

Birds of a feather flock together

- We tend to gather with people like us
- Similar idioms in other languages?
- When do we do this? Why?

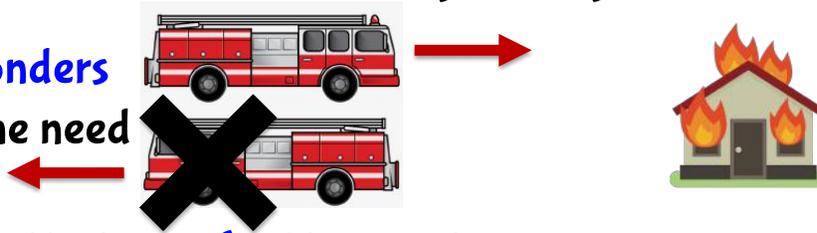


Diffusion

- Random movement makes things evenly spread out

First responders

- Go to the need



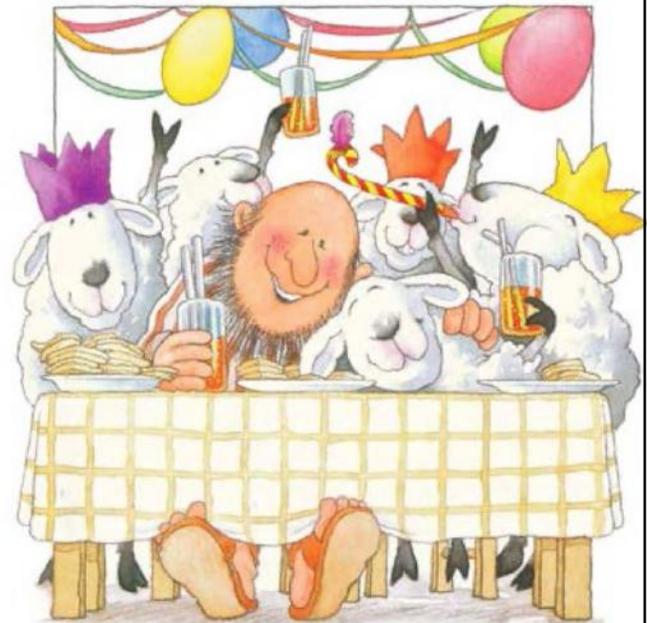
What is God's design for His people?

1

The Joy of Heaven

Luke 15:1–10

bib.ly/Lu15.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts



"Favorite Parables from the Bible"
 by Mick Inkpen

2

Pharisees' view: God wants us to stay far away from "sinners"

"Blessed is the one who does not
walk in step with the **wicked**
 or **stand** in the way that **sinners** take
 or **sit** in the company of **mockers**..." *Psalm 1:1*

"**Anything that an unclean person touches becomes unclean**, and anyone who touches it becomes unclean till evening." *Numbers 19:22*

"Depart, depart, go out from there! **Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure**, you who carry the articles of the Lord's house." *Isaiah 52:22*

3

Luke 15:1-2

Now the tax collectors and sinners were **all** gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and **eats with them.**"

4

*Luke 15:1-10***1-2: The religious elite judged the “sinners”**

- What makes someone a “sinner”? (in their view)
 - Being guilty of certain publicly known sins
 - Not being as “religious” as the elite
 - These “sinners” were **doing what real disciples do**
 - Came near **to hear** Jesus teach
 - “Whoever has ears to hear, **let them hear.**” *Luke 14:35b*
 - This hearing includes **taking Jesus’ words to heart**
 - “All” of them were regularly coming
 - The religious elite were **doing what real sinners do**
- 3-7: • Grumbling about God’s ways
- 8-10: • So Jesus taught both groups...

5

religious elite *Luke 15:3-7*

Then Jesus told **them** this parable:

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he **leave** the ninety-nine in the open country and **go** after the lost sheep **until he finds it?** And when he finds it, he **joyfully** puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, **‘Rejoice with me; I have found** my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more **rejoicing in heaven** over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

6

Luke 15:1-10

1-2: The religious elite judged the “sinners”

3-7: Shepherd searches until he finds, then calls for joy

- A good shepherd searches for 1 sheep in 100
 - Diligent searching: “until he finds it”
 - Sheep is found and cared for
- Joy: shepherd and God and all heaven
 - Calls for earth to join the rejoicing
- Also: rejoice in a good shepherd who searches until the sheep is found
- Those who saw themselves as righteous

8-10: **needed to repent!**

7

Luke 15:8-10

“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she **light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?** And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, **‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’** In the same way, I tell you, there is **rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God** over one sinner who repents.”

