

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

Faith Portal Church

ADULT

Unit 3 Lesson 8

Supplemental Texts

Matt 18:12-14

Focus Verse

“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” – Luke 15:20

Introduction

In addition to the two preceding parables, Jesus gave the parable of the lost son who made up his mind to return to his father. This parable, like the two, implies that there is a great deal of joy when the lost is found. Jesus enlightened his critics as to His earthly ministry and to justify His conduct of receiving sinners (Matt 18:11; Luke 19:10). Jesus showed what a loving father the prodigal son had that he should be on the lookout for his safe return.

Deeper Look

A Certain Man Had Two Sons – Luke 15:11-16

The younger son of a certain man claimed his independence from his father by requesting his own share of his father’s property. This son did not care to separate from his father, brother, home, and father’s continual provisions. Soon, his plan rapidly turned into a nightmare after he squandered his inheritance away from home. He quickly realized how foolish he had been when a famine hit the country he had gone. The famine was critical in directing his mind back home.

And When He Came To Himself – Luke 15:17-24

As he went from plenty to penury, he came to his senses. The reality dawned upon him that even his father’s servants lived in plenty. Those who decide to go outside of God’s will cannot experience His providential care. The way out of the misery is to return to Him. The expectant father rejoiced when his wayward, weary son returned. He welcomed his prodigal as though he never wronged him. The loving father could not be happier to see his lost son found alive!

Thy Brother Is Come – Luke 15:25-32

The warm reception the father gave his younger son was not in any way acceptable to the older son. He complained that his father had welcomed the prodigal just as the Pharisees and the Scribes complained that Jesus received sinners (Luke 15:2). The self-righteous, envious, sad brother acted just as the Pharisees when he could have freely been part of the celebration.

Questions

1. Why did the younger son ask his father to give him his inheritance while his father was still living? What message could his request convey in their day? Why did the father give his son the inheritance? Explain.
2. Why did the son decide to “gather all together” and go to a “far country”? What acts would be considered examples of “riotous living” in our society? Could he have squandered his wealth only? Why, or why not?
3. What purpose could the famine achieve in the life of this son? How could God use “famine” in a similar way in our lives to achieve His purpose? What plan did the son have to endure his plight?
4. What circumstances and rationale led the prodigal son to decide to return home? Did he show any evidence of remorse for what he had done? How?
5. What attribute(s) did you see exemplified in the prodigal in Luke 15:19,21?
6. How did the father receive his prodigal son? Was the son restored to his sonship status? Explain. Who is the main character of this parable? Why?
7. Was the older son justified for being upset that his brother got a party? What would he have expected his father to do to his brother? What was his father’s message to him? What would the Pharisees and the Scribes come away with?

Personal Meditation

Many of us are so quick to judge without full consideration of what surrounds our object of criticism. We feel that we have enough details to reach an unbiased verdict. But most times we are wrong. The Pharisees and the Scribes did not only disdain the people who came to Jesus, they disdained Jesus also. While Jesus was happy to receive the lost sheep of Israel who came to Him, their religious leaders were disgusted. Think about this.

One could say that the religious leaders did not appreciate how Jesus felt seeing His people come to Him. Because they received not the publicans and sinners as Jesus did, they were not in God's business. They chose not to rejoice when the "lost" came to Jesus Christ. Likewise, the older son did not rejoice with his father in welcoming and celebrating his lost brother.

This parable describes the father as the Heavenly Father, the older son as the self-righteous Pharisees and Scribes, and the younger son as the publicans and sinners. Have you ever thought you are holier than others? Have you ever rejoiced when a backslider returns? Think about this.

DAILY STUDY

Monday	Luke 15:11-13
Tuesday	Luke 15:14-16
Wednesday	Luke 15:17-21
Thursday	Luke 15:22-24
Friday	Luke 15:25-28
Saturday	Luke 15:29-32



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