

## WAS LOST BUT NOW IS FOUND

On Saturday June 18th we received a knock at our front door around 9:45 p.m. It is an unusual time for us to have somebody knocking at our door. When I opened the door, I saw a lady that lives three blocks over from us. I usually see her riding her bike holding onto a dog leash while her husky runs beside her. She told Nadine and I that she found a lost dog in the area and wondered if it was our Daisy. She found out right away it was not Daisy as she was barking up a storm behind me.

Nadine and I went out to see this dog and sure enough it had a lot of similarities in looks to our Daisy. Standing with this lost dog was this woman's daughter, and another neighbour from down the street. I did not recognize the dog, nor was there a tag on its collar. We were all surprised that nobody was out looking for this dog at the time. We decided to walk over to the home of a neighbour who knows a lot of people and their dogs in the area. Nadine knocked on her door but being the time of night it was, they did not answer. By this time, it was 10:00 p.m.

We began discussing what we should do at this late hour. We could not take the dog in because our Daisy is not very pet friendly with her colleagues. The one lady aiding in the search said she would take the dog for the night even though her husband would have a fit. Before departing Nadine suggested that she put a photo of this lost dog on our neighbourhood Face Book page with the hopes somebody might see the picture and recognize who the owner was. Nadine did not have her phone with her so she told the lady who would be keeping the dog she would come over to her house to take the picture once she got her phone from our house. Before we all left the three people who originally found this lost dog thanked us for trying to help them find its owner. We thanked them in return for having done everything they had.

I am going to leave you in suspense for a few short moments about whether we found the dog's owner or not. What I want to focus on is how the three people thanked us for making the effort to help find this lost dog's owner. We all lose things from time to time. I am not talking about our patience or our minds, even though we sometimes lose these things. When we, or somebody

we know loses something, how much effort do we put into finding it? For me, it depends on what it is and who is asking.

Around our house if my wife or daughter needs something to be found they always ask me to find it. They know finding things is something I am really good at. It is one quality I have inherited from my father. Whether it is an article of clothing, or usually my daughter's ear buds, I put a lot of effort into trying to find it for them. I do not always find it right away, but I do not give up until it is found. The reason why I put this much effort into finding these items for them is because of my love for them and knowing the missing item is important to them. I am sure each one of us puts in this kind of effort when somebody we know loses something and needs help finding it.

We all know and love Jesus and Scripture makes it very clear that He is asking for our help to find His lost sheep in this world. Jesus tells three different parables in Luke 15 to stress this fact. The three parables He tells are of the **lost sheep, the lost coin, and of course the lost or prodigal son**. Each parable stresses **how valuable every individual who is lost in having a relationship with Him is to our Saviour**. In fact, Jesus pointed out how the angels in heaven rejoice over a lost sinner being found. We know how valuable each and every person is to Jesus, and we also realize in these parables He is asking us to make every effort to help Him find them.

The question we must ask ourselves is whether we are making this effort for Jesus? Perhaps like Nadine and I did with the lost dog, we would in that situation because the dog is innocent and vulnerable. Jesus' lost sheep are just as vulnerable in their situations. Or maybe like me we will put the effort into finding things when people we know and love ask us to find something. We know Jesus and we love Him too so are we responding in the same manner by putting effort into finding His lost sheep? In the parable Jesus told, 99 sheep were with the shepherd and only one was lost.

In these days and times, the number of Jesus' lost sheep is increasing. We know some of these lost sheep by name. Some of these lost sheep are family members, others are neighbours or friends, and still others are colleagues. Jesus is hoping that we are making every effort to help them to find their way back to Him. Let's make sure we are making every effort to help them find their

way to do so. We can do this by **holding them up in prayer** and asking Jesus to make Himself known and real to them. We can also do this by being a **positive witness** to them of the difference a relationship with Jesus can make in one's life. We can also do so by **showing them Christ-like love** whenever opportunities to do so arise. These lost people that we know by name are precious to Jesus. He is asking us to make every effort to help them find Him. Because it is our Saviour who is asking, let's make sure He sees that we are doing this.

I told you I would return to the lost dog. After Nadine got her phone, she headed over to the house of the lady who was going to keep the lost dog for the night. It so happened when she arrived home with the dog, her next-door neighbour drove into his driveway. She asked him if he recognized the dog. He came over, took a look, and realized it was his dog. He had been out for a couple of hours and had no idea how the dog got loose. He doesn't walk his dog, but rather lets it out in the backyard. That is why none of us recognized the dog.

The owner was relieved that his dog had been found even though he had no idea it was missing. When Nadine came home and told me all of this, I was relieved to know a dog that had been lost was now found. It all turned out well because five people made the effort. I do not know if the angels in heaven were rejoicing when this happened, but maybe all the dogs up there were barking. I felt in my heart that Saturday night Jesus was telling me to remind everyone to do the same with His lost sheep. Let's do our part so that our efforts might result in happy endings like this dog's story did.

**Keep Safe and God Bless –**

**Pastor Dean**