Preschool–Grade 6

The Lost Coin

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Every person matters to God. He seeks the lost, heaven rejoices over one sinner who repents, and we should share His joy instead of grumbling.
Bible passage: Luke 15:1–10. Students read it out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." *Luke 15:10 (KJV)* and "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." *Luke 19:10 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Luke 15 and Luke 19:1–10. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Would You Search? (5–10 minutes)

Name one side of the room "I'd search the whole house" and the other "I wouldn't bother." Read each item and students walk to a side: 1) a penny; 2) your phone; 3) a birthday card from your grandmother; 4) a library book due tomorrow; 5) your little brother, lost at a store. Ask: *What makes something worth searching for? Is it what it costs, or what it means to you?* Say: "Jesus told a story about a woman who turned her house upside down for one piece of silver."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Luke 15:1–10. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **publicans** (15:1): tax collectors; **sinners**: people known for living in sin
- **Pharisees and scribes** (15:2): religious leaders and teachers of the law; **murmured**: grumbled
- **receiveth sinners** (15:2): welcomes sinners
- **parable** (15:3): a story that teaches a lesson
- **pieces of silver** (15:8): silver coins; **seek diligently**: search carefully and keep going
- **likewise** (15:10): in the same way; **in the presence of**: right there with; **repenteth**: turns from sin back to God

Explain the setting: The leaders complained that Jesus welcomed sinners (15:2). Jesus answered with three parables in a row: a lost sheep (15:4–7), a lost piece of silver (15:8–10) and a lost son (15:11–32). Each one ends with joy when the lost is found.

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Look closer at 15:8–10: Jesus asked it as a question: what woman would *not* light a candle, sweep the house and seek diligently? Anyone would. One piece out of ten was worth the whole search. When she found it, she didn't keep the joy to herself: she called her friends and her neighbours to rejoice with her (15:9). Then Jesus said that heaven feels the same way about one sinner who repents (15:10).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. The Pharisees and scribes grumbled that Jesus welcomed sinners (15:2). Who were they leaving out? Do people still do that today?
2. The woman still had nine pieces. What does her search for one say about how God sees a single person, including you?
3. A coin can't find its way home. What does that picture tell us about people who are lost without God?
4. She lit a candle, swept and sought diligently (15:8). What does that teach about how God seeks people? How can we help?
5. Heaven rejoices over one sinner that repents (15:10). The grumblers didn't. When someone turns to God, how should we respond?
6. Luke 19:10 says Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost." Who is someone you could pray for this week?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **likewise** means in the same way; **in the presence of the angels of God** means right there in heaven; **repenteth** means turns from sin back to God. In Luke 19:10, **the Son of man** is Jesus, God who came to us as a man (1 Timothy 3:16), and **that which was lost** means the people who are far from God. Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Luke 15:10 this week; keep working on Luke 19:10 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "God seeks the lost, and heaven rejoices when one comes home. God loves you, and the Bible is honest about all of us: 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6); that is the moment heaven rejoices over (Luke 15:10). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. When have I felt left out or "lost"? What does it mean to me that God came looking?
2. Who is someone who seems far from God or left out? Write their first name or initials, and one way I can show them they matter.
3. Write a short prayer for that person, and thank God for seeking you.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: pray every day for the person you wrote down, and do one kind thing for them. When you hear that someone has turned to God, rejoice with them.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You seek the lost and that every person matters to You. Forgive us when we grumble instead of rejoicing. Help us care about the people around us the way You do. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: Jesus told this parable as a question (Luke 15:8), to answer the leaders who grumbled (15:2). The Bible doesn't say who the woman was, where the coin was lost or what it looked like. Keep to what the verses say.

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