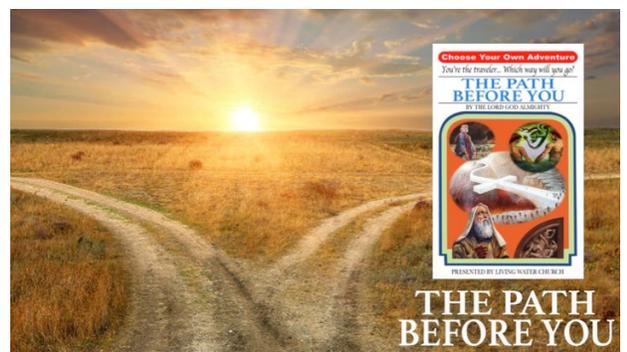




Diving Deeper: A Gather Group discussion guide  
or personal devotional guide



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## The Cross or Causes?

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**Introduction:** .The religious elite of Jesus' day grumbled that he ate with tax collectors and sinners. They were put off by the fact that someone who claimed to speak for God would associate with heathen people. Jesus told them a parable concerning the reason he came.

**Text:** Read Luke 15

**Discussion:**

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever lost something valuable? What did you do and did you find it? If so, how did you feel?
2. Read: Luke 4:18-19, Luke 5:29-32, Luke 19:10 Why did Jesus come to earth? How does this tie into Luke 15? Why is it important to understand Jesus' mission?
3. Read John 20:21. What does this mean for believers?
4. The first two parables in Luke 15 clearly let the religious leaders know that the angels celebrate when the lost are found. Salvation of souls brings joy in heaven. How are you involved in seeking the lost and finding the sick to bring to Jesus?
5. People can get excited over many things. Discuss/write about different "causes" people spend their time, energy, and resources?
6. The church can get distracted and celebrate other achievements other than seeing the lost found. What are some examples of how churches put other agenda's ahead of the salvation of lost souls?
7. Read Luke 19:20 What were the disciples getting excited about? What did Jesus tell them to be excited about?

**Think About it:**

If Jesus came to seek the lost, then why shouldn't we? It's amazing of the many things that "Christians" will get tore up about, but won't get as excited or upset over the salvation of souls. There have been christians who have gotten so concerned about a tree that was planted, a wall that was painted, a pulpit that was moved, how a decision was made, and the list could go on and on . . . all the while people who are lost are headed to an eternal hell. How easily we forget the main purpose for Jesus' coming to earth. He came to save the lost. He sent us to do the same—proclaim the good news of salvation.

**Moving Forward:**

Pray this week for those you know who do not know Jesus. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the lost, hurting, and sick around you who need to hear the good news of Jesus. Take the opportunity to share the grace of God with them and invite them to the kingdom of God! Repent of anything that is taking priority in your walk of faith that eclipses the sharing of the gospel. Join in the joy of heaven!