

Luke 15:17–24

17 “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,

19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”’

20 “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

21 And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘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 fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry;

24 For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.

God Our Father’s Blessings *Luke 15:11-32*

INTRO:

For Father’s Day we will look at a famous example designed to show us something about our heavenly Father in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Actually, the parable of the Prodigal Son is one of a trilogy of parables the Lord Jesus told to the critical Pharisees and scribes. ***“Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.” So He spoke this parable to them.”*** (Luke 15:1-3)

Because this was addressed to the sack sad Pharisees, we need to understand the purpose of the parable was not to teach us all about the Trinity or the security of believers. It was to teach us that God the Father and the angels rejoice with the angels when someone repents **(verse 7)**.

“I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

This truth is repeated in **verse 10**. The last of the three parables expands the thought to how God the Father deals with people.

I. The Son's Rebellion and Repentance. (v. 11-19)

II. The Father's Love and Grace. (v. 20-24)

I. The Son's Rebellion and Repentance. (v. 11-19)

A. Although this story is very familiar to each of us, it was shocking and unnerving to that first audience. We are introduced to two sons. The one is young, unwise, and rebellious. The other is older, bitter, and hardworking. The younger son makes an impudent request. Those listening no doubt were shocked at this demand He wanted his inheritance before his father died.

1 No one ever made this kind of request. It was illegal and immoral. The young son insulted his Father by wishing the Father was already dead.

2. The fact that the Father grants the request is even more shocking. They had to think, "What an indulgent Father that He would give this son his inheritance before he died."

B. These Pharisees and scribes did not have to have heard the rest of the story to know what would happen next. The young boy did with his inheritance what an immature and undisciplined boy will do. He spent it all on fun and games and soon was flat broke and his fair-weather friends all melted away and there he was flat broke and desperate. Can you hear the Pharisees' 'tsk, tsk' as Jesus continues His story?

C. Some of us would expect immediately the boy would wake up and come home. However, our young man was convinced he could do it all by himself. So, we read in **verses 15-16**; ***"Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything."***

Gasps of dismay must have escaped from Pharisical throats. A cold shudder must have moved through the crowd. No good Jewish boy would stoop so low as to feed pigs, would he?

D. Now the story turned. **(Luke 15:17-19)**

"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."'"

Here is where we cheat ourselves. The Pharisees no doubt thought, "Boy is this kid going to get his when he gets home. His Father will probably put him to death when he arrives." We would probably think in these terms also if we didn't already know the end of the story. Jesus was not finished shocking his audience when they heard about the Jewish

boy feeding pigs. Before we launch into an exploration of the Father's love and grace, let us take a minute to consider the son's repentance.

1. Before he came face to face with his rebellion and recognized his need to repent this boy was not thinking straight. In effect, Jesus implies he was out of his mind. He did not recognize the terrible sin which seized him. Nor did he recognize his hopelessness until he **"came to himself."** In **2 Corinthians 7:8-9** the Apostle Paul wrote about how sorrow can bring repentance,

"For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing."

2. Second, his repentance involved recognizing that before God he deserved nothing.

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son." (v.18)

This was a rehearsed speech. It was also a sincere speech. He spoke his heart. Far too many come to God thinking He is fortunate to have them. The fact is they do not deserve God. We are blessed beyond words that we can have Him and that He will have us.

II. The Father's Love and Grace. (v. 20-24)

A. Now the scene moves to the skinny, rag clad, young son coming home. (vs. 20-21)

"And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'"

As terrified as this boy must have been to come home, even before he got near the place the Father met him, kissed him, and received him.

1. This is love that is undeserved. I am sure the Pharisees now gasped again. This was no Jewish father they knew. The Father loved when the son did not deserve love. He accepted him when he deserved to be rejected. This is covenant love. This is special love only the Lord of glory will give to those who repent.

2. Do you remember **Romans 5:6-8**?

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

B. Finally, let us consider the Father's grace. The young man began his rehearsed speech, but he never got to finish it.

“And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.”

1. What did the son deserve? Absolutely nothing. By all rights he should starve to death eating the food of the pigs. What did he receive? Everything. Grace is never deserved, but it is richly offered to us.

2. ***“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”***
(Ephesians 2:8–9)

Do you and I know this grace? Do we live with an awareness of this kind of love? We can have it in Jesus Christ.