

Sermon Outline

THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT FOSTERING

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Bible Readings: Luke 15:1-24 & Hosea 11:1-4

Our stories

What is Fostering?

How does God love us?

God pursued us in love

The lost sheep

The lost coin

God loved us sacrificially

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.
(1 John 3:16-18)*

God lovingly welcomed us

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. (Romans 15:7)

The lost son

God is lovingly patient with us

¹When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
²But the more they were called,
the more they went away from me.
They sacrificed to the Baals
and they burned incense to images.
³It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
taking them by the arms;
but they did not realise
it was I who healed them.
⁴I led them with cords of human kindness,
with ties of love.
To them I was like one who lifts
a little child to the cheek,
and I bent down to feed them.
(Hosea 11:1-4)

God's love pursues us, at significant cost to himself, so he can patiently welcome us into his family.

Go and love others like God loved us

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering. (Heb 13:1-3)

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:27)

'His name is the LORD. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows.' (from Psalm 68: 4-5)

What's stopping us from loving like this?

What can you do to lovingly pursue a stranger, at significant cost to yourself, so that you can patiently welcome them into God's family?