

# Thanksgiving in Heaven

by Carter Conlon

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*This sermon delves into the concept of Thanksgiving in heaven, exploring the joy and celebration that occurs when a sinner repents and returns to God. It emphasizes God's relentless pursuit of individuals, His forgiveness, and the invitation to partake in the heavenly celebration. The narrative from Luke 15 illustrates the immense joy in heaven over one person who repents, showcasing God's mercy, grace, and love towards those who come back to Him.*

**Duration:** 19:57

**Scripture:** Luke 15:4, Luke 15:8, Luke 15:11, Matthew 11:28, Isaiah 55:7, Revelation 3:20, Psalm 51:10, Romans 10:9, 1 John 1:9

**Topics:** "Heavenly Celebration", "God's Forgiveness and Mercy"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I want to talk a little bit tonight about Thanksgiving in heaven. What does Thanksgiving look like in heaven? What goes on there? And I'm going to go to the gospel of Luke chapter 15 and read some scriptures to you. And I'm going to, I want to give you a glimpse into what's actually going on in heaven right now and how you can actually add to the celebration.

You can actually add to heaven celebration tonight. Did you know that? Did you know that you can make angels shout tonight? Did you know that you can, you can actually bring joy around the throne of God? Do you know that you can enhance the Thanksgiving celebration in heaven itself? Listen to what Jesus said, Luke chapter 15, beginning at verse four, what man of you having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the 99 in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it. And of course that's what the Lord Jesus Christ came to do.

He could have stayed in heaven where all these created beings around the throne of God are crying out, Holy, Holy, Holy day and night, 24 hours a day, they're worshiping God. Nothing there needs to be redeemed. He could have stayed there, but instead he saw you.

Yes, you. He saw you in your house. He saw you on your laptop right now.

He saw you in your depression, your discouragement, your seeming defeat. He saw you with the deep questions. Maybe he heard the groaning in your heart.

Oh God, if you're real, can you help me? Can you help my family? And he came down to this earth as a man to get you because he heard your cry. He left the 99 around the throne of God as it is. And he came down to this earth to go to a cross, to make a way for you to come to the Thanksgiving celebration in heaven.

It says in verse five, and when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, which is what Christ did for you on the cross, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors saying to them, rejoice with me for I've found my sheep, which was lost. He calls together when he rose from the dead.

I mean, there's a celebration going on in heaven right now. And he calls together all of his friends and says, rejoice with me for another one, which was lost has been found. Another one, which was destined for eternal darkness has received forgiveness as coming home to spend eternity with us in heaven.

I say to you that likewise, there'll be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 just persons who need no repentance. When one person comes to this place of repentance, now let me define that. Repentance is just saying, Jesus, forgive me for the way I have lived my life.

Forgive me for trying to pursue this journey called life and get through to the end and hopefully beyond to something better than I've experienced here. Forgive me for trying to do this in my own strength. Forgive me for creating my own rules and my own mind of what's right and what's wrong and what's good and what's evil.

God, I have really sinned against you because you've already outlaid what truth is. You already made a way for me to find the life, which I've always longed for. You made a way.

You went to a cross so that I could be forgiven. I could come home to God and I could be a new creation. More joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.

One person tonight who bows their head and says, Lord Jesus Christ, forgive me for the way I've lived my life. Forgive me for having sinned against truth. Forgive me for all the injustices I've done to other people.

Forgive me for harboring bitterness in my heart for the injustices that were done against me. Forgive me, God, for choosing to live outside of this incredible life that you promised to give me, the forgiveness and the newness of life. I've lived in a place I shouldn't live.

Forgive me for the words that I've spoken that have wounded others and all of the untruth that has come from my lips. God, I repent. Jesus said there'd be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents and over 99 just persons who need no repentance.

Or what woman having 10 silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweeps the house carefully until she finds it? The Lord has been sweeping your house for quite a while now, carefully. He's looking for every avenue of your heart. He's around you.

He's whispering to you. He's talking to you. The whole time he's been cleaning your house as it is, he's talking to you.

He's saying, come home to me. Come back to me. I love you.

I want to rejoice over you. I want you to be my son. I want you to be my daughter.

I want to give you the life that you've always longed for, but you've not been able to find it in your own strength in this world. And verse 9, he says, and when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together. Now, Jesus Christ is speaking about heaven right now.

And he says, rejoice with me, for I've found the peace which I lost. Likewise, I say to you, there's joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. There's Thanksgiving going on in heaven, and you can actually add to the celebration.

You can, through Jesus Christ, actually appear at the table of God. Your name will be written down in a book the Bible calls the book of life. It's amazing.

And in Christ, you will already, I can't go into the depth of it. You wouldn't understand it, but the Bible says that in Christ, you will already be seated at the right hand of God. In other words, you're already at God's table of celebration, and you can actually add to the Thanksgiving.

