The Lost Coin
Luke 15:8-10

8"Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house
and search carefully until she finds it? 9"When she has found it, she calls together her friends and
neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!' 10"In the same way, I tell
you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Setting

The lost coin is a unique parable to Luke. This parable is connected to the parable
of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7) and the parable of the lost sons (Luke 15:11-32). The
Lost coin is the parable that is in the middle of these other two parables. One
commentary explains the connection between the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the
Parable of the Lost Coin,

“As in the case of the Parable of the Lost Sheep, there is joy in heaven whenever
one who is lost (sinful) is found (repents). Both of these parables drives home the
point that it is natural to respond with joy when something (or someone) is
recovered. This joy stands in sharp contrast to the Pharisees and the other'
respectable’ religious people who grumbled because Jesus spent time wit those
whom the Pharisees would regard as ‘lost’. (Evans 232).

All of these parables deal with something being lost and then being found. All of these
parables were told to explain the joy that God and those in Heaven get from a lost person
coming back. One commentary explained it like this, “…again the point is that God
takes special delight in the restoration of the sinner who has been lost from his People” (Nolland 775).

It is, as the parable explains, the woman who lost that one coin would do anything to find that one coin. When it is found it is a finding of joy and one that she needs to share with her female friends. It is important to her, this is how God feels about his lost people, when one returns he is excited and filled with joy.

**Exegetical Analysis**

The woman in this parable was searching for her coin. In the modern context this seems trivial. I often drop a penny and it does not affect my life. But, in the time that this parable was written they did not have quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies (just as coins) but all of their money was in coins. The coin that the woman was searching for was called a drachma, which is explained as, “…was a silver coin worth about a denarius, or a day’s wage” (Culpepper 296). This coin was equivalent to a savings that could take them to a journey to Jerusalem or could keep a family alive if they had no income for a while. This coin was important, which implies that losing it was a great loss. One commentary explained this coin in this fashion, “Women’s search procedures in based on the drachmas were heavily dished and not truly circular and therefore they could not roll far. The poor natural light in the house and the capacity of the broom to catch up the coin with the pile of dust perhaps to reveal the presence of the coin by causing it to tinkle” (Nolland 775). This explains why the woman thought she could find this coin just by sweeping. Another important part of this is the fact that the home, is typical of the time. This meant that it was small room, had a dirt floor, and no window. It implies that the
woman does three things; lights a lamp, sweeps the floor, and searches diligently. This reveals how important this coin was to her.

Another interesting area of this parable was the fact this parable uses a woman as the central character. Within this time frame, it is unusual for women to be talked about. So, for Jesus to use a woman as the main character in this parable, reveals a different important aspect. For instance, for a woman finding the coin would be even more essential. One commentary talks about the fact that it could be her dowry, which would get her married and would keep her surviving (Culpepper). In the context of the Bible times, women had very little or no rights. They could not divorce and they had no income (unless as prostitutes) if they were left by men. So, for this woman the loss of this coin could be costly, it could mean starving to death or watching her family have severe financial problems. Interestingly enough, the parable later goes on to explain that the woman then called her female friends to tell of her joy of finding her coin. This restates the fact that the use of a woman in this parable is essential, women 

This parable, unlike the lost sheep, reveals the story of a poor woman. Unlike the lost sheep, this reveals this parable about a rich man who owned many sheep. Ironically, these two parables are very opposite. This poor woman needed to find this lost coin, it was essential. When Jesus told this parable, it allowed those who did not own a lot of sheep to understand a different context. This allowed the listener to have an understanding of the way in which God feels when one of the lost comes back in their context.

Message

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The message of this parable can be seen in many different ways. The message can be to those who are in search of God. It reveals that God is wanting you to come back, it provides great joy not only to God but to all of those in Heaven. Another important understanding is that of the need for those who are already apart of the kingdom of God to continue to reach out to those who are lost. Like the woman who is searching for that coin with all she had, this is how we should be pursuing those who have fallen away. It should be the Christians role to show God’s love to those who are lost, especially because if they do come back to God, there is so much joy for the person and for God.

**Application**

Where are you in our lives? Are you the coin who is lost and unsure of where to go? Or, are you the woman searching and caring about those who are not close to God? Regardless of where you fit within this parable, it is evident that God is joyful whenever one of the lost has returned. When Jesus gave this parable it is evident that the point being made is that regardless of what you have done or have been apart of, God and those in heaven will rejoice if you return to God.

The amazing fact is that God is continually pursuing and caring about finding those who are lost. This implies that regardless of if you are lost, God is attempting to find you, similar to the woman who is searching for that coin. It is similar to the fact that the woman had nine coins but continued to search for that tenth coin regardless of the other nine. We as Christians can not be happy with just helping nine people return to God but we should continue to push to find that tenth. Actually we should not only search for that tenth but continue on throughout our lives, to continue to find others who
have fallen away from God. Besides, when the lost return to God it provides this amazing sense of joy not only for the fellow Christians but also for God and those in Heaven.

*Generally adequate treatment*

*Somewhat superficial at points*

*Grade: B*