

between them." Those who know the culture around this story tell us that the younger son's request for his inheritance was an insult. The distribution of an estate, then as now, waited for the owner's death. So the son's request said to his father, "As far as I am concerned, you might as well be dead!" The request brought shame to the family and broke his father's heart. Surprisingly, the father grants his request, and the son leaves to bear the consequences. As a teenager, I deeply disappointed my dad once when I was caught with a group of friends vandalizing someone's property. When he picked me up at the police station, his face was full of disappointment as he said, "We don't do that sort of thing." By "we" he meant our family. I had insulted him, shamed the family and broken his heart. Rebellious sin is never just a breaking of the law, but a breaking of the divine heart, an insult to Him who loved us and gave His life for us. PRAYER: *Lord Jesus, forgive the insult of my sin, as sharp and hurtful as those who insulted You in Your Passion. Amen*

### **Palm Sunday – Waste**

Read "The Parable of the Lost Son" in Luke 15:11-32, focusing on the key verse, Luke 15:13, "*Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.*" No doubt a neuroscientist would tell us that the runaway son's prefrontal cortex was not yet fully developed. That's where judgment, organization, impulse-control and planning happen in the brain. She would explain that this part of a male adolescent's brain grows more slowly than a female's. So who hasn't said to a young man under the age of 25, "What were you thinking? Did you even consider the consequences?" The runaway son goes through his money with no thought of ethics or consequences. Jesus describes him as "reckless." Shall we blame it on his brain? A lack of impulse-control is not the exclusive challenge of young men. Mature women and men make bad choices without reeling out the consequences. We get reckless with our moral decisions and lose control of our impulses. Sin is like that. It lives far from home without boundaries and without relationships. It doesn't ask, as Joseph did long ago, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen 39:9). Sin is much more than neurological; it is prodigal in its reckless waste of grace. PRAYER: *Lord, control the impulse in me to waste Your grace by sinning. Amen*

### **IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL**

4650 Sunview Drive, Loveland, Colorado 80538  
970-667-4506 ~ [www.ImmanuelLoveland.org](http://www.ImmanuelLoveland.org)

*This week's Bring It Home devotions are from "The Parables of Lent" Daily Devotions on the Stories of Jesus for Lent", written by Pastor Dean Nadasdy and used by permission of Creative Communications for the Parish.*



*Devotions for  
the week of  
April 2, 2017*

### **WHAT NOW?**

1. Throughout this coming week, think about coming home into the waiting arms of a loving, grace-filled Father. How can that gift impact your different relationships, your job, your conversations? Pray for an opportunity to be able to share more about this loving Father who is here to welcome us home.
2. Continue with the "Love Assignment" of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. This is week 7 of 16, love as it's expressed in "not being self-seeking." How can you practice love by not being self-seeking and instead, be looking for ways to love and serve others this week? Let Jesus' Love Work in you and through you in amazing ways!

*If you would like to receive daily Bring It Home devotions by email, please contact the church office: [churchoffice@immanuelloveland.org](mailto:churchoffice@immanuelloveland.org)*

### Monday — Dark

Read “The Parable of the Lost Coin” in Luke 15:8-10, focusing on the key verse Luke 15:8, “...*light a lamp...*” An old Theatre of the Absurd routine has two guys on stage surrounding a circle of light from a spotlight above. One is searching for something. The other asks, “What are you looking for?” The searcher replies, “My keys. I dropped them over there (pointing to the darkness on the other side of the stage).” “Then why are you looking over here if you dropped your keys over there?” the other says. The answer? “Because it’s dark over there. I can see better here in the light.” A house with only a single window and a doorway could be a dark place. The oil lamp the woman lights to search for the coin was likely about the size of the palm of her hand. She would hold the flame close to the stone floor, shedding light on its nooks and crannies. Jesus is saying that He looks for us in the dark corners of our lives. There is no finding Him; He finds us. As His presence brings light to our settled darkness of sin, we repent and are restored as His. PRAYER: *Lord Jesus, shed Your light on the dark corners of my life. Amen.*

