

JOIN US FOR...



CONNECT PARTY

A fun evening filled with desserts, laughter and a chance to meet and get to know others at Element. A great way to get connected & find out what's next!



CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING

Come to find out about Element's budget, an update on Planting Roots, and what we are planning for twenty fifteen.

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SERVE @ ELEMENT

There are many of areas to serve at Element
Fill out a connect card if you are willing to help!

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GOSPEL CLASS

8 week class that goes through basic Doctrine in Christianity & what Element believes specifically. Starts February 1st at 9:30a service

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!

Thank you for joining us today. This is a short note to let you know that we know what you are thinking: it is hot and cramped in this room. We want to acknowledge with you that yes, the front room is full, the kids rooms are full, and it can get warm. We are working on alleviating this right now by building our own building on the land just north of us (we must be out of this one by December 2016).

There is a lot that goes into the process of Element having a permanent home, but we hope that today you are first drawn to Jesus before you are overwhelmed by anything else. If it gets too hot we may hand out popsicles to help you cool off and give you a sugar rush. If you would like a service that has open seats (and is cooler), you are invited to our 8:15am service. Please understand that all of these "challenges" are because of our love for Jesus, people, and growth that has come quickly. These are good things. We hope you will stay as we work to make more room for you to be part of the good thing Jesus is doing here. If you would like more information about our building process or how you can participate you can visit www.elementroots.org - The Element Team

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Luke 15:11-24

PRODIGAL GOD

the prodigal son

TODAY'S VERSES:

- 2 Corinthians 5:18-19
- Luke 19:10
- Matthew 13:13
- Luke 15:11-24
- 2 Corinthians 5:19

MY NOTES:

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All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. . - 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-19

PRODIGAL GOD

the prodigal son

Happy New Year!

Did you make a New Year's Resolution?

Element is starting 2015 off with an exploration in Jesus' parables found in Luke 15.

What is your favorite story (any story)? Why?
Do you have a favorite parable that Jesus told? What is it?
Why do you think Jesus taught primarily in parables?

Humans by nature crave stories, and Jesus tells us parables that are able to touch both the mind and heart. To use a cliché, parables are much like an onion, they have multiple layers, as we peel the layers back, the stories become more powerful.

This week, Eric discussed the younger son in the prodigal son parable. The parable of the Prodigal Son has been called The Evangelium in Evangelio which means the Gospel within the Gospel. It is as if in Jesus' parable we have a microcosm of the cosmic gospel. All the elements are there – a lavish Father, rebellion, repentance, and a homecoming. Along with the Good Samaritan, this is, no doubt, one of the most well-known parables of Jesus in the world. Ralph Waldo Emerson called the Prodigal Son the greatest Biblical story.

Read Luke 15:11-32

What part of the Prodigal Son parable stands out to you?

Who do you relate to in the story?

Have you ever wasted a blessing you have received? What was the outcome?

When looking at the father in the parable we almost always fail to notice his extravagant love and grace. In an American culture, even having this grace pointed out to us, still leaves us with a bit of consternation as grace is not immediately prevalent; what we many times see is an overindulgent father giving a spoiled boy another chance.

What is the criteria for a good father?

Do you think parenting like the father portrayed in the story leads to having spoiled children?

How can the fathers love be misunderstood and bring about seeing God's gift as simply "fire insurance" while you do whatever you want?

In the parable, the father is portrayed, as someone who is abundantly generous, loving, and is continuously willing to suffer humiliation for his son's sake. Instead of being angry with his son for his rebellion, the father loves his son and is joyous at his return. John 1:16 says, *"For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."*

If someone wrongs you, are you able to be like the father and love the individual even though they hurt you?

If you make a mistake, what helps you to return to God the Father and accept (live in) His unconditional, extravagant love for you?

Jesus shows us the way back to the Father. We need to see that He has suffered for our sake, because of our sin. He has made the way for our reconciliation. There is no plan that we can come up with that would find a way to earn his love and acceptance. All we can do is come home to Him, placing ourselves at His mercy knowing that we are not worthy to be called his son/daughter. This grace is meant to make us like the prodigal son where we stand in amazement, understanding God's extravagant love. It is not that we accept God, it is that God, through Jesus, has accepted us. We get to now experience the son-ship we were always meant to enjoy. There is nothing that brings God more joy than for lost children to be found—for them to truly come home.

If you know Jesus, talk about what your homecoming was like.