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LET'S PARTY!

TEXT: Luke 15

INTRODUCTION: I am often asked, “**Why do you like to go to Brazil?**” For the most part, the answer is the same answer I would give to the question, “**Why do you like to go on mission?**” The main things are the same wherever I go: Mexico, West Africa, India. I have not been to China yet, but I am confident the same would hold true. The only thing that changes according to the location of the mission is the context given by the local culture.

I could give you a lot of reasons, and they would all be true. But if you really want to know the number one, main reason I like to go is that **I like to party!** And we always party when we go to Brazil.

Usually, we save the party for the last night of our mission. We take printed invitations with us, and we start passing out the invitations a couple of days before the party begins. We tell the people that there will be cake, snacks, soft drinks, and decorations – all free; and we tell them to bring their whole family.

When they arrive, I ask them, “Are you wondering why we invited you to a party? Are you wondering why we bought cake, sagadinhos, and cold drinks for everybody, and why we decorated the church?”

And then I say to them, “It is because of a story Jesus told and because of something Jesus said.”

Jesus said,

<p>Luke 15 11 Then He said: “A certain man had two sons.</p>	<p>There was a man who had two sons.</p>
<p>12 And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood.</p>	<p>And the younger son said, “Dad, I want my inheritance now, while I’m young and can enjoy it. I don’t want to have to wait until you die.” Sadly the father gave in to the request of his son and gave him the money.</p>
<p>13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.</p>	<p>It was not long before the boy took the money, left home, and traveled to a far country where no one knew him. He began to spend the money wildly, buying food and drinks for everyone. As long as he had plenty of money to share, he also had plenty of friends.</p>
<p>14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that</p>	<p>But when the money ran out, his friends ran out also. And the young man found himself broke,</p>

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land, and he began to be in want.	homeless, hungry, and alone.
15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.	He said, "Man, I 've got to get a job!" But the only job he could find was on a farm, feeding the pigs. It was a dirty, stinking, rotten job; but it was all he could find.
16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.	One day he was watching those filthy swine eat their slop, his stomach aching so badly from hunger, he would have eaten the hog slop they were eating if he could.
17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!	And the thought came into his mind. The hired servants at my father's house have plenty to eat, yet here I am starving to death.
18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,	I'm going to go back home and I'm going to say to my dad, "Father, I've sinned against heaven and against you.
19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." '	I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Would you just let me come back home as one of the hired servants?"
20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.	That same hour, the boy began his long journey home. What the young man did not know was that every day since he left home, his father had walked out in front of their house and stared at the long road leading over the hill, the same road the boy had walked when he left home to waste his father's gift. The old man would gaze at the horizon looking, hoping to see his son returning home. On that day, at first he saw what he had seen every day, nothing. But then, suddenly, a speck, a mere dot, appeared on the horizon at the top of the hill. The speck grew into a moving stick, and the stick grew into a man – a young man – his son. The old man began to run. It had been a long time since his old legs had run, but now he ran for all he was worth.
21 And the son said to him,	When he reached his son, the young man did just

<p>'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'</p>	<p>as he had planned. He fell on his knees and said, "Father, I've sinned against heaven and against you. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Would you just let me come back home as one of the hired servants?"</p>
<p>22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.</p>	<p>The father took the boy by the shoulders and lifted him to his feet. He put his arms around him and gave him a big hug.</p> <p>About this time, the household servants who had been shocked to see their master running away from the house down the road had finally caught up with him.</p> <p>The father turned to one and said, "Bring a new robe and put it on my son."</p> <p>To another he commanded, "Bring new sandals for his feet."</p> <p>To a third he said, "Go get my favorite ring to put on his finger."</p>
<p>23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry;</p>	<p>And then to the remaining servants the father directed, "You know the calf we fattened up that we have been saving for a special occasion? Go kill it and cook it. We're going to have a party!"</p>
<p>24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.</p>	<p>Because this, my son, was dead and is alive again; he was lost, but now he's found. Let's have a party and celebrate!"</p>
<p>Luke 15:7 7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.</p>	<p>Jesus explained, "When a person repents of their sin and gets saved, the angels rejoice in heaven."</p>
<p>Luke 15:10 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."</p>	<p>"When a person turns from their sin to faith in Christ, the angels in heaven have a party."</p> <p>And lest some of you that are good Berean believers who are watching the text closely say, "Wait a minute, pastor, I don't see anything here about the angels having a party."</p>
<p>Luke 15:10 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is</p>	<p>I'm glad you are being so attentive to the Word, because it is the Word of God. But you must do a</p>