The door opens, and suddenly the whole crowd is shouting because of you. Yes, you. Even if you've made a mess, even if your life is so ... You say to me, pastor, you've got to be kidding, man.

I mean, if you could see the other side of the camera and look at me, like my hair is greasy, and somebody out there saying, I'm not capped in my clothes, they stink, and I've just been in places I shouldn't be, and sin and depression is all over me, and inside of my body is substances that shouldn't be there, and in my head are thoughts that I shouldn't be entertaining. You're telling me that heaven will rejoice over me? You're telling me that angels who've never sinned will start shouting and flapping their wings or whatever they do around the throne of God? They'll even shout, holy, holy. Maybe it'll go up a decibel around the throne.

You mean you're telling me I can do that? That I can actually cause Thanksgiving in heaven? In all of my mess? Now, Jesus is talking about what's going on at the throne of God. In all of most of Luke 15 up to the point I'm going to get to, he's talking about what actually goes on in a realm that you can't see with your natural eye, but you can actually travel there by faith. By faith we go there in Christ, and then one day you'll physically be there.

One day, if heaven has a video room, you can go in and see what happened around the throne the day you gave your heart to Jesus Christ. The shouting that erupted, if they do have glasses that clinked at the table, the toasts that were given in your name, as much of a mess as you were. He goes on in Luke chapter 15 to talk about a young man that was given life by his father and an inheritance, and he just decided to take this life his father had given him, and he just took off with it, just like you did.

He went far away from where he should have been and what his life was actually called to be and what his father had given him life for. He abandoned that purpose, and he took on his own purpose, and that's what sin does. We separate from God, and we make the choice to live our own way, do our own thing, seek our own pursuits, create our own rules, and so that's what this boy did.

He took everything his father had given him. God gave you life. God gave you the eyes you have to see, or the mind you have to think, the voice you have to speak.

God gave you everything around you. God gave you everything in nature that's all around you that proves his love and his existence, if you have the heart to see it and to embrace it. And he took off, and he went far, far away from his father, and then all of a sudden in that society, it got vile, just like our society is getting today.

The conversation was vile, and anger was on the increase, and incivility was abounding, and liars were esteemed. It's amazing that you can actually get to that place in society where people can bold-facedly lie and yet still be esteemed. It's amazing.

He got so tired of it. He made a last-ditch effort to find any satisfaction he could in this environment, but people had gotten so selfish that every man now was in it for himself, and he started thinking, God Almighty, this is not the way my life is supposed to be. In a last measure of desperation, he ended up out in a field feeding pigs.

Nothing more unclean for a Jewish boy could ever come his way. He ended up doing things he never thought he would do, and some of you listening to me tonight, you're actually doing things you never thought you would do. You're in places you never thought you would go, and your mind is being gripped by things you never ever dreamt would grip your mind, but here you are.

Now you're watching this service online tonight. You're listening to this message, and you're actually peering through a portal. It's like a keyhole for you into something maybe that has never been your portion, or maybe you once knew a little bit of it, but you walked away from it.

You're looking back at it again, and this boy began to say, I got to get home to my father, and the scripture tells us that he got up to come home, and when he was still a far, far way off, he couldn't even see his way back, but you know something? Maybe you can't see your way back, but God never lost sight of you. He never stopped looking at you. He never stopped longing for you.

He never stopped walking the mountain searching for you. He's been going up and down hills and valleys looking for you in your lostness. He's been sweeping your house, walking around you, talking about the goodness of his kingdom, looking to bring you home.

He never lost sight of you the whole time that you lost sight of him, and suddenly he finds himself embraced by his father, not judged, embraced. He finds his father hugging him. You see, when's the last time you saw God like that? Many people see God as a stern old man that's just with his bony finger pointing at all his failings and sins, but that's not what Jesus said the father is like.

The father ran down the road, embraced his son in all of his smell, all of his folly, all of his failings. He embraced him and kissed him on the neck, and under Jewish law, when you embrace somebody that had been with pigs, basically, you took the smell of that person upon yourself. You took their sins as it is their failings upon yourself, and that's exactly what Jesus did on the cross 2,000 years ago.

When he stretched out his arms and those nails went through his wrists, he was embracing you, and he was saying, come to me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden. Come to me, come to me, and you find not a God whose desires to judge you, but a God whose desires to forgive you. He brought out the best robe and covered all of this boy's failings, and then put a ring of authority on his finger, and put shoes on his

feet, and made him a partaker of another kingdom that he had never fully known.

He basically was saying, son, you're ready now to tell your friends about me because, you see, you know that there was nothing in you that could bring you back into right relationship. It had to be my mercy. You see, tonight, I want you to know there's nothing you can do to get back to God other than open your heart and say, Jesus Christ, I accept the forgiveness that you offered me on the cross, and still offer me today.

