



Welcome!

SERIES: Everything in Between
Today's Message: *The Math of Mercy*
Dr. Lance D. Watson, Senior Pastor

PRAYER: Seeking God, we stand in awe of your love that is so personal and so relentless. Thank you for being the Shepherd who didn't stay on the hillside but came down into the thickets and the shadows to find us. Thank you that when we wandered off—distracted by our own desires or lost in our own mistakes—you didn't wait for us to find our way back to you. **You came for us.** Give us the heart of the Shepherd. Shake us out of our comfort zones and our “ninety-nine” mentality. May we be a community that doesn't just wait for people to show up, but a people who go out to find them. Grant us the stamina to search, the strength to carry those who are weary, and a voice that joins in the heavenly celebration when even one person comes home. In the name of the Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ, Amen.

ICEBREAKER: What is one thing—an object, a pet, or even yourself—that you've managed to get hilariously lost?

INTRODUCTION: Herding sheep is a never-ending task. As soon as one is found, another may go missing. Our lives have a similar ebb and flow—in one moment we might feel like we have it all together, and in the next, we're struggling to survive. But no matter how “lost” we feel, the Good Shepherd is on watch. Alleluia! *Invite someone to share this series with your group.*

SCRIPTURE: Read **Luke 15:1-7:** Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³ Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

DISCUSSION:

1. **What stood out in today's message?** What's one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message today?
2. **The Context of the Crowd:** In verses 1-2, the Pharisees and teachers of the law mutter that Jesus “welcomes sinners and eats with them.” Why do you think Jesus chose to respond to their criticism with a story about a sheep instead of a direct theological argument?
3. **The Logic of the Search:** From a business or “common sense” perspective, leaving 99 sheep alone in the open country to find one seems reckless. What does this “reckless” search tell us about how God values the individual versus the collective?



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4. **The Response to Finding:** When the shepherd finds the sheep, his first instinct is to rejoice and call his friends together (verses 5-6). If we are meant to mirror the heart of the shepherd, how does our community typically react when someone who was “lost” returns? Is our reaction closer to the shepherd's joy or the Pharisees' skepticism?
5. **The Definition of “Lost”** -- The sheep likely didn't intend to get lost; it probably just wandered off one bite of grass at a time. In our own lives, what are the “distractions” or “small bites of grass” that tend to lead us away from the flock and the Shepherd?

CHALLENGE: Identify the “one” person in your circles who seems the most distanced or overlooked this week and intentionally reach out to them with a gesture of kindness.

SERVE: March 29 is **INVITE SUNDAY**. Create a list of people you will invite to worship with you and then practice “radical hospitality” by inviting them now.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also “find, follow and like” our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/myspbc. Turn on your notifications.

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

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We Care!

NOTICE: PLEASE BE PATIENT AS WE GRADUALLY REOPEN OUR CAMPUSES IN THE SAFEST MANNER POSSIBLE. As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472

EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org

SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org

Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org

Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org

Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org

Encore (50-59): Lisa Johnson: Lisa.Johnson@myspbc.org

Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org

Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000

EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.

GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study.
Previous GPS Guides are available online at www.myspbc.org.