

**NE MN Synod Lay Leader Network**  
**Year 3 Session 3: Luke 15**  
**5 February 2022**

**Premises**

1. Luke describes an arc of transcendence that reaches:
  - a. From Judea/Galilee to Jerusalem to all nations to us to all nations.
  - b. From Law/Prophets/Psalms to words of Jesus to us.
2. The transcendence is carried by Word and Holy Spirit.
3. Word and Holy Spirit call us to complex and specific expressions of transcendence.
4. We will enter the meaning of Luke 15 through *lectio divina*.

*Lectio*

**Luke 15:1-32**

<sup>1</sup> Now all the **tax collectors** and **sinners** were **coming near** to **listen** to him. <sup>2</sup> And the **Pharisees** and the **scribes** were **grumbling** and saying, "**This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.**"

<sup>3</sup> *So he told them this parable:* <sup>4</sup> "Which one of you, having a hundred **sheep** and **losing** one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is **lost** until he **finds** it? <sup>5</sup> When he has **found** it, he lays it on his shoulders and **rejoices**. <sup>6</sup> And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, '**Rejoice with** me, for I have **found** my sheep that was **lost**.' <sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more **joy** in heaven over one sinner who **repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

<sup>8</sup> *"Or what woman having ten silver **coins**, if she **loses** one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she **finds** it?" <sup>9</sup> When she has **found** it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, '**Rejoice with** me, for I have **found** the coin that I had **lost**.' <sup>10</sup> Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who **repents**."*

<sup>11</sup> Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The **younger** of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the **property** that will belong to me.' So he divided his **property** between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later the younger son **gathered** all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he **squandered his property** in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup> When he had spent **everything**, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup> He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything.

<sup>17</sup> But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "**Father, I have sinned** against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup> **I am no longer worthy** to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" <sup>20</sup> So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was **filled with compassion**; he **ran** and **put his arms around** him and **kissed** him. <sup>21</sup> Then the son said to him, '**Father, I have sinned** against heaven and before you; **I am no longer worthy** to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a **robe** -- the best one -- and put it on him; put a **ring** on his finger and **sandals** on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And get the **fatted calf** and kill it, and **let us eat and celebrate**; <sup>24</sup> for this son of mine was **dead** and is **alive** again; he was **lost** and is **found**!' And they began to **celebrate**.

<sup>25</sup> "Now his **elder** son was in the field; and when he came and **approached** the house, he **heard** music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup> Then he became **angry** and **refused to go in**. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that **I might celebrate** with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' <sup>31</sup> Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> But **we had to celebrate and rejoice**, because this brother of yours was **dead** and has come to **life**; he was **lost** and has been **found**.' "

**Context: Position of Luke 15 within Structure of the Gospel of Luke**

<b>1-2: Good News</b>	<b>3-9:50: Voices</b>	<b>9:51-19:48: Journey</b>	<b>19:45-21:38: Temple</b>	<b>22-23: Passion</b>	<b>24: Resurrection</b>
1:1-4 Prologue	3:2 Word came Repentance	10: Love God/neighbor	20: Wicked tenants	Passover	1-2 Empty tomb Remember
2:9-11 Great fear Don't fear Good news	Forgiveness Is 40 Prepare All flesh	11: Pray	20-21: Scribes/widow	Lord's supper	Remembered Told
Joy All Savior Christ	3:22-23 Baptism Holy Spirit Word Son Beloved Pleased	13-19: Kingdom 14: hospitality <b>15: lost/found/rejoice</b> 16: Rich man/Lazarus 17: Lepers 18: Pharisee/tax collector 19: Zacchaeus	21 Signs	Greatness Denial Trial Crucifixion Death/Burial	13-35 Emmaus Throwing words Opening scripture Breaking bread told
	4:1-15 Wilderness Son: Dt x 3				36-49 Jerusalem Terror/doubt Understanding Christ Suffer Rise Proclaim Repentance Forgiveness To all nations
	4:16ff Good news Word/Spirit: Is 61 Poor/Acceptable year Not acceptable				Stay
	6: SP blessings/woes Hear: do/not do				
	8: Soils Hear: do/not do				
	9: Must/If any				
	9: Transfiguration Son/Chosen/Listen				

