

## “Lessons From A Foolish Father”

### Parables: Wisdom to Live By, Part 1

February 22<sup>nd</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Jesus upsets the religious leaders of His day by hanging out with “**SINNERS**” (see Luke 15:1-2)

If you don't understand **WHO** God is and **WHAT** He is like, or you won't understand **HOW** He works

#### The Story – Luke 15:11-32

Luke 15:11-12 (NIV) “<sup>11</sup> Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.”

In the first century Jewish culture what the father did was utter **FOOLISHNESS**

Luke 15:13-16 (NIV) “<sup>13</sup> Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup> After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.”

Luke 15:17-20 (NIV) “<sup>17</sup> When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup> I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father.”

Luke 15:20b-24 (NIV) “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast & celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost & is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”

For the first time the son realizes his dad was afraid of **LOSING** him

Luke 15:25-28 (NIV) “<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. <sup>27</sup> ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup> The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.”

Luke 15:29-30 (NIV) “<sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’”

Luke 15:31-32 (NIV) “<sup>31</sup> ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Unfortunately some are taught to have a right relationship with God & go to heaven, you must **EARN** it; and you feel you must always do **MORE**, because you haven't **EARNED** it yet

Note the same dad who **EMBRACED** the younger son also goes to **FIND** the older son

Note the dad **DOESN'T** bring up their morality, what they worked for or deserved – both are **SONS**

#### Four Family Truths

##### 1. God loves us enough to let us **LEAVE**

Romans 1:21 & 24 (NIV) “<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened...<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts...”

Mark 10:21-22 (NIV) “<sup>21</sup> Jesus looked at him and loved him. ‘One thing you lack,’ He said. ‘Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me.’ <sup>22</sup> At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.”

God will not **FORCE** His way or will on you

God will let you live the type of life you **WANT** – as a non-follower of Jesus & as a Christian

2. **Turning to God is the only option that MAKES SENSE** (Luke 15:17 “When he came to his senses...”) Proverbs 14:12 (NIV) “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”

The freedom you have when you come to God or come back to God is a life free from **GUILT** & **SHAME**

You may not always **LIKE** God’s way, but it makes sense when you **DO** it

3. **The road back home starts with an ATTITUDE change**

Mark 14:36 (GN) “‘Father,’ He [Jesus] prayed, ‘My Father! All things are possible for You. Take this cup of suffering away from Me. Yet not what I want, but what You want.’”

James 4:7-10 (NLT) “<sup>7</sup> So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. <sup>9</sup> Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up in honor.”

The core of **REBELLION** = “give me” (Luke 15:12)

The core of **BROKENNESS** = “make me” (Luke 15:19)

Jesus didn’t die to **BLESS** our life but to **CHANGE** our life

Coming “to our senses” means I must take **OWNERSHIP** of my **ACTIONS** – that’s what led me here

4. **Unconditional love has to be ACCEPTED, not EARNED**

Ephesians 2:8-9 (GN) “For it is by God’s grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God’s gift, so that no one can boast about it.”

Titus 3:4-5 (NLT) “When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.”

God doesn’t say, show Me what you’ve **DONE**, but says, “you’re My son/daughter, My **HEIR**”

If you could **WORK** for God’s love, how **GOOD** would you have to be?

**Moral of the Story:** We have a God that would rather **RESCUE** than **PUNISH**

**My Next Step Today Is:**

- I get it. I realize I can’t earn God’s love. Today I am receiving God’s unconditional love for me.
- I will begin to pray more often, not God “give me,” but God “make me” into the person You want
- I/we plan to attend “All About New Hope” next Sun, March 4<sup>th</sup> during 3<sup>rd</sup> service (11:30 am)

**Next week:** Join us as we explore a parable on, “How to Pray & Get an Answer.” Invite a friend!

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