

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Luke 15:20-24
Lesson #12
The Father's Heart
12/15/2019

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-31



The Parable of Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

1. The Prodigal runs away to a distant land.
2. He becomes destitute through worldly living.
3. This brings him to repent and return home.



4. His father graciously receives him back.
5. His older brother becomes bitter, feeling the father is not fair in graciously receiving the wayward younger brother.

2

Prodigal

- The meaning of “prodigal”
Extravagant (wasteful) use of resources
- The term is not a Biblical word.
- The term can be applied to both the son and the father.

The son,
with respect to his inheritance

The father,
with respect to his graciousness



3

Zechariah 3

“¹Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand **to accuse him.** ²The Lord said to Satan, “. . . Is this not **a brand plucked from the fire?**” ³Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. ⁴He spoke and said . . . “See, **I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.**””

4

Luke 15

“²⁰ And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly **bring out the best robe and put it on him,** and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; ²³ and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was **lost** and has been **found.**’ And they began to **celebrate.**”

5

The context

- **Luke 15 consists of 3 parables.**

The lost sheep vs.1-7

The lost coin vs.8-10

The lost son vs.11-32

- **They each make the same point.**

The **joy** of “finding” a **lost & valued** object.

- **The focus is on the father’s heart.**

The prodigal son provides the occasion for the lesson and its audience.

6

The lesson

**The Gospel
is good news for penitent sinners**

**who are accused and
marginalized by religion,
hopelessly, lost, and alone
in the world.**

Luke 2:14

“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among men
with whom He is pleased.”

7

Understanding the Father

- **The father represents God in this parable.**
- **His actions are dramatic and unexpected.**
- **He stands in contrast to the older brother.**
- **He shows us how we are received by God.**
- **He shows us how we are to respond to others.**

8

A critique of the father.



1. He did not protect the son from his folly.
2. He did not come to the son’s rescue when needed.
3. He did not hold the son responsible in the end.
4. He was too lavish in his reception of the son.
5. He was not fair to the older brother.

9

Note the father’s response

1. The father expresses himself to the son with **action** not words.
2. The father **could have said:**

“You have a lot of nerve to show your face around here.”

“You have really hurt your mother and me and things will never be quite the same.”

“You will be expected to work to repay what you have squandered away.”

“You will enter rehab immediately and will be on probation for two years.”

10

The father’s example

1. He was liberating, not overly **possessive**.
2. He was trusting, not overly **protective**.
3. He was gracious, not overly **punitive**.
4. He was initiating, not overly **passive**.
5. He was lavish, not overly **prudent**.

11

Love cares
without **being possessive.**

(The father let the son go.)

- Love does not find fulfillment by controlling others.
- Love does not project one's image through others.

- Love knows when to let go.



12

Love cares
without **being possessive.**

(The father let the son go.)

- Why does God give us **FREEDOM** to be foolish?
- Why did God **LET** Israel rebel?

Hebrews 5:8

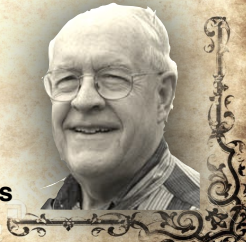
“Although he was a Son, he **learned** obedience from the things which he **suffered.**”



13

“Good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgment.”

Fred Brooks



14

When should I let go?

- When I have reason to **believe** that the son can & will learn.
- When I **trust** that the son is not in eminent, mortal, danger.
- When I have the **faith** to risk the power of love.

15

Because love is not fearful
it is **not overly protective.**

(The father did not rescue the son.)

- Love knows the **power of love.**
- Love knows the **power of pain** and is not afraid.
- Love is not a body guard or life guard but a **swimming instructor.**

16

Because love is not fearful
it is **not overly protective.**

(The father did not rescue the son.)

2 Corinthians 1

“3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; 4 who comforts us in all our affliction **so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction** with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. . . . 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves **in order that we should not trust in ourselves**, but in God who raises the dead;”

17

“Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

C.S. Lewis



18

Love is forgiving and **not punitive.**

(The father never even mentions the son's failures.)

- Love does not take into account a wrong suffered.
- Love is not shocked by failure.
- Love is patient and kind.
- Love is not afraid of restoration.
- Love does not demand justice.

19

Love is forgiving and **not punitive.**

(The father never even mentions the son's failures.)

Romans 4:5

“But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who **justifies the ungodly**, his faith is reckoned as righteousness,”

Romans 8

“1 There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has **set you free from the law of sin and of death.**”

20

Love is **not passive.**

(The father runs to welcome his son.)

- Love takes the initiative but with wise timing.
- Love rejoices in the truth.
- Love has a ‘body language’.

21

Love is **not passive.**

(The father runs to welcome his son.)

John 4 (The woman at the well)

“13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that **I shall give him shall never thirst**; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

22

“Love is moving toward another person's soul with a commitment to help them reach the deepest desire of their heart.”

Bell Hooks



23

Love is not **prudent (conservative).**

(The father is unbridled in his grace.)

- Love is not stingy with blessing.
- Love does not count the cost of its joy.
- Love is lavish and wasteful.

24

Love is not **prudent (conservative).**

(The father is unbridled in his grace.)

Ephesians 1

“³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

25

The eyes of the
father's heart

1. He could see beyond his **initial risk** because he valued a grander plan.

God's plan: Know - Accept - Forget about - Give self.

The grooming of the Prodigal son's heart was worth the risk.

2. He could see beyond his **personal property** with a vision of true riches.

He was willing to lose part of his estate
He spent a fortune on a homecoming.

3. His heart was reflected in **body language.**

26

The father plays three important roles in the life of the son.

1. He helps the son see himself.
2. He shows the son God's grace.
3. He removes the son's shame.
4. **His joy reveals the son's worth.**

27

Christmas
a message
from home



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