

Impact

Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

Are you lost? Let yourself be found.

The question is not "How am I to find God?" but "How am I to let myself be found by him?" The question is not, "How am I to know God?" but "How am I to let myself be known by God?" And, finally, the question is not "How am I to love God?" But "How am I to let myself be loved by God?"

God is looking into the distance for me, trying to find me, and longing to bring me home. I am beginning now to see how radically the character of my spiritual journey will change when I no longer think of God as hiding out and making it as difficult as possible for me to find him, but instead as the one who's looking for me while I'm doing the hiding.

Questions like these raise a real issue: that of my own self-concept. Can I accept that I'm worth looking for? Do I believe that there is a real desire in God to simply be with me?

- Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

Have you ever been lost? Even for a few moments? Have you lost your bearings, without quick access to GPS? Do you even now remember the fear and anxiety of not knowing where you were or how to get home? Imagine yourself stranded on the side of a dark road, lost and alone, when suddenly a good friend appears. Your friend has been searching for you, and is so excited to have found you, calls your friends and throws a party in your honor!

Jesus tells the parable of the sheep that gets lost to make a point. He asks, "What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it?" Most of us have likely heard Jesus' question and wondered instead what person among us would leave the ninety-nine in the desert to go out in search of the one! **Jesus wants us to know the extent of God's great, outlandish love for us.** The parable points to the essential message of the gospel: God so desires that we be close to him, he came to be one with us in and through Jesus.

The sheep had wandered away, separating itself from the security of the shepherd and the flock. It might have thought for a time that it had found greener pasture all on its own. It may have been distracted by the promise of something better. It might have followed other sheep who seemed to be happy in their independence, not realizing that they, too, were lost.

Are you lost now? What separates you from God? Do you idolize material wealth or social status? Do you fail to see your poor brother or sister who needs your attention, care, and compassion? Are you challenged to be humble, remembering that everything you are and have comes from God, and instead, arrogantly lose sight of God's grace in your midst? Do you sometimes follow the crowd, those who have no time for or interest in God, only to find yourself feeling empty inside?

God's love is so incredible that God seeks us out when we are lost, and more. In Jesus' parable, when the shepherd finds the lost lamb, he carries it home, calling his friends and neighbors to rejoice with him. Are you lost? Let yourself be found by God who wants to be with you in mercy, love, and peace.

**MY CHILD,
CONDUCT YOUR
AFFAIRS WITH
HUMILITY, AND
YOU WILL BE
LOVED MORE
THAN A GIVER OF
GIFTS. HUMBLE
YOURSELF THE
MORE, THE
GREATER YOU ARE,
AND YOU WILL
FIND FAVOR WITH
GOD.**

**WHAT IS TOO
SUBLIME FOR YOU,
SEEK NOT, INTO
THINGS BEYOND
YOUR STRENGTH
SEARCH NOT.**

Sir 3:17-18

IMPACT THIS MONTH

What do you put before God? How will you resolve to serve God above all, as a sign of the importance of God in your life? Acknowledge the ways you are tempted, and resolve to turn toward God with your heart and life.

When tempted to focus on material things to an unhealthy extent, give money, time, or donated goods to the poor;

When your prayer seems like a laundry list of wants, focus instead on your spiritual needs and

the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of others;

When caught up in too much attention to yourself, sacrifice your time, attention, or money for another.

When you feel like you don't have time for God or anyone else, make time! Pray, give thanks, and share your blessings with others.

When tempted to unduly worry about money or the circumstances of your life, ask God for the grace to trust in him and act accordingly.



IN TRUE HUMILITY

What comes to mind when you hear the word "humility?" Humility is a quality that has great impact when we experience it in another. The humble person seems to understand his or her place in the world and as a result is not consumed by the constant pursuit of what he or she does not have, freeing him or her to value and care for others.

Humility can be misunderstood. Being humble does not mean acting as though

we do not have talents or expertise that need to be shared. When we were children, we might have been told to be humble rather than being taught not to be prideful. There is a difference. As C.S. Lewis noted, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less."

Jesus urges us to take the call to humility to heart: "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the



one who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 14:1, 7-14) Not only this, he explains that those who are to be given preferential treatment are the poor, crippled, lame and the blind.

In true humility, we see the needs of others and seek to follow Jesus' humble, self-giving way. We are humble when we put others' needs before our less important desires. We are humble when we live each day with the conviction that we have been entrusted with much and have responsibility to use it, to steward it, well.