

THE Gospel Part 3 – Who Are THE Lost? – Study Guide

This study guide is designed to help students navigate the profound scriptural shift regarding the target audience of the Gospel, the biblical definition of "the lost", and the essential distinction between being redeemed and obtaining salvation.

Definitions of Key Words

- **Lost** (*Abalumi*): A Greek transliterated word meaning to perish, to be ruined, or to get lost. Scripturally, it refers to those already owned by the Shepherd who have wandered from His influence.
- **Redemption**: God's act of purchasing an individual out of the world. It is an act of God's mercy and choice rather than a human work.
- **Salvation**: A future, conditional event related to inheriting the coming earthly kingdom and moving into eternal glory.
- **Parable**: A heavenly truth taught in an earthly context using similes or figures of speech so that obscure concepts can be understood by man.
- **Word of the Kingdom**: The specific "seed" or message of the Gospel that produces fruit in "good soil".
- **Human Sheep**: A biblical figure of speech used to describe people belonging to God's pasture.

Expansion of Key Points

1. The Gospel's Intended Audience

The sources argue that the Gospel is not written for "outsiders" or the ungodly world, but is specifically addressed to **God's redeemed and called**. This is evidenced by the "address labels" in the epistles, such as **Romans 1:7**, which identifies the recipients as those "called to be saints". Furthermore, as stated in **2 Timothy 2:10**, the Apostle Paul endured all things "for the sake of the elect," not the pagans, so that they might obtain the salvation found in Christ.

2. Redefining "The Lost"

In a scriptural context, "the lost" refers to those who are already owned by God

but have wandered away. This is illustrated in **Matthew 15:24**, where Jesus declares He was sent "only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". This concept is supported by **Psalms 119:176**, where David—a man after God's heart—confesses, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep". Thus, the "lost" are redeemed people perishing under the lack of the Shepherd's influence.

3. The Distinction Between Redemption and Salvation

Understanding the difference between redemption and salvation is described as fundamental to making the scriptures "fit". While one can be "elect" or redeemed, they must still move into **salvation**. As noted in **2 Timothy 2:10-13**, even the elect must "obtain the salvation" that leads to eternal glory. In this context, **Romans 10:9-10** is not a formula for an outsider to "get saved" but is an instruction for the redeemed to confess the Messiah and drop the Mosaic law to ensure their future inheritance.

4. Satanic Strategy: Diversion and Distortion

Satan's primary objective is to lead the redeemed away from the Messiah to a **"different" or "distorted" gospel**. According to **2 Corinthians 11:3**, Satan uses cunning to lead thoughts "astray from the sincere and pure devotion to Christ". This is often achieved through a **diversion tactic**: keeping the church focused on "outsiders" (pagans) so that the "insiders" (the redeemed) remain neglected, scattered, and blind to their coming kingdom inheritance.

5. The Criterion of the Sheepfold

The redeemed are identified by their response to the Shepherd's voice. In **John 10:4-5**, it is noted that sheep follow the Shepherd because they "know his voice," but a "stranger they will not follow". In fact, true sheep will "flee" from those who distort the Gospel. This internal recognition is a sovereign work; **Matthew 11:27** explains that no one knows the Father except the Son and "anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him".

6. The Ownership of the Sheep

Jesus does not "nick" sheep from another shepherd; ownership is always assumed in the parables. **John 17:6** clarifies this ownership, stating that the people Jesus manifested the name to were those God "gave me out of the world" and that "yours they were". Jesus died specifically for these sheep, as **John 10:15** states He "laid down his life for the sheep," rather than for the unredeemed world.

7. The Response of the Soil

The only way to distinguish the redeemed from the unredeemed is through their response to the "word of the kingdom". As seen in the **Parable of the Soils**, the "seed" is the kingdom message; good soil produces fruit, whereas seed thrown on "rocks" (the unredeemed) results in no change because the rock itself cannot become soil. This aligns with **Romans 10:17**, which teaches that "faith comes by hearing," meaning the message provides the redeemed with something they can finally believe.

Biblical References within the Source Excerpts

- **Inheritance Outcomes:** Daniel 12:2.
- **Winning the Elect:** 2 Timothy 2:10-13,,.
- **Redemption from the World:** John 17:6,,.
- **Targeting the Lost Sheep:** Matthew 15:24,,.
- **Paul's Specific Address:** Romans 1:7.
- **Salvation for the Redeemed:** Romans 10:9-10.
- **Satan's Cunning:** 2 Corinthians 11:3.
- **Deserting the Gospel:** Galatians 1:5-7,.
- **David as a Lost Sheep:** Psalm 119:175-176.
- **Human Sheep:** Ezekiel 34:30,
- **The Door and the Shepherd:** John 10:1-17, 10:26,
- **Blinding of the Pharisees:** John 9:39,,.
- **Sovereign Revelation:** Matthew 11:26-27.
- **The Lost Sheep Parable:** Luke 15:1-7.
- **Searching for the Astray:** Matthew 18:12.
- **Faith and Hearing:** Romans 10:17.
- **God's Love for the World:** John 3:16,

Study Questions

- Why do the sources claim that the Gospel is "private mail" meant for the elect?
- How does the Greek word *abalumi* change our understanding of being "lost"?
- Based on the transcripts, what is the "diversion tactic" Satan uses against the church?
- According to **John 10**, what is the specific criteria that identifies a true sheep?
- What is the significance of the "soil's response" in identifying a redeemed person?

Answer Key

- The scriptures are addressed specifically to the "saints" and "faithful" (e.g., **Rom 1:7**) to help them obtain a future salvation and inheritance.
- It means to perish or be ruined; it refers to sheep already in the flock who are wandering away from the Shepherd's influence and safety.
- Satan focuses the church's attention on reaching "outsiders" so that the "insiders" (the redeemed) are neglected and led toward a distorted gospel.
- A true sheep knows the Shepherd's voice, follows Him, and—crucially—will **flee** from the voice of a "stranger" (one who distorts the Gospel).
- The response (fruit) to the "word of the kingdom" is the indicator; if a person has "ears to hear," they will respond to the kingdom message, whereas "rocks" will never respond.

Exhortations

- **Shift Your Focus:** Stop allowing the theological systems of this world to dictate your mission. Follow the example of Paul and **focus your energy on the elect**, helping your redeemed brothers and sisters obtain their salvation.
- **Guard Your Ears:** Recognize that a "stranger" is anyone within the church who distorts the Gospel of the Kingdom. Do not try to "enlarge your knowledge" by listening to them; **flee from them** as Jesus commanded.
- **Seek the Wandering:** Understand that "the lost" are often sitting right next to you in church or wandering downtown. Herald the **message of the**

Kingdom and watch for the response of the "soil" to find those God has called.

- **Strive for the Gate:** Do not be comforted by the multitudes. The path to the Kingdom is a **narrow gate** that requires you to "strive" and change your life according to the Messiah's demands.