

Sunday, May 17, 2026

Knowing God: The Loving Father Who Runs

Text: Luke 15:11-32

Doctrine matters because...

1. **We love God.**
2. **Belief shapes behavior.**
3. **It informs our worldview.**
4. **We need to be equipped to explain what we believe and why we believe it.**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. (Baptist Faith and Message 2000)

Eph 1:3-6, John 1:12, 1 John 3:1, Gal 4:6

From the very beginning, we were created to commune in loving fellowship with the Father. The fall introduced the brokenness in which we find ourselves. Genesis 3 is the “Proto-Evanglion” or “first gospel” we see in scripture.

1. The Care of the Father (v.11-13)

- He is present.
- He is protector.
- He is provider.

2. The Compassion of the Father (v.14-20)

- You can only see someone a long way off if you are looking. This is how the Father is toward us. The father in the prodigal son felt *compassion*.

3. The Celebration of the Father (v.21-24)

- The father celebrates the return of his younger son. The father loves us where we are, NOT where we pretend to be.

- The older son is *doing* a lot for the father, but is unable to celebrate. The father responds “Son, you are always with me. All that is mine is yours.”

4. The Call of the Father (v.25-32)

- How should we live knowing that the Father still runs?
 - Repent quickly — Don’t wait to “clean up.” The Father runs to meet you.
 - Receive grace fully — Stop trying to earn what the Father freely gives.
 - Release others freely — The Father’s forgiveness becomes our model.
 - Rejoice in God’s mercy — Celebrate what the Father celebrates.
 - Reject the older-brother spirit — Don’t let pride keep you outside the feast.
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