

I. Synopsis

Rejoicing is a theme found in Luke's Gospel. Jesus tells a story to illustrate God The Father's heart for us. Heaven rejoices as people who were isolated are restored to wholeness, brought back to God's family.

II. Ice Breaker Question

Recall a time that something of importance to you was misplaced. What steps did you take to attempt to find the object? What is the range of emotions that you experience when you first realize the object is lost until it is found?

III. Scripture: Luke 15:1-7 (ESV)**IV. Discussion Questions**

1. The metaphor of God being a shepherd is used throughout Scripture. As you read this passage what does it tell us about what does it tells us about God's heart for us?
2. The metaphor of humanity being a sheep is used throughout Scripture. Sheep are defenseless, skittish creatures prone to wander. What does this you about our relationship with God? What is the response to the rescue?
3. How do you think the religious leaders of Jesus' time, the Pharisees would have responded to Tim Keller's quote, "Once we become part of God's community, we are sinners free to admit we are sinners"? What you think of this quote? How could this quote be misconstrued? If we believe this quote, how does it have the potential to transform how we see others and ourselves?
4. Read Luke 15:1-7, where do find yourself in the story? Why?

Keller, Tim. "He Welcomes Sinners". *Gospel In Life*. New York, NY, 9.28.2008. MP3file.

Digging Deeper

The image of God being shepherd is found throughout Scripture. Read the following passages Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, and John 10:1-18 to discover a few of these passages.

As you read the passages what are the characteristics of the shepherd? What similarities regarding the shepherd do you find among the passages? What does it mean for you that God is a shepherd? How does this deepen your relationship with God?