



## WEEKLY STUDY

### WEEK 1

A recurring theme in the book of Luke is the idea that God loves to go after lost things. Most people are familiar on some level with the 3 parables from Luke 15, but that theme carries throughout the book. Here at the end of Chapter 2 we see Jesus himself “lost” in the city of Jerusalem. He didn’t think he was lost, but his parents did. Pastor Jacob declared that 2024 can be a year of recovery—the recovery of lost things. As you read and pray this week, may you consider what God is seeking to recover in your life, in the lives of those close to you, and in the world in general.

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

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### DAILY STUDY

#### MONDAY: LUKE 2.41-42 (NIV)

*Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.*

- As we saw last week, Mary and Joseph were faithful observers of the Law of God. They followed the Jewish customs, and therefore, they naturally would have traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. This may have been the twelfth time that Jesus made this journey in his lifetime. As a younger child, friends and relatives might have carried him and looked after him along the way. Now he was approaching an age when a typical Jewish male would be thinking about their role as a man among God’s people. This trip was different from the previous ones.. **Do you recall special moments when you began to become aware of what you might be (or might be called to be) as an adult?**
- *God, I thank you for the markers along my journey that point out my growth in relationship with you. Continue to reveal the ways you want to use me for your purposes. Amen.*

## TUESDAY: LUKE 2.43-45

*And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it,<sup>44</sup> but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances,<sup>45</sup> and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.*

- Very few of us today can imagine the kind of close-knit community where a parent would feel perfectly confident entrusting their child to the care of the collective group. Mary and Joseph had not laid eyes on their son for many hours, but were not concerned because they truly believed he was with the larger group that was traveling together. Eventually they realized that they had lost him. It's interesting that, in this exploration of lost things, Jesus was the first one who seemed to be lost. That's probably what his parents would have said, "He's lost!" And with the desperation of parents who can't find a child, they returned to the last place they saw him, Jerusalem. **Think of a time you lost something precious. How did you react? What thoughts went through your mind?**
- *Thank you God for searching for me in my lostness. I didn't always even know that I was lost, but you came and found me anyway. Thank you Jesus. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY: LUKE 2.46-49

*After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.<sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.<sup>48</sup> And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."<sup>49</sup> And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"*

- Pastor Jacob pointed out the parallel between Jesus being "lost" for three days in Jerusalem and lost to the world while laying in the tomb after his crucifixion. The number of days is significant. It was long enough to make one wonder– is this really it? Will we really never see Jesus again? When Mary and Joseph found their pre-teen son sitting among the teachers in the temple, they witnessed his next step towards living out his mission. Speaking to the man who had raised him as a son on earth, he identified that God's house (the temple) was his Father's house. **Are you ever prone to lose track of the big picture in a moment of crisis?**
- *Jesus, as a young boy you remembered who your Father was and remained devoted to living out your mission. Send your Spirit to help keep me focused on following you. Amen.*

## THURSDAY: LUKE 2.50-52

*And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.<sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.*

<sup>52</sup> *And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.*

- Jesus had just reminded his parents of his status as the Son of God. It was still a little abstract for them (who among us has Jesus all figured out?!), but they kept walking. They did what you do after a traumatic event like losing your child—they went home. Jesus was aware that he was still a child and still had to increase in wisdom and stature, and so he remained as a child to his earthly

parents. It was a gift to them and to the whole world, because it allowed Jesus to be nurtured and to gain favor with God and man. **Have you ever heard or read the words of Jesus and said, “I just don’t understand!”? Are there times and places where you haven’t felt safe to say that? With whom do you feel safe in wrestling with the words of Jesus?**

- *God, you work through mysterious things and in mysterious ways to reach the least, the last, and the lost in your creation. Even when I don’t fully understand, help me to believe. Amen.*

#### **FRIDAY: LUKE 19.10**

*For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*

- The scene of the 12 year-old Jesus in the temple sets us up for the big reveal that is to come soon in the book of Luke (Luke 4.17-21). Jesus boldly announced that he was the One that everyone had been waiting for—the One who would bring salvation. This verse from Luke 19 comes at the end of the story of Zacchaeus, a corrupt tax collector who received salvation through an encounter with Jesus. He might have been someone others thought was beyond redemption. But corrupt agents of the government tax collectors (and we) are the kind of people Jesus came to seek and to save. Thank God! **Who are the people who seem to be beyond God’s plan of redemption? Can you imagine them having a turn around like the one Zacchaeus experienced?**
- *Jesus, I am chief among those who are in need of your grace and forgiveness. Thank you for seeking me when I was lost. Thank you for your gift of salvation. Amen.*

#### **SATURDAY: PSALM 51.10-12**

*Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

<sup>11</sup> *Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.*

<sup>12</sup> *Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

- Throughout the scriptures, we see God pursuing lost things and offering restoration. God sought out Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, Jacob as he wrestled an angel, Moses in the wilderness, and many more. David is also proof that God does not give up on us. The anointed king had gone astray pursuing his own heart instead of God’s. Here in Psalm 51 we can see the hope he had that God could still restore him. **Have you ever had a moment of realization that God was still pursuing you in spite of your mistakes?**
- *God, create in me a pure heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Please restore to me the joy of your salvation. Amen.*

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

Jesus was found in the temple because he was “about the Father’s business”.

The Father’s business is the recovery of lost things.

Be about the Father’s business. Ask God to give you a heart for lost things.

Prayers for lost things...what lost people, situations, relationships, dreams are you lifting up to God this week?

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