**I Love to Tell the Story**

Explore every story of Jesus in this year-long devotional guide. Go at your own pace using the online archive.

**Day 146: A Parable of a Great Dinner party**

**Read: Luke 14:15-24 (Matt 22: 1-10)**

Guided reflection:

Jesus used parables to either teach us of God’s love or to show us ourselves. This parable does both. Of course, our loving God is the host of the party and has taken great pains to prepare good things for us. But, when we are invited, we allow other distractions to keep us from coming, paying attention, and responding to the lavishness of God’s love. Trivial things keep our attention and we miss out on the wonderful opportunities God has for us! But that does not deter God. God just goes after anyone who might be open to his invitation. If Jesus were going to tell this parable in church on Sunday, what would he list as our trivial pursuits? What is your excuse today?

Guided Prayer:

*“O God, it is hard to comprehend that you want to lavish your love on me – but even more difficult to comprehend is that I can become so distracted that I miss out on so much! I open my eyes, my ears, and my heart to you today. Where are you throwing a party today that I should not miss? Amen”*

**Day 147: The Prodigal Son**

**Read: Luke 15: 11-32**

Guided reflection:

This, of course, is one of the most beautiful stories in all of scripture. When have you been the prodigal? What happened that made you come to your senses? Do you know that the loving father (God) was, and is, and always shall be looking down the road in case you are ready to come home? Have you ever been the father – the one who showed mercy to someone who did not deserve it? Are you looking down the road for someone to “come home?” Are you the elder brother who is jealous of the mercy his brother receives and unwilling to extend mercy?

Guided prayer:

*“Father, “daddy”, I’m home! Thank you for having the light on when it seemed so dark in my world. Thank you for not giving up on me. Forgive my foolish ways and forgive my jealous ways as too. Thank you for your unconditional love. Amen”*

**Day 148: The Unjust Steward**

**Read: Luke 16: 1-13**

Guided reflection:

To be honest, this is one of those parables that seem to go against what I believe! It seems that Jesus is making the hero of the story out of a wasteful steward because he used his position to rewrite the boss’s ledger and make for himself some nice friends! But as I read

 vs 10, I see that Jesus is saying that this would be smart in this world’s standards, but Jesus wants servants who are faithful in little things so they do not have to make up schemes to cover their tails! If you are faithful in little, then God can trust you with much. You can’t look out for your own interests AND look out for God’s interests at the same time – choose one. Right now, which master are you serving?

Guided Prayer:

*“Well, Lord, I want to be faithful in little things so you can trust me with the bigger things in life, but I also want to cover my tail! Help me stop worrying about that and help me focus on just being faithful to live each day as you would have me live it. Are there any places you want me to be more faithful? Amen”*

**Day 149: The Hypocrisy of the Pharisees**

**Read: Luke 16:14-15**

Guided reflection:

Yesterday’s reading continues with the Pharisees’ response. They laughed and scoffed. But Jesus looked at them and said: “Oh, you make sure you look good to everyone else, but God knows your hearts. You are way off base on what is important in God’s eyes!” What about you? Do you think you have everyone fooled? God knows. Is there a place where you need to get honest with God?

Guided prayer:

“*O God, why do we have to get so honest… can’t I just keep making everyone happy… what they don’t know won’t hurt them, will it? What will it mean to “come clean’ with you? There may be places where I am not ready to do your will yet… but don’t give up on me. Amen.”*

**Day 150: The Rich Man and Lazarus**

**Read: Luke 16:19-31**

Guided reflection:

Is this a story of lack of compassion; of regret; of missed opportunities? Is this a story of the hereafter and our “just rewards?” Is this a story to jolt us into making sure we care for those around us while we have the chance? Or, could this also be a story whose punch line is about why Jesus came, to come and dwell among us, so, if we will listen, we would know the way to eternal life? Will we be smart enough to listen? When are you the rich man… when are you like Lazarus?

Guided prayer:

*Open my eyes to see opportunities around me to show your love. If I have a time to be like Lazarus, may I find comfort in your arms. But help me be willing to listen and pay attention, lest I find myself with no more opportunities. Help me know that this is not a dress rehearsal, this is the real thing. May I make the most of every opportunity! Amen!”*