### Good News Context: Alpha (2:9-11) and Omega (24:44-49)

1. Luke 2:9-11

Shepherds feared a great (*mega*) fear

Don't be afraid

For

I am bringing you good news (one word: "evangelizing" ["gospeling"] you)

Great (*mega*) joy

For all the people

Savior

Christ

2. Luke 24:44-49

My words

Everything written about me must be fulfilled

Law of Moses

Prophets

Psalms

Opened their minds to understand the scriptures

Christ

Suffer

Rise

Repentance and forgiveness of sins to be proclaimed in his name to all nations

Stay until clothed with power

### Syntactical Structure of Luke 15

1-2 Setting

Tax collectors/sinners: coming near to listen

Pharisees/scribes: grumbling

"This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3-7 Man has 100 sheep

Loses 1 / Finds the lost sheep / Rejoices

Calls together friends/neighbors "Rejoice with" me

For lost (sinner) / found (repents) / joy

8-10 Woman has 10 coins  
Loses 1 / Finds lost coin  
Calls together friends/neighbors / "Rejoice with" me  
For lost (sinner) / found (repents) / Joy

11-32 Man has 2 sons

Younger son

Father

Becoming lost

Give me my share

Divides his property (*bios*)

Gathered

Traveled

Squandered (*diaskorpizo*) his property (*bios*)

Spent everything [famine]

Hired himself/would have filled himself

Becoming found

Came to himself: I am dying!

I will get up, go to my father, and say

Father I have sinned

I am no longer worthy

Treat me like one of your hired hands

Went to his father

Saw him

Filled with compassion

Ran

Put his arms around him

Kissed him

Said: Father I have sinned

I am no longer worthy to be called your son

Said to slaves: best robe, ring, sandals, kill fatted calf

Let us eat and celebrate

For my son: dead/alive; lost/found

They began to celebrate

Older son

In field  
Came  
Heard music/dancing  
Asked slave  
Your brother has come back  
Your father has killed fatted calf

Became angry, refused to go in

Listen:

I have been working  
I have never disobeyed  
You have never given me  
That I might celebrate  
When this son of yours  
Came back  
Devoured your property  
You killed the fatted calf for him

Father

Began to plead

Son  
You are always with me  
All that is mine is yours  
We had to celebrate and rejoice  
Because this brother of yours was dead, has come to life  
Was lost, has been found

**Exposition: Word Studies**

15:1-2 Setting

Tax collector (*telones*)

3.12 come, what should we do?  
5.27 Levi  
5.30 complain (*gogguzo!*): why eat with tc/sinners?  
7.34 friend of  
15.1!  
18.10,11,13 went to temple to pray: be merciful to me, a sinner!

Sinner (*hamartolos*)

- 5.8 Peter: I am a s. man
- 5.30 why eat/drink with
- 5.32 I have come to call
- 7.34 friend of tc/s
- 7.37 sinful woman
- 7.39 she is a s.
- 15.1 come near to listen
- 15.2 welcomes/eats with
- 15.7 joy over one s. who repents
- 15.10 joy over one s. who repents
- 18.13 be merciful to me, a s.
- 19.7 guest of

Come near (*eggizo*)

- 15.1 tax collectors/sinners come near to listen
- 15.25 older brother comes near (what will he do?)

Listen (*akouo, shema*)

- 6.27,47,49 Sermon on the Plain
- 8.8,10,12,13,14,15 Parable discourse
- 8.21 my mother, brothers
- 9.35 Voice: my Son, listen to him
- 15.1 tc/sinners come near to listen
- 16.29,31 to Moses/prophets

Pharisees (*pharisaioi*) and scribes (*grammateis*)

- 5.30 why eat/drink
- 15.2 grumble: welcomes, eats with
- 18.11 came to pray

Grumble (*diagogguzo, gogguzo*)

5.30 why eat/drink with tc/s?

15.2

19.7 he has gone to house of a sinner

Eats with (*esthio sun*)

15.2

Ac 11.3!

