

# Junior Soldiers

Unit 8 : Lesson 8



## Lost Everything!

**PURPOSE :** For the children to explore and understand that we are born and live separated from God (lost) until we choose to enter into right relationship with God (found), and this is worth celebrating.

Jesus said, "In the same way, there is more happiness in heaven because of one sinner who turns to God than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to."

Luke 15:7 (CEV)

## Consider & Prepare

### Read:

Luke 15

Isaiah 53:6

Romans 3:23–24

John 3:17

John 10

This lesson is the second part of a two-lesson series, following on from lesson 7 in this unit on the prodigal son. In that lesson we looked at the story of the lost son but focused on God's unconditional love and how both the sons were deserving of his love.

Today's lesson looks at all three stories in Luke 15—the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. We focus on the celebration that comes when something that is lost is found; how God celebrates with great joy when someone who was lost chooses to follow him.

What does it mean to be lost to God? Because of 'the fall' recorded in Genesis, all people are born in a sinful state and live in an imperfect fashion in an imperfect world. Creation is not as God intended it to be. His ideal is for us to be in close relationship with him—to be 'found' instead of 'lost'.

When we talk about salvation and being saved, we are talking about being saved from our natural sinful state. This change is like starting life afresh—like being 'born again', is how Jesus described it. When this happens, God celebrates, and so should all Christians

## What you will need:

### For 'Connecting In'

- *Cecil the Lost Sheep* – you might like to choose to use a copy of Cecil in book form, large book form or the downloadable book form that can be used on the multimedia screen; you will find these resources either in a Christian bookstore or at [www.lostsheep.com.au](http://www.lostsheep.com.au)
- 10 objects/items that will fit on a tray
- A tray to hold the items
- Cloth that will cover all the items
- A precious item
- Confetti, party poppers and party hooters

### For 'The Main Thing'

- Bibles
- Butchers paper
- Textas

### For 'Tying In'

- Paper
- Pens
- Textas or other drawing implements
- Scraps of coloured paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

### For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.



# Connecting In

## Cecil the Lost Sheep

Read *Cecil The Lost Sheep* to the children, using whatever format you choose.

- What a cool story, how excited was the shepherd when he found Cecil?
- I wonder if anyone has ever been that excited to see you or if you have been that excited to see someone.
- I wonder where you see God in this story.
- I wonder where you might see you in this story.

## What's missing game...

For this activity you will need ten different objects, a tray to put the objects on and a cloth that will cover all the objects.

- Give the children some time (e.g. one minute) to make a mental note of the objects on the tray.
- Cover the items and ask the children to close their eyes while you take away one of the items.
- Uncover the items and see if the children can guess what item is now missing from the tray.

**Link:** 'I wonder how you went at guessing what was missing from the tray. I wonder if the game would be easier if you were given more time to look at and get to know the items that were being displayed. God knows each of us so well; he knows so much about us. He knows when we stop listening to him or being

connected to him or being his true friend, and we wander off to be connected with other things.

Luke 12:7 tells us a little bit of how well he knows us and what we are worth to him: 'Even the hairs on your head are counted. So don't be afraid! You are worth much more than many sparrows.'

Today we are going to explore this a bit more as we look at three stories from Luke 15 that Jesus told to help us understand how much God celebrates when we are connected to him.



**OR**

### **Treasure Hunt...**

For this activity you will need to have an object that is precious to you (please be wise with this choice, nothing breakable or fragile). You will need to hide this object prior to the lesson. You might also like to have some confetti, party poppers or party hooters to show joy when the item is found.

- Talk to the children about an object that is precious to you that you have lost in this space.
- Tell them about the object and why it is precious to you and why you need to find it.
- Ask them to help you find it.
- When the item is found let them know how excited you are that you have it back again. It would be good to go over the top with excitement at this stage: you might want to have some confetti or a party popper or a party hooter to show the joy you are feeling. You could even do some funky party dance moves together.

**OR**

- Talk to the children about a leader that was supposed to be there to help today, someone special that the children will miss not being there.
- Tell them why the person is important and special to the lesson and why you need to find them.
- Ask them to help you find them.
- When the leader is found, let them know how excited you are that they have been found. It would be good to go over the top with excitement at this stage: you might want to have some confetti or a party popper or a party hooter to show the joy you are feeling. You could even do some funky party dance moves together.

**Link:**

- How did you feel when you found the item/leader?
- How exciting is it that this special item/person was found?

God knows each of us so well; he knows so much about us. He knows when we stop listening to him or being connected to him or being his true friend, and we wander off to be connected with other things.