<p>joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”</p>	<p>little research on the word joy in the Greek. It is the word “chará,” And the Jewish scribes who translated the Old Testament into the Koine Greek of the New Testament, used this same word for joy to translate the Hebrew for banquet, such as when Esther gave the banquet to King Ahasuarus.</p> <p>So, a full understanding of the text means a joy so profound and exhilarating that it is expressed in a great party.</p>
<p>Luke 15:25 25 “Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.”</p>	<p>Furthermore, this is born out when the older son comes in from working in the field, what does he discover in the house? Music and dancing. (You see, they were Jews and not Baptists!)</p>
<p>Luke 15:32 32 It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’ ”</p>	<p>Then, Jesus, finishing the story, said, “It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.”</p>
	<p>And then to the Brazilians I say, “That’s why we had this party. Jesus said that when each and every person in this town prayed this week to repent of their sin and trust in Christ, the angels in heaven celebrated with a party. So we thought, if the angels had a party of celebration over your salvation, we ought to do the same!”</p>

In Altamira, a town surrounded by the Amazon Rain Forest, our team of eight saw 94 people pray to repent of their sins and put their trust in the Lord Jesus who died for their sins upon the cross and rose again from the dead.

Now folks, I didn’t just re-tell that story to you just so you know one of the things we do when we go on mission in Brazil. There are some precious, precious truths that I believe are helpful and important to all of us here this morning.

First,

I. SEE HOW IMPORTANT YOUR SALVATION IS TO GOD THE FATHER.

A. Whether you came to Christ fifty years ago or in the last five days,

B. You are not just one in a crowd.

You probably already know that this story of the lost son is one of three stories about lost things that Jesus told in a row. They were

- **The story of the lost sheep**

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- The story of the lost coin
- The story of the lost son

Each of these stories show how diligently God seeks the lost.

- The Good Shepherd (God the Son) seeks the lost sheep.
- God the Holy Spirit searches mind and heart like the woman searched the house for the lost coin.
- God the Father yearns for the son who sinned against Him to repent and come home to be part of His family.

C. Angels rejoice because God rejoices.

- They celebrate. They have a party because you got saved.
- They probably have angel food cake!
- No probably something even better than that.
- But they really do rejoice!

II. IF YOU HAVE NOT YET REPENTED AND TRUSTED IN CHRIST, SEE HOW MUCH THE FATHER DESIRES FOR YOU TO BE SAVED.

And His desire is an active desire.

Sometimes our desires are merely passive.

I want LSU to win the College Football Championship this next season, but my desire is not active. I don't lift a finger to help it happen. I don't give a dollar to support the football program.

God's desire is not like that. He does not just watch to see if things happen.

By the Spirit, God pursues the lost. God in His providence orchestrates things to draw the lost.

One of the many blessings of going on mission where many people are coming to Christ is that amidst the many that trust the Lord you will have the privilege of being able to see some of how God has worked in extraordinary ways to bring some to Himself.

I saw it again a week ago yesterday. My team was approaching a house when an 11 year old boy from the mother church that was on our team reached out and touched my arm. He said that we should not go to that house; there were very bad people in that house. Everybody in the neighborhood knew that, and avoided the place.

I said, "Let's just see if they will talk to us." We went to the door and clapped. A young woman of about 23 stepped out and came to the gate. Our translator asked if she was willing to talk to the Americans about the Bible.

She looked at us and then nodded yes.

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We could hear noises inside the house, so I asked if there were others inside that might like to talk with us as well. She said with sad eyes, "Everybody else is drunk."

I began to share the gospel with her.

She prayed to receive Christ. As we recorded her name and address, we discovered she did not live in that house, but down the street. Her sister lived there, and she had just spent the night. From the way she said it, I could tell it had been a nightmare.

God had sent us with the gospel to save and rescue her.

The whole rest of the world knew about the drunks inside who would not listen. Only God knew Gabriela was inside, her heart made tender to the gospel by the difficulties and trials of life. And God sent us to tell her.

My friend, if you have not yet trusted in Christ, understand how much God wants you to be saved so that you can live for Him now and with Him forever. But understand He will not force you. He will draw you, but you must willingly respond in repentance and faith.

III. SEE WHY GOD COMMANDS ALL BELIEVERS TO GO AND SPREAD THE GOSPEL.

- **Jesus said**, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10
- **He commanded us**, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19–20
- **He explained to us**, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

If we do what He says, we get to celebrate with the angels every time another lost son or daughter comes home.

CONCLUSION:

- Are you the lost one who needs to come home this morning? Then come during the invitation song and tell one of us that you want to trust Christ, and let us help you.
- Are you the one God saved and you needed to be reassured of how precious you are to God and how much He loves you?
 - Then thank Jesus for what He did on the cross for you.

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- Then spend a few minutes thanking God for drawing you.
- Thank God for letting you hear the gospel.
- Thank God for actively working that you might be saved.
- Dear fellow believer, are you
 - Making disciples? Why not?
 - Being a witness of Christ, here in Bay County, in Florida, in our country. Are you going from time to time at least to the end of the earth, or if you are not physically able, helping others to go by prayer and giving?
 - If not? Repent of your inaction today and respond to the heart of God to say, "I will!"