



THE Storyteller

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Week 6

Day 1: The Heart of a Searching God

Reading: Luke 15:1-7

Jesus reveals something stunning about God's character: He doesn't wait for us to get our lives together before He pursues us. The shepherd doesn't calculate the cost-benefit ratio of leaving ninety-nine sheep for one. He simply goes. This defies human logic but reveals divine love. God's pursuit of you isn't based on your performance or worthiness. Before you even thought about returning to Him, He was already scanning the horizon, waiting and watching. The religious leaders were offended that Jesus welcomed sinners, but that's precisely the point—God's love isn't reserved for those who deserve it. It's lavishly poured out on those who need it most. Today, remember: you're not just tolerated by God; you're pursued by Him.

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Day 2: When Grace Offends Us

Reading: Luke 15:25-32

The older brother's anger reveals something uncomfortable within us all. We want grace for ourselves but judgment for others. We measure God's forgiveness by our own standards, deciding who deserves a second chance based on whether their sins seem worse than ours. But God's grace isn't a limited resource that runs out when someone crosses our personal line. The older brother had everything—his father's presence, provision, and inheritance—yet he chose isolation over celebration because he couldn't accept his brother's restoration. How often do we miss the joy of God's presence because we're focused on who doesn't deserve to be there? True spiritual maturity isn't just receiving grace; it's celebrating when others receive it too.

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Day 3: Seeing People, Not Just Problems

Reading: Matthew 9:9-13

Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners, communicating radical acceptance in a culture where sharing a meal meant endorsement. He saw Matthew the person, not just Matthew the traitor. He saw potential disciples, not just societal problems. We often keep people at arm's length because we focus on their issues rather than their humanity. We see the addiction, the lifestyle, the past mistakes—and we miss the person Jesus died to rescue. When Jesus said He came for the sick, not the healthy, He wasn't just talking about spiritual sickness. He was declaring that proximity to brokenness doesn't contaminate us; isolation from it contradicts our calling. Who have you been avoiding because their mess makes you uncomfortable?

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Day 4: The Father Who Runs

Reading: Luke 15:11-24

In first-century culture, dignified fathers didn't run. They maintained composure, demanded respect, and waited for others to come to them. But this father abandoned dignity for love. He ran toward his son while he was still far off, before any apology was offered, before any restitution was made. This is the scandal of grace—God doesn't wait for us to clean ourselves up. He runs toward us in our mess. The son prepared a speech about becoming a servant, but the father was already calling for the robe, ring, and sandals—symbols of full sonship restored. You cannot out-sin God's willingness to forgive. You cannot wander so far that His love can't reach you. Stop rehearsing your apology and start running home.

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Day 5: Pulling Up Extra Chairs

Reading: Romans 15:5-7

Paul's instruction is clear: accept one another as Christ accepted you. Not after people get their theology right. Not once they've proven themselves worthy. Not when they finally overcome that struggle. Now. As they are. Because that's how Christ accepted us. Being a follower of Jesus means we don't just appreciate our own seat at the table—we actively make room for others. We pull up extra chairs. We extend invitations to unlikely guests. We become the welcoming party that runs toward the person in the distance instead of staying comfortable in the house. This week, who is your "tax collector"? Who has God placed in your path that makes you uncomfortable? What would it look like to invite them to your table, to offer acceptance before perfection? That's the heart of the Father. That's the mission of the Church.