

Intro: Turn with me to one of the best known passages of scripture in the bible: Almost as well known as Lords Prayer, 23 Ps
Luke 15:11-32 Page 740

Often called Prodigal Son...I prefer the Lost Son: One in a series of 3 Parables of Something Valuable Lost and Found

Each of these Parables highlight the same spiritual truth: People Didn't Understand Grace: Jesus was 'splaining it ! v 1-2

PARABLES

- A physical story or illustration that reveals (explains) a spiritual truth
- Usually have one main point
- Not every detail has significant meaning: If you find some; must relate clearly and closely to main point
- There aren't "secret and hidden meanings:" Look for what Jesus says!

Point of the Lost Son: Understand The Heart Of God For People That Don't Know Him

SAME TRUTH: God Rejoices in Return

Learning To Love Like Jesus: Loving Those That Return

1. We All Have Walked Away From The Father.

Vs 11-13

Jesus is highlighting the human condition for us: This communicates UNIVERALLY! Whenever and Wherever

- Story: Vs:11-13: Give me; Left
~Father Gave him his freedom: Go or stay
~Father Gave him his inheritance
~Father allowed him to walk away:
- Illustrates OUR story
~Father gives us OUR freedom (never forces) Didn't with Adam and Eve...Doesn't with us
~Father has given us our inheritance: We have ETERNAL life: Ours...Do with as we see fit: This life as well OURS
~Father allows us to walk away: If we choose; we can live our life as if He doesn't exist...isn't even there
"He went away sad, because he had great wealth."

Mark 10:22

2. God Eagerly Desires For His Children To Return To Him.

Vs 14-20

Why? 1. Created for Relationship 2. Understands the consequences

Illus: Ever watched a child or a friend doing something that you KNOW is going to hurt them?

- While He was still "a long way off" the Father saw him
God does many things as He waits
~Draws: Joh 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him..."
Came to his senses
~Convicts: Joh 16:8 "When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt" (sin, righteousness and judgment)
It is better back home!
~Enlightens : Eph 1:18 "I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened..."
My fathers servants have it better than I do
~Meets them on way home: Vs 20: While he was still a long way off...
Ran to meet him with joy!
- God does the same for us...and those in Our Life
~Draws: Spirit gently and quietly speaks to heart...(Sometimes loudly!)
~Convicts: It is a GOOD thing to feel legitimate guilt! You have crossed a moral boundary!
~Enlightens: Opens our eyes to see where we are in relationship to Him....and Others
~Meets us: John 6:37 "whoever comes to me I will never drive away..."

Applic: Most of us function so much differently!

We tend to be like the elder brother...unwilling, unwelcoming, begrudging the return of his brother.

Not God...that's NEVER how HE treats us!

"He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

2Peter 3:9

3. God Unconditionally Forgives Those Who Return To Him.

Vs 20-24

"his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him." V 20

- Father loved him BEFORE his repentance was offered (repentance = relationship....love is always there!)
- Father loved him without conditions (now you have to do this!)
- Father restored him to his place in the family (never got to offer the "servant" speech!) (BEST robe!)
- The Father expected OTHERS to welcome him too! (Servants...Older Brother!) (message for US!)

Applic: God is that way with us. When we ask for forgiveness He is always faithful to provide it. 70x7

4. God Rejoices and Celebrates When The Lost Return To Him.

Vs 22-32

- This is the main point of the story!
It happens in ALL three of the parables Jesus told back to back to those who were grumbling about Him welcoming “tax collectors and sinners!” This is what it’s all about. God Celebrates the return of the Lost!
Lost Sheep: Vs 7; Lost Coin: vs 10 Lost Son vz 32
- Killed Fatted Calf: That was reserved for times of great celebration
- Threw a party for everyone! This shows the heart of God
- Refuses to give in to those who don’t understand.
~ Pharisees
~ Older brother
~ You and I!!!

CONCLUSION:

There are a couple of spiritual truths that you cannot overlook in this story today!

- Understand the Need
~Those without forgiveness will spend eternity without Christ, separated from the Father forever
~There is NO other name under heaven by which men MUST be saved
~There is NO other way: Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life
- If you are away from the Father...come home!
~He loves you, Welcomes you, Celebrates you
~There is Nothing to bad, No distance too great, No sin to deep but that the Love of God and the blood of Christ cover
~Today...Come Home: Forgiveness is yours for the asking
~GOD WILL NOT MAKE YOU...But He Will Welcome You
- If You know someone far from God, Reach Out
~Share with them the love God has shared with you
~Encourage them
~Know that as you do that...You Bless the heart of God
Why would you EVER NOT do that which you KNOW will bless Him
He has given you so much...To have this opportunity to cause the heart of God to sing with Joy...Take it!
- Be a part of what God is doing at RTBC in the next year
~35 men and women, boys and girls coming to follow him in salvation and baptism
~Find your place

“I Stand At the Door”