8

Luke 15:1-10

1-2: The religious elite judged the “sinners”

3-7: Shepherd searches until he finds, then calls for joy

8-10: Woman searches until she finds, then calls for joy

- Archaeologists have found coins caught in cracks of stone floors!
- Identical pattern
 - One lost / Search / Find / Joy / Together / Heaven
- Loss prompts diligent searching (detail in story)
- Joy comes with finding what was lost

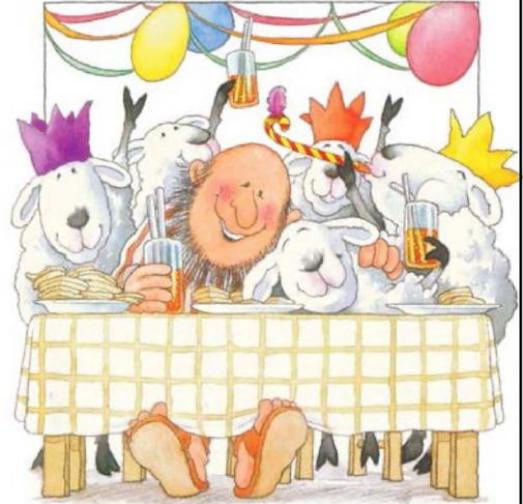
9

The Big Idea

**The joy of rescuing people
motivates God
to diligently pursue people who are far from God
until they are brought home**

10

“For the Son of Man came to **seek** and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10) because “there is **rejoicing** in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (Luke 15:10)



11

Touching what is “unclean”

- **Pharisees’ view**
 - If you are too close to “unclean” people, they’ll make you unclean as well
 - So, stay away from bad people & pursue good people
- **Jesus’ view**
 - The holiness of God needs no protection
 - When Jesus gets close to unclean people, He makes them clean and whole
 - So Jesus **pursues** unclean people to heal them

12

The Big Idea

**The joy of rescuing people
motivates God
to diligently pursue people who are far from God
until they are brought home**

13

Application

Enter into the joy of God by turning to Jesus for healing

- Jesus' goal **is not**:
 - find and reward people who are good
- Jesus' goal **is**:
 - find and love people who...
 - are far from God
 - need healing and forgiveness
- **Do you need healing and forgiveness?**
 - Turn to Jesus (repent) for He is right at your door
 - "Lord, save me!"
 - This begins a journey of being transformed by God
 - **And God + heaven + you will rejoice in the lost being found!**

14

The Big Idea

**The joy of rescuing people
motivates God & God's people
to pursue diligently people who are far from God
until they are brought home**

15

Application

Take the healing presence of God where His healing is needed

- Like first responders: go where the help is needed
- **Wherever you go...**
 - take the healing, grace-filled presence of Jesus with you
 - The fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance (patient endurance of trouble or ill-treatment), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control *Galatians 5:22-23*
 - take God's will: the **justice, truth, and mercy** of God
 - take and live out this Good News
 - God **rejoices** in finding those who need finding

16

Application

Take the healing presence of God where His healing is needed

- Like first responders: go where the help is needed
- Wherever you go...
- And intentionally go where God is needed
 - work, school, neighborhood, hobbies, ...
 - whenever you have the choice to locate
 - for a short time or a long time

17

Application

Take the healing presence of God where His healing is needed

- Like first responders: go where the help is needed
- Wherever you go...
- And intentionally go where God is needed
- And invite people to be among God's people
 - "But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted (by the Holy Spirit) of sin and are brought under judgment by all, as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!" " *1 Corinthians 14:24–25*

18

- Jesus said: “For the Son of Man came to **seek and to save the lost.**” *Luke 19:10*
- Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but **sinners** to repentance.” *Luke 5:31-32*
- These parables show God as the “**seeker**”
 - Clearly as a model for His people

19

Core Value Proposal: Radical Grace and Radical Obedience

Approved by the Board on September 8, 2021

to be proposed **and we go to people where they are**

We are committed to building a community that **practices radical grace** while **calling our people to radical obedience** to Christ. In **radical grace**, we welcome people to come as they are, and we are committed to building relationships with people as Jesus did, including with those who are often judged by others, just as Jesus welcomed sinners, prostitutes, and tax collectors (Luke 5:29-32). We also call our people to **radical obedience** to Jesus in all parts of our lives, conforming to His call to holiness and to sacrificial service (Luke 5:27-28; 9:23-26). And we recognize that this road to radical obedience is lifelong and requires grace, patience, perseverance, and mutual encouragement (Hebrews 10:23-25; 12:7-13).

20

Radical grace and radical obedience meet
 in the call to seek diligently
 those who are in trouble and distant from Jesus

21

The Big Idea

The **joy** of rescuing people
 motivates God & God's people
 to pursue diligently people who are far from God
 until they are brought home

**Who in your life might God be calling you, and using you,
 to bring into the healing presence of God?**

- **Identify** 3 people (plus or minus)
- **Pray** "God, please open their hearts to You,
 and please use me to bring Your presence near to them"
- **Take action** to move closer to them **with God's presence**
- **Invite** them into God's presence among His people
- **Create** a recurring weekly calendar event: IPTI + 3 names

22