DEEP SIX STUDY

November 15th, 2026

Be Full – "For the One

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com/watch)*

Opening: (Luke 15:1-2) – This week we kick off our annual "Be Full" celebration – the time of year when we get to celebrate the incredible generosity of Cape Cod Church. As a church, we live by our Five Commitments – and Be Full is all about the first one: "We are here for *the one* who isn't here yet." By that definition, we're an "outward-facing" church – because we know that God is "outward-facing" too.

1. What Do I Do That Makes People Ask, "Why Would You Do That?" (Luke 15:3-4, 8)

- No passage in Scripture captures the heart of God for "the one who isn't here yet" better than Luke chapter 15, where we find three parables (stories) that Jesus tells about those on the outside of faith. Interestingly, his audience is made up a many of those outsiders – as well as some religious "insider" types who were criticizing him for associating with such people.
- In the parables, Jesus presents three somewhat extreme examples of how someone lost something then went to extraordinary measures to get it back. We can make two mistakes as we consider the "math" of the stories: (1) that the lost things somehow matter <u>less</u> than the things that weren't lost (this is what the religious people in Jesus' audience thought), or (2) that the lost sheep, coin and son somehow matter <u>more</u> to the owners than the "unlost." Both interpretations are wrong.
- Jesus' pont in all three stories is that the reason that the lost ones matter is that *he loves them.* Jesus' message to his critics (and to us) is this: "I love them, and I want you to love them, too." That's why he tells the three stories – not to elevate the lost above the found or the found above the lost, but to make it clear that he loves them all and wants us to love them too.
- The challenge of Jesus' critics ("why are you associating with *those people*?") presents a question we should ask ourselves, as individuals and as a church: "What are you doing [for others] that makes people ask, 'Why would you do that?'" As a church, that's what Be Full is all about: being "for the one" in such a generous way that it might make people ask, "Why would a church do that?"
- We want the lost, the curious, the skeptical, and the "notorious sinners" around us to ask, "Why would they do that?" so that we can answer and tell them, "Because God loves you, and has put his love in our hearts, too. We want to bless you because of what Jesus has done for us."

2. What Can I Bring to The Party? (Luke 15:22-23,28)

- Each of the three stories that Jesus tells in Luke 15 end with a celebration when the lost thing is found (or returns), and that presents us with one more question we can ask ourselves when we consider how much he loves us and loves the lost: "What can I bring to the party?"
- The parable of the Lost Son ends with a big party – one that the hopeful father had been preparing for expectantly. As the party begins, though, the lost son's older brother stays outside, angry and jealous that his "sinful" brother's return is being celebrated. His response distresses the father, and probably saddened the younger brother as well, because the participation of the whole family was needed to make the celebration complete. The older brother's response mattered, because of his influence.
- Individually, we may not think we can make a difference, but we each have influence and impact. Our prayers, our volunteering, and our giving all matter, even if we can only do a little. When we put all

our efforts and resources together as a church, we can make a huge difference – "Across the Street and Around the World"!

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Proverbs 19:17; Matthew 5:14-16; Acts 9:36; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Hebrews 13:15-16; 1 John 3:17-18

Video of the Week: Luke 9-19 by Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. *Be Full* is our annual celebration of Cape Cod Church's Missions Program. When you hear the word "missions" in the church context, what thoughts and images come to mind?

2. In the opening of the message, Pastor Ben reminded us that one of our Core Commitments as a church is, "We're here for the one who isn't here yet." In your own words, what does that mean to you – and what should it look like for a church that lives by that commitment?

3. Whenever Jesus told a parable, his audience was typically represented by one of the characters or objects in the story. As you think about the three "lost things" parables in Luke 15, where do you see yourself in each of those stories? Explain your answers.

4. How would you answer the first question posed by the message ("What are you doing to make people ask, 'Why would you do that'?")?

5. Read Luke 15:25-30. What might we be *doing, saying or implying* as a church (or as individuals within the church) that might send a signal like the older brother sent – that we're not entirely happy when the dirty, sinful, beaten-down-but-hopeful "lost son" comes to our door?

6. As you consider our calling as a church to be "for the one who's not here yet" and to serve those "across the street and around the world," what might God be calling you to do for that mission in 2027?