

## Seedling Group Questions for the Fourth Sunday in Lent: "Welcome Home" (March 31, 2019)

The sermon can be found at [www.lipstosing.wordpress.com](http://www.lipstosing.wordpress.com)

### Questions for Opening Up

What is the best and most fun party that you have ever been to? What was the occasion of the celebration?

What was your experience of being disciplined like when you were small and growing up at home or at school?

### Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

As you read the newspaper and watch what's going on in the world, where do you see the need for reconciliation to be the greatest?

Where in your own life do you see the need for reconciliation to be the greatest?

### Read Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Of all the characters in Jesus' parable – the father, the younger brother, the older brother, or perhaps even a more minor character – who do you find the most intriguing? Why?

Of all the characters in Jesus' parable – the father, the younger brother, the older brother, or perhaps even a more minor character – who do you most relate to? Why?

### Putting Things Together

Do you have any dysfunction in your family? If you're willing to share it, what's the cause of the conflict? Is there any role you feel called to play or think you could play in order to help your family function in a healthier way?

What do you think our role is in receiving forgiveness from God? What is our role in receiving forgiveness from one another? How are those two things related?

### Making It Personal

In the sermon Joseph says, "In Jesus Christ we are all brought home, we are forgiven, we are sheltered, we are kissed and kissed fervently, we are given a robe and a ring, and we're invited into the feast that never ends...We have a Father whose discipline is forgiveness. Whose correction is mercy. And whose approach to parenting is grace. Today God embraces you, protects you, loves you, and invites you to the feast."

How does knowing this equip us to be about what Paul calls the "ministry of reconciliation"?

## **Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

<sup>16</sup>From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup>So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup>that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. <sup>20</sup>So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

## **Gospel: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

<sup>1</sup>Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

<sup>3</sup>So he told them this parable: <sup>11b</sup>"There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>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! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>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.' <sup>22</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup>"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and 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, and 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, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

