

Adult Bible Studies

Current Events Supplement March 17, 2019

Calling the Lost Luke 15:11-24

During this year's harsh winter, temperatures fell to 20-25 below zero in Chicago. On one of those frigid cold days, a propane tank exploded in a tent city when it was placed "too close to a space heater." As a result, approximately 70 homeless individuals needed a new place to stay. That's when an individual booked 70 rooms in a local hotel for them. "The Salvation Army was prepared to welcome approximately 70 individuals who were affected by the explosion, but was notified those services were not necessary as the individuals were already being taken of," said Jackie Rachev of the Salvation Army. "We are thrilled that they are safe and warm."¹

In today's lesson, our author quotes Peter Gomes: "no one is too far gone, too low, too abased, too bad to be removed from the unconditional love of the Father."² There is nothing we can say or do that will make God stop loving us. Since God created all life, God loves all life, no matter the person or the circumstance. God loves all.

The homeless population is one of the most vulnerable and voiceless in our society. We may tend to avoid the homeless; some people try to have the homeless essentially evicted from their cities and suburbs. Yet a caring individual in Chicago saw seventy persons without homes as people of worth and value who deserved to be warm and safe. This person offered not just shelter but a bed and shower, demonstrating love, God's love, for those whom society often ignores, forgets, and silences. This person saw not "homeless people," but beloved children of God.

1. Imagine being the front desk clerk at the Chicago hotel when the individual called to book 70 rooms. What would you have thought and felt? What qualities would you attribute to the person who booked these rooms?
2. What risk do we run if we say that someone is not worthy or too low for God's love? What is your response when someone feels unworthy of God's love?
3. How does your community provide safety and security for the homeless population? How does your faith community participate in ministry with persons who do not have homes?

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¹ Gianluca Mezzofiore, "On one of the coldest days in Chicago history, someone put 70 homeless people up in a hotel," CNN, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/31/us/chicago-good-samaritan-hotel-rooms-homeless-trnd/index.html> (accessed on March 6, 2019).

² *Adult Bible Studies*, Spring 2019, 23-24.