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Parables of the lost Sheep and Piece
of Money.

LUKE XV. 3—10.

The lost sheep, and the lost piece of money, are both intended to describe the condition of all sinners, whether old or young, who are still in their natural state; that is, the state in which they were born. There are many things in which sinners are very much like lost sheep, and in the Bible they are often compared to them. See Psa. cxix. 176. Isa. liii. 6. A sheep is more apt to wander than almost any other animal, and it scarcely ever finds its way back again, but continues to wander farther and farther. It is quite helpless; it has no strength to defend itself from wild beasts; if it gets fast among briars and thorns, it cannot disentangle itself again; if it fall into a stream, it is not likely

that it will be able to swim out; and if it does not happen to meet with pasture, it will not know where to seek it. Sooner or later, it will certainly be destroyed, unless it is found and brought back to the fold.

You would pity a poor sheep in such distress; but, my dear children, your souls are much more to be pitied, while you continue to wander from God. You all began to wander from him, (that is, to hate and to disobey him,) as soon as you were able to do anything. See Psa. li. 5. lvi. 3. You soon began to be passionate, and to cry and fret, when you were not allowed to have your own way. You soon began to disobey your parents; and if they talked to you about God, your Father in heaven, and tried to tell you how much you ought to love him, you were soon weary of hearing them. In-