

Lost fools: the condition of the heart  
“For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.” – Jesus (Luke 19:10)

*Remember, your attention needs to be not only on the behavior of your child, but more fundamentally on the condition that produces that behavior . . . .*

*Lasting change in the behavior of your children (the thing all parents long for) will always travel through the pathway of the heart . . . .*

*Every moment of discipline and correction is at the same time a God-given opportunity to get at the issues of the heart with your children. Your children need your authority, but they also need the grace of insight, because that grace of insight is the doorway to the grace of confession, which is the doorway to the grace of new life. - P Tripp, Parenting (pp. 100, 126,128)*

**Where we are in the Redemptive Story:**

we are here-ish

Creation ⇒ Fall ⇒ Redemption  Consummation

**What is the condition of the heart?**

**Scripture Study:**

1. David with Bathsheba: 2 Samuel 11-12:10
2. Peter's denial of Jesus: Luke 22:31-34, 54-62; John 21:15-19

*For Further Study*

- The Israelites' grumbling in the desert: Exodus 16
- The disciples in Gethsemane: Mark 14:32-42
- The Israelites' refusal to enter the Land: Numbers 13:1-2, 17-33, 14:1-24

**Questions to consider:**

1. What is prior context to this situation? What are the pressures and dynamics at play, leading up to this event?
2. What's the weakness, failure or sin playing out in this situation? What's wrong with the main character's response?
3. As an outsider to the story, what can you see would've been the better, more fruitful response? Why doesn't the main character respond this way? What seems to be going on?
4. What is the response from God (Jesus), or His representative? How is this an appropriate response in this situation? What's the wisdom in it? What seems to be the focus or goal?

5. If each of these situations is revealing the heart condition common to all humans, how have you seen similar tendencies play out in your child/ren? What's the parenting equivalent to this story? What do you think is going on in your child's heart in these moments?
  
6. And what do you think your child needs from you, in response?

**Big ideas** (from P. Tripp, *Parenting*)

- Those who are LOST . . .
  - believe the lies of *autonomy* and *self-sufficiency*.
  - need *insight* into their lost-ness, *compassion* and *understanding* toward their lost-ness, *hope* that there is real help available to them, *rescue* by God, and *wisdom* of when to say "no" to self
- The FOOL . . .
  - sees the world inside out and upside down (looks at what is wise and sees it as foolish)
  - lives as if God doesn't exist. Lives without a sense of the need for God's authority, wisdom, power and grace.
  - can say s/he believes in God, but practically deny his existence in the way s/he lives.
  - more naturally denies God's existence than humbly recognizes and submits to his holy demands.
  - needs to see God's *glory*, understand God's *wisdom*, hear God's *redemptive story* and know God's *welcome*.

*The mystery of the way God works is that he sends fools to rescue fools and because he does, it takes grace to be a tool of God's agenda of rescuing grace. Parents, the more you are ready and willing to confess the foolishness that causes you to need God's grace, the more you will be willing and ready to extend that grace to the foolish hearts of the children he has entrusted to your care. But remember: because of what Jesus has done for us, that grace is ready for the taking right here, right now. – P Tripp, Parenting (p. 136)*

**For Reflection:**

Insight into our children's hearts is gained as we continue to grow in having insight into our own hearts and our own deep need for the redemptive work of the Lord to bring change in us.

- How aware are you of your own lost and foolish condition?
- How are you continually inviting the Lord's heart transplant work in your own life – from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh?
- Where are you needing His wisdom and guidance to engage the heart of your child?

## Peter's denial of Jesus: Luke 22:31-34, 54-62; John 21:15-19

Luke 22:31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." 33 Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." 34 Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."

Luke 22:54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." 57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58 And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." 59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." 60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." 62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

John 21:15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." 16 He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. 18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." 19 (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."