

The Father Who Loves

During the fall, we are using the parable of the Sower as our blueprint. In September we focused on God's greatest desire: saving souls. He is the **sower**. Starting next week we'll focus on the power of God's word and the **seed** we have been called to spread. And finally, in November, we'll discuss how to sow the seed in any **soil** ... trusting in the power of God to do the work. God is, by nature, the saving God. What's in this for you? We want you to **rediscover** the saving God, **reinvigorate** your spiritual life and **reinforce** your commitment to share the good news.

I. The Parable

- A. The younger son makes an outrageous, shameless request:
 - 1. He wanted what was his and he wanted it right then.
 - 2. The shameless request led to shameless rebellion. He became destitute and helpless.
- B. The father sits on the front porch, waiting.
 - 1. He loves with an infinite love.
 - 2. Offers his rebellious son righteousness, sonship, comfort, and celebration.

II. The Father

- A. Luke 15:20: So **he got up** and went to his father. He follows through. He goes home.
 - 1. Any request made of the father would have been immediately refused.
 - 2. The whole town would heap scorn on him. Mocked. Spit on.
 - 3. *This is not how the story turned out.*
- B. 15.20b: *But while the son was still a long way off, his father **saw** him ...*
 - 1. Hoping. Praying. Evident he had been bearing private pain. Suffering.
 - 2. Why looking? Not only to initiate reconciliation, but to get to him *before* he enters the village in order to protect him from the shame.
 - a) Isaiah 65:24: *Even **before** they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking, I will hear.*
- C. Luke 15:20c: *his father... saw him and was filled with **compassion**.*
- D. Luke 15:20d: *He **ran**....*
 - 1. He couldn't get there fast enough. (Original language: he sprinted)
 - 2. He responded in such a way that publicly humiliated himself.
- E. 15.20e - The father *threw his arms around his neck, and **kissed** him.*
 - 1. The father empties himself of any pride, rights, and honor.
 - 2. By the time the boy walked through that village, he has been fully reconciled.

III. As We Close...

- A. How eager is God to receive sinners?
- B. Philippians 2:7-8: *Instead he **emptied** himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity. And when he had come as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross.*
- C. He condescended. He bore the shame. He stood in our place.
 - 1. Isaiah 50:5b-6: *I gave my back to those who beat me, and my cheeks to those who tore out my beard. I did not hide my face from **scorn** and spitting.*
 - 2. This is the divine understanding of repentance, faith, and grace.
- D. What an incredible God we serve. He lavishes us in His love. He is hearty in His embrace.
- E. Will you come?