

The Father Forgives!

Luke 15:20-21

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- “Dread”—“To anticipate with fear, misgiving, distaste; to fear intensely”
- Times when we might experience “dread”
- “Dread” is what Jacob experienced anticipating meeting with Esau
- “Dread” is what the prodigal experienced as he made the trek home

The Father Forgives!!

A. The Prodigal FRETs: Possible Scenarios

1. His Father may choose NOT to meet with him.
2. His Father may choose to publicly shame him.
3. His Father may choose to grant him an audience.
4. As far as the Pharisees and Scribes: NO INSTANT FORGIVENESS!

B. The Father FORGIVES!

1. **The Actions of the Gracious Father—v. 20-21**
 - a. The father diligently looks for the prodigal’s return.
 - b. The father “*had compassion*” on him.
 - c. The father takes off running to meet the boy
 - 1) Grown men do not run—but walk magisterially
 - 2) Desire to shield son from village shame
 - d. The father is eager to forgive his son: the hug and kiss
 - e. The father forgives BEFORE the son confesses.
2. **The Incomplete Confession of the Son—v. 21**
 - a. Confessed his sin and unworthiness
 - b. Why no mention of serving as a “*hired worker*”?
3. **The Application to the Pharisees and Scribes, and US**
 - a. Thought that sin needed to be atoned for by working
 - b. Misunderstood Jesus’ mission and the heart of God
 - c. Failed to grasp that God loves and freely forgives repentant sinners
 - 1) Jesus Christ as the Seeker of the Lost
 - 2) Jesus Christ endured the shame and mockery
 - 3) Keeping the law and good works cannot save
 - a) Law must be kept perfectly—James 2:10
 - b) Atonement always by shedding of blood
 - 4) Jesus Christ is our atoning sacrifice
 - 5) Christ’s ONE sacrifice forms the basis for our forgiveness
 - 6) Salvation by God’s grace through faith plus NOTHING!