

**WHAT NUMBERS FLOAT YOUR BOAT??**

Luke 15:1-7

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. I never cease to be amazed at folks' attitudes concerning numbers.
2. Folks fall into three categories when it comes to numbers.
  - A. Those who ignore all numbers as much as possible.
  - B. Those who select certain numbers that are of interest to them.
  - C. Those who put numbers on everything.
  - D. Do numbers really matter??
3. Even the numbers on your boat matter to the game warden.
4. The preacher is all about numbers because numbers represent souls for whom Jesus died.
5. Whether we love or think we don't love numbers, everything in life in this world now and in eternity is associated with numbers.
  - A. The new heaven has numbers as stated in Rev. 21.
    - 1) In verses 12-13, 21, it says the final heaven has 12 gates and each is made of one pearl.
    - 2) In verse 14, it says the final heaven has 12 foundations with the 12 apostles' names.
    - 3) In verse 16 it says, the final heaven is 4-dimensional with each dimension being 1500 miles.
    - 4) In verse 17 it says, the final heaven's walls are 216 feet high.
  - B. John 21:11 states that Jesus told the disciples to cast their nets on the other side and they caught 153 fish in one cast.
  - C. The 4th book of the Bible is called Numbers because it refers to the numbering of the tribes of Israel according to God's command as they journeyed from Egypt for forty years until their arrival in Canaan.
  - D. It was a numbering census that caused Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem for Jesus to be born there as had been prophesied.
6. Since numbers are important to Jesus, they should be important to us.
7. In our text, we see Jesus revealing the seriousness of numbers.

**I. (vv. 1-2) NUMBERS MATTER TO THOSE WHO HAVE A COMPASSIONATE HEART.**

1. (v. 1) The numbers start with compassion.
  - A. D. L. Moody was teaching a Sunday school class in Chicago, and a young boy walked several miles to come, and someone asked him why he didn't go to a class that was closer to his home to which he replied, "Because they love a fella over here."
  - B. Lost sinners come to Jesus because they see compassion in Jesus's followers.
2. (v. 1) The numbers breed curiosity.
  - A. Folks see the changed lives of converts.
    - 1) First, we witness with a changed life.
    - 2) Then we witness with our changed lips.
    - 3) Matthew 5:16 – ***Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.***
  - B. Folks see the parking lot filling up with cars.
3. (v. 2) The numbers of Jesus's enemies even saw His compassion.
  - A. I'm so glad that Jesus isn't too busy to come to see sinners.
  - B. I'm so glad that Jesus came to visit this sinner.
  - C. Revelation 3:20 – ***Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me.***

**II. (vv. 3-4) NUMBERS MATTER TO THOSE WHO HAVE A CARING HEART.**

1. (v. 3) Almost all the parables that Jesus told referred to the priority of a caring heart.
  - A. Lk 15:8-10 – The lost coin showed caring for lostness in the house.
  - B. Lk 15:11-32 – The lost son showed caring for lostness outside the house.
  - C. Lk 10:30-37 – The good Samaritan showed caring for a stranger.
2. (v. 4) There is joy in the heart of every rescued sheep and shepherd when the lost are found.
  - A. The burden of my soul was rolled away when Jesus found me.
  - B. I am glad that Jesus had room at the foot of the cross for one more lost, repentant sinner like me!

**III. (vv. 5-6) NUMBERS MATTER TO THOSE WHO HAVE A LOVING HEART.**

1. John 13:35 – ***By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another.***
2. When the lost sheep is found, the loving shepherd picks it up and places it on his shoulder.
3. (v. 6) There is great rejoicing of everyone when the shepherd finds the lost sheep.
4. Do you get excited when lost sheep are gathered into God's fold?

**IV. (v. 7) NUMBERS MATTER TO THOSE WHO HAVE AN OPEN HEART.**

1. Jesus is our 1st example as stated in the theme verse of Lk 19:10 – ***For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.***
2. Heaven is our 2nd example as stated in Luke 15:7, 10 & 32.
3. Christians are to be Christ's 3rd example as stated in these verses:
  - A. Ps. 126:5-6 – ***They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goes forth and weeps bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.***
  - B. Ezekiel 3:18-19 – ***When I say unto the wicked, you shall surely die; and you do not give him warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he turns not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.***
  - C. Luke 14:23 – ***And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.***

**CONCLUSION:**

1. The key question is Are you numbered with the redeemed in heaven's record book?
2. Are the numbers of your priorities the numbers that matter to God and move His heart?
3. The Holy Spirit revealed this challenge to be relayed to all of us today, Each one Reach one!