

September 11, 2016

Series: Kickoff

Sermon Title: *Searching Until...*

Key Verse:

Luke 15:1-2 (NRSV)

“¹Now all the tax collectors and sinners were *COMING NEAR* to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were *GRUMBLING* and saying, “This fellow *WELCOMES SINNERS* and eats with them.”

The Key:

Engaging the Search party.

DANGEROUS searching

Luke 15:3-7 (NRSV) ³So 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?* ⁵When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and *REJOICES*. ⁶And 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*.’ ⁷Just 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.

EXTRAVAGANT celebrating

Luke 15:8-10 (NRSV) 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?* ⁹When 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*.’ ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is *JOY* in the *PRESENCE* of the *ANGELS* of God over *ONE SINNER* who repents.”

The Mission of Clearbranch UMC is
to **ENGAGE** people through relational ministry,
to **EQUIP** disciples for Christ and
to **EMPLOY** their gifts through missions.

EXPECTANT compassion

Luke 15:11-24 (NRSV) ¹¹Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had *TWO SONS*. ¹²The 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. ¹³A 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. ¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the *PIGS*. ¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and *NO ONE GAVE HIM ANYTHING*. ¹⁷But 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! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am *NO LONGER WORTHY* to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ ²⁰So 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. ²¹Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²²But 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. ²³And get the *FATTED CALF* and kill it, and let us eat and *CELEBRATE*; ²⁴for this *SON OF MINE* was *DEAD* and is *ALIVE* again; he was *LOST* and is *FOUND*!’ And *THEY* began to *CELEBRATE*.

Challenge Questions:

How will you risk searching for those far from God this week?

How will you extravagantly celebrate what God is doing?

How will you show expectant care and compassion?

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