

LESSON 12

Name: _____

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Directions: Read the cited scripture passages and related biblical footnotes to help you to fill in the blanks for each item.

1. According to Matthew 1:1 who is the intended audience of Matthew's gospel?

2. Keep this in mind as we do a contextual analysis of the parable contained in Matthew 18:10-14. It is called the parable of the _____.
3. "Contextual" means looking at the passages before and after the one being analyzed to get hints about its _____.
4. According to Matthew 18:1, to whom does Jesus address this parable?

5. This same verse gives Jesus' reason for telling the parable. The disciples have just asked Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the _____?"
6. The passage that comes right before the parable is an admonition of Jesus about scandal or bad example. In Matthew 18:6-9 Jesus warns: "Woe to the person who causes one of these little ones to _____." (v. 6)
7. The reason given for not despising these little ones is that "their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my _____." (v. 10)
8. In other words, these lowly children who at first glance seem unimportant are worthy of great respect because they have representatives before God in _____.
9. The passage following the parable of the lost sheep is another saying of Jesus. This one deals with the proper treatment of a stubborn _____.
10. "If your brother sins against you" (Mt 18:15-18) you are to follow a three step process in trying to win him over.
 - A. First, go alone to him and _____.
 - B. If he does not listen to you, take one or two others along with you as _____.
 - C. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the whole local community of believers. If he still refuses to repent of his faults, treat him like a Gentile or a tax collector. In other words, consider him an _____.
11. So the passage *before* the parable of the lost sheep and the passage *after* it both deal with _____.
12. Now let's look at the passage in the middle to see what it is about. This parable tells of a (good) shepherd who leaves a flock of ninety-nine sheep in order to rescue one sheep that has gone _____.

Lesson 12 continued

13. The passage before and after this parable both seem to treat sinners in the same way. Both of these passages give on sinners and consider them _____.
14. But the parable of the lost sheep counters such harsh treatment with the suggestion that the believers should not abandon sinners, but should actively _____.
15. In fact, Jesus further astonishes us by comparing lost sheep or sinners with the ones mentioned in Matthew 18:6, 10. They are the _____.
16. In this section Matthew seems to be saying that at the same time that God is severe, God is also _____.
17. Contextual analysis does not only examine the passages before and after the one being analyzed. This method also looks for clues about meaning in the parallel passages of other _____.
18. Luke 15:3-7 is the only other mention of this parable in the New Testament. In Matthew Jesus tells the parable to his disciples, while in Luke 15:2 Jesus is talking to _____.
19. In Matthew, the parable refers to God's pursuant love, even for sinners. In Luke, however, it is a justification for Jesus eating with _____. (v. 2)
20. In Matthew, the parable refers to the wishes of God in heaven about sinners, while in Luke the parable defends Jesus' (God on earth) hospitality of sinners when he sits down to _____.