group for their own celebration: balloons, noise makers, and party poppers (or whatever party supplies or snacks you want to use), three face frames

Introduction:

Hello, I am Mr. Gutenbuch (or Ms. Freda Rita) and this is such a unique library. When I am in charge of this library, the rules are a little bit different than what you see at your local library. Today’s rule is “YOU MUST HAVE A PARTY.”

Hold up the sign.

Story of the Lost Sheep

The first way that you will have a party is to listen to a story and then act it out.

Read Luke 15:1-7

Play the “Lost Sheep” Game

The hat or basket with the slips of paper with numbers on them will be used for this game.

Before we have our party, we will have to find the lost sheep. In this hat are slips of paper with numbers on them. Each of you will draw a slip of paper from the hat. Keep your number secret, only you can look at it.

There are numbers 2, 3 or 4 on each slip of paper. This is how many “baas” you will make in a row. If you have two on your paper, you will say, “baa, baa.” If you have 3 it will sound like “baa, baa, baa.” Who can show me what 4 sounds like?

Have a volunteer go “baa, baa, baa, baa.”

After you do your set of 2, 3, or 4 “baas,” pause and then do it again.

Most of you will have the numbers 2 or 3, but there is only one number 4. This is the lost sheep. The quest is for the shepherd to find the lost sheep by listening and counting the number of “baas” he hears. Continue to “baa” until our missing sheep is found.

I need a volunteer to be our shepherd.

Choose a volunteer and place a shepherd’s robe on him.

Now that we have our shepherd, let’s find out what kind of sheep the rest of you are.

Pass out the slips of paper showing the numbers.

Remember to keep your number secret.

When I say “begin,” you may start your “baaing.” Shepherd, you need to listen very closely to find the missing sheep that is “baaing” four times. Ready, begin.

This game will continue until the shepherd has found his missing sheep.

Good job, shepherd! Please bring your lost sheep up to me. The lost sheep has been found! Let’s have a party!!

Pop the party popper over the heads of the shepherd and sheep. They may sit down.

The point of this parable that Jesus told is that all of heaven rejoices when one lost person is found. This lost person is someone who doesn't know Jesus, but comes to faith in Jesus and is found.

Since you all did such a good job in this last game, I have party balloons (or other party supply). In a little while, each group will take back balloons to small group for your own party.

Read Parable of the Lost Coin-Luke 15:8-10

Make sure the coin is hidden before large group begins.

Jesus told another parable about a lost coin in Luke 15:8-10.

Read the passage.

Bring out a broom and begin sweeping and looking for your lost coin.

I lost a coin and I need all of you to help me look for it. The last time I had it, it was in this room. Let's all look. When someone finds it, please bring it up to me and there will be an award for everyone.

When the person finds it and brings it up, shoot the next party popper over his/her head.

The entire group now receives these wonderful noisemakers (or other party supply) for their small group party.

Point to the noisemakers.

Story With An Expression

This story is rephrased and told adding special expressions. Appendix pages need to be reproduced and circles cut out. Three volunteers need to be chosen to sit on chairs up front and show designated expressions when it is their character's turn. The three characters are a father, brother and son. It doesn't matter if the volunteers chosen are girls or boys, but try to pick kids who are very animated.

Note: Words in caps will provide suggestion to the volunteer on how to act.

I need three volunteers to come forward who love to make faces.

Choose three people.

Please sit in these chairs.

Give the helpers their specific character faces from the appendix.

_____ (insert name of the first volunteer) **will play the part of the father,** _____ (insert name of the next volunteer) **will play the part of the brother, and** _____ (insert name of the third volunteer) **will play the part of the son.**

When I give you your cue, put your paper over your face and give us the suggested facial expression. For example, if I would say the father was sad, _____ (the kid with the father appendix page) would place his picture frame over his/her face and look sad. Let's see each of our volunteers make a sad face.

Have each volunteer practice making a sad face.

Jesus told a story to show that his father in heaven wanted people who had turned away from God to come back to him. This is the story he told. It is the parable of the faithful father who partied when his son returned.

Once there was a father who had two sons. The younger son said to his father, "Give me my share of the inheritance. I wish you were dead!" Can you imagine what the son looked like when he said that? The son's face showed he was DEFIANT and STUBBORN.

The son puts up the frame and makes a face showing stubbornness.

The father's face looked deeply SAD over the request.

Father shows sad face.

He said, "I will give you your inheritance even though it GRIEVES me that you want to leave."

The son hit the road to party town. He had his money and was ready to spend it all having a great time. I think I see his PARTY FACE on right now. He partied and partied. He went to a distant land where we still see his PARTY FACE.

Look at his face now. He is TIRED of all his partying. Is that a face of SURPRISE we see as he realizes that he has no money left? Not only does he have no money, but also a famine hit the land and jobs were very hard to find.

He became very hungry. I can see the HUNGER in his face. He was finally able to get a job feeding pigs. Look at his face as he gets a WHIFF OF THAT SMELL.

He looked at the slop he was feeding the pigs with absolute DISGUST. It was horrible! But, his face was still showing signs of

HUNGER. So much so that he was willing to eat the same food as the pigs!

He had an idea. He had that **AHA** look on his face. “Even the servants at my father’s house live better than this. I wonder, if I went home would my father hire me as a servant?” There’s that look of **WONDER**.

The son continued, “No longer am I worthy to be called his son, but I will admit to him my sin and see if he will allow me to be his servant.” He leaves for the long journey home.

When he gets to the corner near his home, his father sees him. Look at the face full of **WONDER**. “Is that my son?” he asked. There is **HOPE** in the father’s expression.

The father begins to run to his son. As he meets his son, the son hangs his head with a face of **SHAME**. He admits that he has sinned against the father. But the father says, “Quick, let’s party.” The father now has his **PARTY** face on.

The father tells his servants to “bring the best robe, bring the ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. Give my son all the status he had before. Kill the fatted calf. We will have a feast tonight! My son who was lost is now found.”

Just look at the **SMILE** on the father’s face!

As the party began, the brother came in from the fields. He had a look of **CONFUSION** as he was wondering what was going on. Someone told him that his brother had returned. The brother began to **POUT**. “It’s not fair, father. Your son left and did bad things. Why didn’t you treat him as he deserved?”

A look of **ANGER** came over his face. “I have stayed here and worked faithfully for you. Why don’t you treat me as I deserve?”

The father still had his **PARTY** face on. He said, “You, too, should be happy. This brother of yours was once dead, but now he has come back to life. He was lost but now is found. That is what is important.”

Pop the last popper over the heads of the three helpers.

I have one more thing to add to your small group party soon to take place.

Show them the poppers (or other party supplies). Have the volunteers sit down.

What a celebration this father had for his son. Just think about the celebration that takes place in heaven when a life that is lost is found in Jesus.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, thank you for putting this party chapter in the Bible. Thank you for saying in verse 10, *"So I can guarantee that God's angels are happy about one person who turns to God and changes the way he thinks and acts."*

Each one of us needs to turn to you. Each one of us needs a Savior, for all have gone to a distant land. All of us have sinned and want to have our own way and not yours. For the sake of Jesus, forgive us and let Jesus live in our lives so that we know we have been found. We are not lost but have been found by you.

If there is anyone here who does not trust in Jesus, give them the assurance that no matter what they have done or how far they have been from you, you love them, forgive them and accept them into your family. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**YOU
MUST
HAVE A
PARTY.**

