



am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’<sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

<sup>21</sup> “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

<sup>22</sup> “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> So he called

one of the servants and asked him what was going on. <sup>27</sup> ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

<sup>28</sup> “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

<sup>31</sup> ““My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

### **Warm Up:**

Pastor Tom started his message off with several examples of famous last words. Imagine you have a chance to speak to the people you care about for the last time, what are some things you hope you will say in that moment (these may be serious, funny, sentimental, practical or something else)?

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Toward the beginning of his message, Pastor Tom talked about Jesus’ famous last words in Luke 23:34. Read that verse.  
What surprises you about these words? What can we know about Jesus’ character from his words in Luke 23:34?
- 2) Pastor Tom made this statement in the first sermon of this series:  
*God’s number one priority is not punishment, it is forgiveness.*  
What are some of your reactions to this statement? How might knowing this impact the way you interact with people in your own life?
- 3) Read Luke 23:39-43. Take a minute to summarize what is happening in these verses. How does Jesus respond to the man on the cross? What stands out to you in these verses? What can we learn about God’s heart for the lost in these verses?
- 4) Read Luke 15:1-2. Pastor Tom made this observation about these verses—“Religious

people were mad that Jesus was prioritizing sinful people, even associating with them and that those “kinds” of people, were actually drawn toward Jesus.”

Can you think of some times when you’ve seen a person or an organization prioritizing sinful people? What might it look like for a church to prioritize sinful people today? How might this sit with people who are religious?

- 5) Take a few minutes to review the details of the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15.

What are some of the highlights for you as you read this story? Pastor Tom made a point to share that when the son returned to the father “the only thing that had changed in the son was his mind and his direction.”

How might knowing the son’s condition impact the way we read this story? How might that impact the way we understand forgiveness and those who don’t yet know God?

- 6) In his message, Pastor Tom shared this lesson from parables in Luke 15.

*People get lost and stay lost until somebody cares enough to go and find them.*

What are some of your reactions to this statement? How do you see this truth in Luke 15?

- 7) Excerpt from Tom’s Message: God is seeking and saving. God is going and searching. God is sweeping and finding. God is waiting and watching for the lost to come home. When have you seen God seeking and saving or searching? What are some times that you have shared God’s heart for the lost? Describe what those times were like.

### **Next Steps:**

*Lost people matter to God and they certainly should matter to his bride....I pray ALIVE never becomes religious. I pray we never take pride in our own lifestyles and behaviors. I pray ALIVE becomes known for our relationships. First and foremost, for our relationships with Jesus, as a personal savior and Lord. But secondly, for our relationships with the lost son, the lost coin, the lost sheep and the thief on the cross.*

Imagine a church with a heart for the lost. What might a church like this look like? What are some practical ways you have seen ALIVE prioritize the lost? What are some ways we can do this as a body heading into the Easter season?

As we reflect on God’s heart for the lost, ask God to put someone on your heart right now who is lost for one reason or another. Take some time as a group to pray for those you know who are lost or far from God.