

Bible Study for Sunday Sept 15, 2019

Our texts for this Sunday are:

- Psalm 51:1-10
- Luke 15:1-10

Opening Discussion:

“Three priorities should drive the mission of every congregation: Provide programs that meet the needs of their community, offer worship that welcomes the seeker as well as nourishing the members, and promote active outreach programs.”

- What do you think of these priorities?
- What would you add or subtract?

Read Psalm 51:1-10

What does this Psalm teach us about who God is and who we are?

Why should we view our sinful acts as symptoms of a deeper problem according to vv5-6?

What does sin ultimately do to our relationship with God?

How does God use the Holy Spirit to restore us? What role if any do we play in this transformation?

Read Luke 15:1-10

This passage may be uncomfortable for those who have worked hard to be right with God, but it is a balm to those who feel they've lost their way. Considering that each of us at some point will falter or feel lost, it is good news for all.

Discuss as a group who would represent the sinners and tax collectors in our society today.

- Are there groups of people that society marginalizes and doesn't see the need to reach out to?
- And if we did reach out to them, would we actually want them to come to worship...like all the time?

Can you recall being lost in such a way that the only way you could 'get found' was by someone else's action? How did “being found” feel?

Can you be lost and still come to church? What if “foundness” doesn't have anything to do with church attendance?

Luke 15:7 gives us a glimpse into the priorities of Heaven. What are some barriers that keep believers from having an attitude of evangelism? What might evangelism to each other look like?

God is committed to pursuing the lost. How can we (as a church community) orient ourselves toward this ministry of finding and welcoming those who do not know God or feel distant from God or have turned away from God?

- How (un)comfortable are you with this whole idea?

In Luke 15:8-10, what do you understand to be the emphasis in these two parables? Is it the lost being found or the great amount of effort that was put into searching for the lost? What implications does your answer have for how we do evangelism?

It is easy to think of God offering mercy to those who beg Him for it. It is much harder to understand the type of love God has for us, who tenaciously seeks to save us while we are still sinning and unrepentant. In your own journey toward or away from God, what role have other Christians played in helping you experience God's grace and make Jesus the central priority of your life?

- What would it take for you to be that someone for someone else?

Psalm 51:1-10 (NRSV)

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

⁵Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

⁶You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Psalm 51:1-10 (The VOICE translation)

¹Look on me with a heart of mercy, O God,
according to Your generous love.

According to Your great compassion,

wipe out *every consequence of my shameful crimes*.

²Thoroughly wash me, *inside and out*, of all my crooked deeds.

Cleanse me from my sins. ³For I am *fully aware* of all I have done wrong, and my guilt is there, staring me in the face.

⁴It was against You, only You, that I sinned,

for I have done what You say is wrong, right before Your eyes.

So when You speak, You are in the right.

When You judge, Your judgments are pure and true. ^[a]

⁵For I was guilty from the day I was born,

a sinner from the time my mother became pregnant with me. ⁶But still, You long *to enthrone* truth throughout my being;

in unseen places deep within me, You show me wisdom.

⁷Cleanse me *of my wickedness* with hyssop, and I will be clean.

If You wash me, I will be whiter than snow.

⁸Help me hear joy and happiness *as my accompaniment*,

so my bones, which You have broken, will *dance in* delight instead.

⁹Cover Your face so You will not see my sins,

and erase my guilt *from the record*.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God;

restore within me a sense of being brand new.

Luke 15:1-32

15Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³So he told them this parable: ⁴“Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸“Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”