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# The Main Thing

## Lost and found...

In the Bible, in Luke 15, it has three stories that talk about lost things: a lost sheep, a lost coin and a lost son. Last session we explored the story of the lost son and looked at how God loves us no matter what. (*Recap and remind the children of the prodigal son story from last time.*)

Explore together the three stories found in Luke 15. For this section you might like to divide the group into three smaller groups and get each group to look at one of the stories within this passage. While they are looking at the story ask them to think about the questions below **OR** you could give each group one of the stories from the passage and get them to act them out in a condensed time frame. After they have been acted out you could reflect as a group on the questions below.

- What do these stories have in common? (*Something lost; something found; celebration*)
- I wonder if any of you have ever been lost. What is it like to be lost?

Brainstorm what it feels like to be lost and then explore the following four areas that we can become lost in. Get the children to think of words that describe how they would feel when they are lost, e.g. panic, scared, lonely, sad etc.

1. Lost physically – describe the feeling when you became lost.
2. Lost mentally – daydreaming or feeling like everyone knows what's being talked about except you.
3. Lost relationally – no one cares, no friends, on your own, feeling lonely.
4. Lost spiritually – feeling like there is no God, no one is listening to your prayers, no one cares.

If this is what it is like to be lost physically, mentally, relationally or spiritually, what does it look like to be *found* by God, knowing and feeling comfortable that God loves you and you are connected with Him?

Brainstorm with the kids the opposite to the lost words above: What is it like to be found? e.g. safe, calm, happy etc.

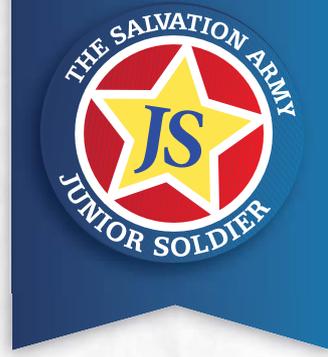
## Let's celebrate...

When someone finds Jesus, Christian should celebrate. In the stories, we read about how someone celebrated when they found a coin and a sheep and when a son returned home—but compare these celebrations to how much more exciting it is when someone gets to be friends with Jesus.

We should celebrate as a Junior Soldier group, as a church, as a family: God made us to be connected with other people and not be on our own, this means also celebrating with others. There are lots of things that we can get excited about and want to celebrate: when you get excited about something, what do you do? (*Give the children an opportunity to respond.*)

Do you usually celebrate on your own or do you want to go and share it with someone? Maybe you want to give someone a high five or a hug or a pat on the back.

In the Bible there are many references to believers being 'children of God' and being part of the 'family of God'. Some of you may know how exciting is when a new baby is welcomed into a family. Well, imagine how excited God gets each time someone joins his family and wants to be connected with him! He doesn't just want to celebrate on his own but to have all those in his family excited and wanting to celebrate together.



# Tying In

## In search of...

For this activity you will need some paper, pens, textas or other drawing implements, scraps of coloured paper, scissors and glue sticks.

Give the children the option of either writing or drawing a letter from God to someone who doesn't know him. This might include how excited he would be to have them as his friend.

## OR

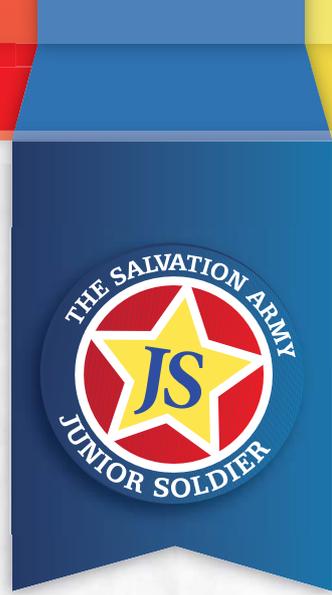
Create a 'Wanted' poster of someone they know who doesn't know God yet. The poster should indicate that God wants to find this person.

The children can write, draw or use little bits of paper for a collage for this activity.

## Prayer activity...

Have the leaders out the front of the room. Ask each of the children to think of at least one person that they know who isn't a part of God's family yet. When they have decided who they are going to pray for, they can run out the front and high five a leader and call out the person that they are praying for.

Have a leader close by praying for all those that the children have mentioned plus celebrating those that are already part of God's family.



# Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

## Prayer reminder...

- Put your letter or poster somewhere this week that will help you to remember to pray for the person who is not already a part of God's family.
- When saying grace at dinner time, choose (as a family) some people that you would like to pray for that you would like to be connected with God and be a part of his family.

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