I am the lost sheep on the mountain. I am the coin that's been lost in the house, and Lord, I give my heart and my life to you tonight. And not only that, he brought him home after he fell on his neck and kissed him, and put a robe covering his failings upon him, and put sandals on his feet.

Then he brought him to a Thanksgiving dinner. May I put it that way? He said, bring out the fatted calf and kill it. In other words, let's have a feast.

And you can just picture all of heaven coming to this feast. And he said, not only that, bring up the band, and let's strike up the band, and let's start to sing, and let's start to dance. Because the older brother, it says in verse 25, came to the house, and when he drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

And so we're looking at Thanksgiving in heaven. We're looking at a dinner, at a table in a sense. We're looking at a banquet.

We're looking at a feast. We're looking at merriment. We're looking at the lost lamb who's come home, the lost coin that's been found, the lost son that's come back to God.

We're looking at the response in heaven. We're looking at Thanksgiving in heaven tonight. We really are looking at Thanksgiving in heaven.

Praise be to God. We don't earn it. We haven't deserved it.

It's all mercy. It's all grace. It's all the goodness of God.

That's Thanksgiving in heaven. There's nothing this boy could do but just stand there and watch the rejoicing over him. Likewise, Jesus said, there is joy among the angels of heaven over one sinner that repents, one person that comes back to God, one lamb that finally recognizes its owner and cries out, cries out to God, saying, here I am.

Come and get me. I'm stuck in a thicket and I can't get out myself. Oh God, thank you for your mercy.

God, thank you for your goodness. God, thank you for your grace. God, thank you for revealing your heart through the scriptures, how your mercy endures forever.

Your mercy is beyond our comprehension. And as we sang tonight, how great God is. How great is our God.

How powerful is our God. How merciful is our God. How glorious is our God.

There's a seat for you tonight at the table of God. There's a place that's got, there's a placard and it's got your name on it. And heaven waits for you to attend its Thanksgiving celebration.

Praise God. The invitation comes, we get these Evites. God sends an Evite to you tonight.

It's an evangelical invite. That's what an Evite is from God. And he says, a party is about to be held in your honor.

Hallelujah. The angels in heaven are waiting to rejoice. We got the fatted calf on hold.

It's simmering right now. The band is tuning up their instruments and it's all about you tonight. It's all about you and your willingness.

Would you please RSVP. Repent and say you've been very patient with me. RSVP.

God is willing. That was, I got that on my feet by the way. I didn't plan that.

God is willing to be merciful. RSVP. Come on now.

Come on now. Don't make this difficult. When I was a cop, I used to go in once in a while, you had to go into a bar where somebody's creating a ruckus.

And I would say to them, I'd sit down, take off my hat and I'd say, okay, there's two ways we can do this. You can get up and come with me now. Or there's a second way.

I'm telling you, God's coming after you. You can get up and come with him now, but he's not going to let you go. He's not going to let you walk away because he loves you with an everlasting love.

There's a party waiting in heaven for you. It's got your name on the invitation. Would you open your heart tonight? Would you just say these simple words with me? I'm going to lead you in a prayer right now.

Make it your own prayer right now. Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for loving me.

Thank you for coming to get me because I've been stuck in the wrong place. I've been lost. I'm the coin you've been looking for.

I'm the child that strayed, but God, you want me to come home and you want to celebrate my homecoming. So I open my heart to you tonight in the same way that you've opened your heart to me. I accept your embrace.

I return that embrace to you. I just want to say, Jesus, I love you. Thank you for loving me, for coming to get me, and for bringing me home to heaven's thanksgiving.

It's hard to comprehend, but you love me that much. So I give my life to you. From this day forward, Jesus Christ, you are the Lord of my life and I am your child.

Thank you for the invitation. I accept it in Jesus' name. Hallelujah.

Can you hear the shout? Can you hear the shout in heaven? Can you hear the angels rejoicing? Can you hear the band getting ready to play? Oh, come on now. Can you hear the shout? Is there a shout going on in heaven right now? Can you hear the shout? All for you tonight. All for you.

All for you. Jesus was not exaggerating. He was not embellishing.

He was speaking the truth about what goes on at the throne of God. When one sinner comes home, one person repents. One person says, God, I'm sorry for the way I've lived and I accept you as my savior.

If you've done that tonight, I want you to RSVP right now and text the word decided to 51,000. Would you do that right now? That's your RSVP. Decided.

Come on, do it right now. Do it right now. Take your cell phone.

Unless you're a student at Summit, you don't have a cell phone, so you can't do that. But take your cell phone and text the word decided to 51,000. That's your decision to accept the invitation to heaven's Thanksgiving dinner.

That's going to be your Thanksgiving. And you're going to make God's Thanksgiving as well. It's going to be wonderful.

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Video: [https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9tUBkTQn5\\_c.mp4](https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9tUBkTQn5_c.mp4)

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