### Tuesday — Sweeping

Read “The Parable of the Lost Coin” in Luke 15:8-10, focusing on the key verse, Luke 15:8 “...*and sweep the house...*” Call it the language of the broom. A team wins four of four games against an opponent, and we say they swept the series. A survey is taken to determine who is watching what shows on television, and we call it the sweeps. Someone impresses us, and we say, “She swept me off my feet.” The language of the broom carries the idea of completeness and thoroughness. As Jesus tells it, her broom swept the house that day as the woman searched for her coin. It reached places she couldn’t see. She was intentional and diligent. It took effort, all her own. Coins don’t shout, “Here I am! Help me!” Her broom would gather no small amount of dirt along with other unexpected “treasures” and, thankfully, that treasured little coin. The sweeping work of Jesus Christ includes His amazing teaching, perfect obedience, atoning death and victorious resurrection. His relentless pursuit of sinners then and now entails a sweeping thoroughness of effort—all this for our sake. PRAYER: *Lord Jesus, may Your pursuit of sinners sweep the world with love. Amen*

### Wednesday — Celebration

Read “The Parable of the Lost Coin” in Luke 15:8-10 focusing on the key verse Luke 15:9, “*And when 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.’*” A high school senior lost her class ring on a canoe trip. Her parents had her name inscribed inside the ring band. The girl knew there was little chance of finding it, but she and her youth group formed a line and swept every inch of their campsite in search of the ring. One chuckled that he felt like a hobbit in Tolkien story. After an hour, the group gave up and paddled on to a new campsite as planned. Ten months later, though, another camper discovered the ring at the very same campsite, tracked down its owner from her name inside the ring and returned her treasure. The senior was so ecstatic when she received her ring that she invited her friends from the canoe trip to a big party. They all came, including the finder. One of them baked a cake in the shape of a ring. They played ring-toss and

watched an excerpt from the *Lord of the Rings*.” How much greater is the celebration in heaven when a single sinner repents! PRAYER: *Lord, bring joy to my heart and a celebration to the Church when You find a lost soul. Amen.*

### Thursday — Analogy

Read “The Parable of the Lost Son” in Luke 15:11-32, focusing on the key verses 11-12. “*There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them.*” To hear a parable and understand it, you have to think analogically. That is, the teller of a parable puts two stories side by side and suggests that the one helps us understand the other. In his book *The Problem of Pain*, C.S. Lewis identifies four great biblical analogies for the love of God, each increasing in intimacy: 1) artist and creation; 2) master and beast; 3) parent and child; 4) husband and wife. Here in His story of a lost son, Jesus gives us an unforgettable parent and child analogy for reconciliation. Woven within the father/sons relationships are the great biblical themes of sin, humility, faith, repentance, grace, forgiveness, restoration and celebration. This is not merely an artist loving his creation or a shepherd caring for his sheep. This goes to the depths of a parent’s love for a child and signals the profound nature of Jesus’ love for the lost and found. What father would not revel in a runaway son’s return? What mother would not die for her child? So it is with Jesus and us. PRAYER: *Lord, my story is one of Your grace. Amen*

### Friday — Rivalry

Read “The Parable of the Lost Son” in Luke 15:11-32, focusing on the key verse, Luke 15:29, “*Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends.*” Sibling rivalry is the subject of many stories in the Bible—Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Leah and Rachel, Joseph and his brothers. Think, too, of the sibling rivalry in Shakespeare’s plays or in John Steinbeck’s *East of Eden* with brothers Cal and Aron Trask. Not long ago an ultrasound video showed unborn twins jostling each other for more room in the womb. The video was titled “*Sibling Rivalry Begins in the Womb.*” It’s safe to say that anyone who has a brother or sister knows something about sibling rivalry. In His parable of the lost son Jesus places the conflict between the Pharisees and sinners into a family context. The family is unhealthy with a runaway younger brother, a resentful, jealous older brother, and a father seeking the best for both. The story is much more than a lost-and-found parable. It is a loving appeal from Jesus for the Pharisee to see the repentant tax collector and sinner as a source of joy rather than resentment. For Christians, it levels us all in being completely dependent on the grace of God. PRAYER: *Mend our torn relationships, Lord, by the power of Your love. Amen.*

### Saturday – Insult

Read “The Parable of the Lost Son” in Luke 15:11-32, focusing on the key verse, Luke 15:12. “*And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property*