(table fellowship defines boundaries!)

15:3-10: Lost sheep, coin

Lose / Destroy (*apollumi*)

9.24 save a life or lose it?

15.4,4,6 sheep

15.8,9 coin

15.17 I am perishing!

15.24 my son was being destroyed (lost?)

15.32 your brother was lost (perishing?)

19.10 Son of Man came to save the lost/perishing

Find (*heurisko*)

15.4,5,6 sheep

15.8,9,9 coin

15.24 son of mine

15.32 brother of yours

Joy (*chara*)

2.10 mega joy

15.7 more joy in heaven

15.10 more joy in presence of angels

24.52 worshiped, returned with great joy

Rejoice (*chairō*)

15.5 finds lost sheep, rejoices

15.32 we had (*dei*) to celebrate (*euphraino*) and rejoice (*chairō*)

Rejoice with (*sugchairo*)

15.6 with

15.9 with

15:11-32: Prodigal family

Give (*didomi*)

A fruit of repentance

A sign of presence of the kingdom

Or the opposite!

Divided his property (*bios*)

15.12 father gave

15.30 son spent all

Squandered (*diaskorpizo*)

15.13 gathered, threw away all

I have sinned (*hamartano*)

15.18 practice speech

15.21 live speech!

(cf. 24.47: repentance/forgiveness of sins proclaimed in his name to all nations)

(Note other sinners!)

(Significance of Psalm 51 in the Psalter, Deuteronomistic History, Canon, and liturgy!)

From Torah in heart (righteous/wicked) / to last word Hallelujah

Books (I-V) collections and superscriptions create meaning

Davidic collection

Book I Happy David

Book II Broken David

Book III Rejected David

Book IV Remembered David

Book V David's Praise

Psalm 51 ss: when David had gone into Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12: You are the man! I have sinned!)  
Have mercy (my transgressions, iniquity, sin)  
Create clean heart  
Then I will teach  
Open my lips  
Acceptable sacrifice: broken heart  
Hermeneutical conclusion: David = wicked!

Had compassion (*splagchnizomai*)

7.13 Jesus  
10.33 Good Samaritan  
15.20 Father

Kissed (*kataphileo*)

7.38 sinful woman continued kissing his feet, bathing them with her tears  
7.45 to pharisee: you did not kiss me  
15.20 Father/son  
(cf. Jacob/Esau in Genesis 33:4)

Celebrate (*euphraino*)

15.23 let us  
15.24 they began to  
15.29 that I might  
15.32 we had to  
16.9 every day

It is necessary (*dei*)

9.22 Son of Man must  
15.32 we had to celebrate  
24.7 Son of Man must  
24.26 necessary for Christ  
24.44 all must be fulfilled

*Lectio* Summary

How does Luke 15 (lost / found / rejoice) develop the paradigmatic terms of the Gospel (2:9-11) and the unfinished conclusion (24:47)?

Great joy

For all the people

Savior

Christ

Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations

*Meditatio*

As you “listen” and “understand” Luke 15, what edges of transcendence do you feel Word and Holy Spirit are calling you, your community and our church to experience?

How do you see the paradigmatic words of Luke 15 being lived out today?

How do you identify with:

Tax collectors and sinners

Pharisees and scribes

Younger son

Older son

Father

*Oratio:* “Lord, teach us to pray!”

*Contemplatio*

**Session 4 Assignment: Develop a contemporary mission document for your congregation.**

**Select either Philippi (Acts 16; Philippians) or Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9; 1 Thessalonians) as a model for renewal of your congregation.**

1. Describe the context of mission
  - a. Use the Acts narrative and descriptions from the Pauline letter to develop a profile of the 1<sup>st</sup> century church. How do those characteristics apply to your current setting?
  - b. Select one or two descriptions of contemporary culture from Root and/or Bonhoeffer that you see as especially pertinent to your ministry setting. How is that cultural description lived out in your setting?
  - c. What is your current mission statement? What strengths and limitations do you see in your current mission?
2. What principles emerge from Acts and the letter that would be beneficial to your congregational mission?
3. What action steps could be taken to implement these principles of renewal?