

THE STORYTELLER

Week 2: Wasteful, Extravagant, & Unfair

Sermon Series:

We launched a new series! For the next 13 weeks, we are going to unpack the parables of Jesus, investigating the parables from the Gospel of Matthew and Luke.

Last week, Jeff defined a parable as a story that explains our reality giving a new or greater understanding of the world around us. Specifically, concerning God and our relationship with God. Key to parables is their depth and layers, they are stories that come alongside our own circumstances.

As we go through this series remember Jeff's 4 steps to consider: 1. What is the context in which the parable is told? 2. What are the indispensable plot elements? 3. What was the meaning at that moment, in that setting? How does that meaning adapt to our cultural setting today?

The purpose of this sermon series is to draw us in, pique our curiosity, and sit with Jesus. You are invited to pull up a chair ask questions, be confused, wonder, and listen to the parable of Jesus.

Message Focus:

Wasteful, Extravagant, & Unfair

The Passages: Luke 15:1-32

The Framework Breakdown:

- 1.) V.2 reads, "And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'" This verse is key to the parables in Luke 15. What does it mean to be welcomed? Describe a time, a place, or a scenario where you felt welcomed. Describe how and whom you are welcoming, in your home, in church, at a party, or in public. How do you think Jesus welcomed sinners? Why did this offend the Pharisees and the scribes?
- 2.) Go around and discuss how you have traditionally understood the meaning of the lost sheep? Who does the lost sheep represent, and why? How is this parable directed at the Pharisee's criticisms of "welcoming and eating with sinners?" Who are the sinners the Pharisees are referring to? What does v.7 illustrate about the character of God?
- 3.) What do all three of these parables have in common? How do these parables invite the Pharisees into a new way of thinking? Were Jesus' parables meant for the transformation of the Pharisees or for the marginalized outcasts (sinners) of the culture? How do we treat outcasts, the marginalized, and the sinners of our community? How do these parables change your way of thinking and impact your habits and lifestyle?
- 4.) How have you traditionally understood the parable of the prodigal son? Who is the central character? How does the prodigal son fit with the first two parables? Of all three characters, who do you most identify with, and why? Why do you think the parable of the prodigal son is more well known compared to the parable of the lost sheep or the lost coin?