

## SEARCHING FOR WHAT IS LOST

*Luke 15: 1-10*

The Pharisees and scribes were grumbling because Jesus was too friendly with sinners. It is the eternal temptation of those who consider themselves good. In fact Jesus does not defend himself nor does he say the Pharisees were exaggerating. Through the two parables he confirms that God does exactly that. Thus God, in Jesus, shows himself close to those who make mistakes, even big ones!

Jesus gives us the two examples of people searching for what is precious to them. Think of the trouble you go to find something you have lost. The search is more thorough when what we have lost is very valuable. And we hear of the joy that comes when they find it. Jesus uses these examples to try and explain to us the sense of how God seeks us, and his joy when our friendship with him is renewed. His searching for us cost him more than just the search – it cost him his life.

The search for the one sheep is not the sort of doctrine you learn in business schools. It sounds outlandish, to abandon the well-behaved and spend your energies on the outside chance of rescuing the delinquent 1%. Yet over the centuries these words have inspired good Christians to reach out to those who have drifted into isolation and despair. While common sense urges us to spend ourselves on those who reward our efforts, Jesus worked in another direction: The healthy have no need of a doctor.

Perhaps in each of us there's a spark of the black sheep that will not live under restraint. It is important to let the Lord find us, bringing healing to us and returning us to his flock.

At a different angle, as baptised Christians we also have some share in the work of our Good Shepherd who never ceases to seek the lost ones that he came to save.