

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126

*Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy. (v5)*

Philippians 3:4b-14

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, & your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

<sup>25</sup>“Now his elder son was in the field; & when he came & approached the house, he heard music & dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves & asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, ‘Your brother has come, & your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe & sound.’ <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry & refused to go in. His father came out & began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, & I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, & all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate & rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead & has come to life; he was lost & has been found.’”

## LISTENING TO . . .

**GOD-** *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. The son thinks he’s a slave (v29), while the father calls both children sons. What do the following add to this discussion? *See Romans 6:5-23; 7:6-24; Galatians 4:1-25*
2. Compare the parable to v7; who is a sinner & who is righteous? How does the father sacrifice his dignity, while his sons attempt to preserve their own?  
*See 2 Samuel 6:12-23; 1 Corinthians 4:9-13, 9:19-23*

**EACH OTHER-** *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. The older son understands his status in terms of his own good behavior. How does your own self-righteousness get in the way of healthy relationships with others? What helps you to be humble & remember your identity in Christ, which is **not earned** by good behavior?
4. How long do you think until a “lost son” becomes an “older brother?” What causes it?

**NEIGHBORS-** *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. How are you an “older brother” to other believers? How about your congregation?
6. The world needs mercy; explain the difference between mercy & tolerance. How does your congregation exhibit both qualities? *See Genesis 3:1-20; Luke 19:1-10; John 8:1-11; 2 Peter 3:9*

Fifth Sunday in Lent  
Series: Repent!

04.03.22  
Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

My Family

*Our identity is royal sons & daughters, not slaves,  
but is that what we want?*

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, &  
all that is mine is yours.’ (v31)

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-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Forgetting what lies behind & straining forward to what lies ahead,  
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God  
in Christ Jesus. (*Philippians 3:13-14*)

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