The Berean

Daily Verse and Comment

Luke 15:5-7

(5) And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. (6) And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' (7) I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

New King James Version

Just people need no repentance because they need no change of mind and purpose. Some people were reared in a godly and righteous family environment. Their parents obeyed and worshipped according to God's laws, statutes, and ordinances, and taught their children to do likewise. The Gentile Cornelius was one such man (Acts 10:1-2). Of course, no human being is completely just (Ecclesiastes 7:20), but he may be righteous in comparison to those who flagrantly sin, such as those succinctly described in Luke 15:1. A just person cannot repent of the idolatries of a pagan, which he has not practiced, nor of the larcenies of a tax collector, of which he has never been guilty. When comparing just people to flagrant sinners, we immediately see what Jesus means: These needed no repentance in comparison to the others, not being guilty of such gross sins.

There is more immediate joy over a sinner who repents and follows Christ than over those who are already repentant and safely within God's flock. The latter already have greater and more intimate happiness—eternal joy!—within the Family of God. Faithful members should be elated by the fact that their Shepherd loves and cares for them so intimately. And for the one who strayed, upon genuine repentance, there is hope of salvation.

— Martin G. Collins

To learn more, see:
Parables of Luke 15 (Part One)

Related Topics:
Conversion of Cornelius
Debt, Our Unpayable
Distinction between Righteous and Wicked
Indebtedness to Christ
Indebtedness to God
Parable of the Lost Sheep
Repentance, Motivation For
Righteousness

Commentary copyright © 1992-2026 Church of the Great God
New King James Version®, Copyright© 1982, Thomas Nelson. All rights reserved.