

April 13, 2025

Sixth Sunday in Lent: Christ Collides with Our Priorities!

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

300 E. Oak Street, Ft. Collins, CO 80524

Worship: 10:00 AM

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LENT: CHRIST COLLIDES

This Lent we will explore some of Jesus' parables. It has been said that the origin of the word parable is two things that collide. In many parables, Jesus intentionally means to shock by using stark contrasts, reversals of fortune, humor, and surprise endings. Often we encounter his teachings colliding with our own assumptions and what is considered the "conventional wisdom" of our world.

1. GATHERING

Prelude: "God So Loved the World" (John)

Call to Worship (Lynette)

One: As we worship, Christ collides with our priorities.

Many: We gather and pause from the important busyness of our lives.

One: Jesus reveals that God's priority is to help those who are lost to find their way and for those who are dead to be filled with life!

Many: Help us O Spirit of God to push back against every force of deathness.

All: For the hope of your reign, O God, help us celebrate being found alive you.

Congregational Singing (Cathy)

Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also, with you.

All: Let us offer one another signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

"Action expresses priorities." — Mahatma Gandhi

"Nobody's life is ever all balanced. It's a conscious decision to choose your priorities every day." — Elisabeth Hasselbeck

"Our life is the sum total of all the decisions we make every day, and those decisions are determined by our priorities." — Myles Munroe

"Sometimes when you're overwhelmed by a situation - when you're in the darkest of darkness - that's when your priorities are reordered." — Phoebe Snow

Confession and Words of Assurance (Steve)

All: *Loving and merciful God, we confess that we have missed the mark.*

One: We have not loved you with all our thoughts, words, and actions.

Many: We have missed the mark through what we have chosen to do and what we have chosen to neglect.

One: We have not fully accepted your love for us. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

Many: We so often prioritize the wrong things and the wrong people. *(In what specific ways did you prioritize the wrong things this past week?)*

All: *We repent before each other and before you, our loving God. Please help us open our hearts to your love. Help us bring our priorities in line with yours so we may better help those who are lost find their way and to bring life to those who are caught in death's dark spiral. Amen.*

Leader: Now hear these words of assurance: God tells us that we are created in God's image. God created us for relationship with God and each other. In this, we know that God will never break our relationship. God's steadfast love endures forever.

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Luke 15:1-24

1 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3 So 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? 5 When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. 6 And 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.' 7 Just 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? 9 When 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.' 10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

11 Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So, he divided his property between them. 13 A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled

to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16 He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything."

17 "But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'"

20 "So, he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate."

Sermon: "Finding the Lost and Bringing the Dead Back to Life!"

Although it's "Palm Sunday," let's get a jump on Easter and talk about the concrete ways we can actually find those who are lost and to bring to life those who we thought were dead!

3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Congregational Singing (Cathy)

Response

Joys and Concerns

Offering & Music (John)

Sending: As we journey, Jesus collides with our priorities to live in the ways of God! Those who are lost are dear to the heart of God. God desires that all are raised from death to true life. Go out into your world, search, celebrate and expand the reign of God.