

LUKE Lesson 41

The Prodigal Son; (Chapter 15:11-32)

15 March 2019

This parable was used by Jesus Christ to teach the Pharisees that sinners need the Father's forgiveness and grace—and to show them that they also had the same need because they were no better off than the "publicans and sinners" (vs 1, 2). This story also teaches that everybody makes their own choice. Two brothers with the same father and the same advantages and upbringing can end up living very different lives. Parents must obey God's command and trust His promise in Proverbs 22:6.

<u>The characters:</u>	The father	represents God, our Savior.
	The younger son	represents the lost sinner
	The elder brother	represents a self-righteous church member (a Pharisee)

THE YOUNGER SON

He demanded what the father owed him (vs 12). The fact that he wanted all of it pictures how sinners live for the moment (instant gratification) and end up in ruin.

Four reasons for the son's decision:

1. He despised his father's government (control).
 2. He wanted to be out from under his father's watch where he had to answer for his sinful choices.
 3. He wanted to control his goods himself. He didn't want anybody to tell him what to do.
 4. He was proud. He thought he could run his own life better than his father.
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The downward journey of the sinner

1. He begins to drift away from the father (vs 13). A step toward the world is a step away from God (1 Jn 2:16).
 2. He wastes his money on sinful pleasures (vs 13). Sin is expensive! It will cost you more than just money (health, sanity, joy, family, stability, etc.).
 3. He begins to be in want (vs 14). Poverty follows a life of sin.
 4. His sin brings servitude (vs 15).
 5. Starvation (vs 16-17).
 6. Nobody gave (vs 16). Those you thought were friends will disappear.
 7. He's in a state of death (vs 32, 24) and is lost.
 8. He reaches a state of madness (vs 17). The fact that he "came to himself" reveals that he'd lost his mind.
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The Return of the Sinner

1. His affliction woke him up (vs 17). God let's a sinner get in trouble to open their eyes to their need.
2. He began to reason (vs 17). He considered his situation (and his mortality) reasonably.

3. He was humbled (vs 18-19). *"I'm not worthy."* This is the way back up.
 4. He arose and headed back toward the father's house (vs 18).
 5. He confessed his sin (vs 21). We've sinned against God (heaven) and our fellow man (against thee). You need to make things right with those you have sinned against and those you've caused to sin.
 6. He repented in humility (vs 21). God saves the repentant sinner.
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THE FATHER

1. He was willing to please his son, so he granted his request (vs 12). God will not make you live right. He's not willing that any should perish (2 Pet 3:9), but He won't stop you from doing what you want to do.
2. He understood that his son needed to learn the errors of his way by experience.

His Reception

1. He was patiently and eagerly watching for his son's return (vs 20).
 2. He had compassion for his son (vs 20). It grieved him that his son had to experience some terrible things.
 3. He ran to the son. He was eager to get him back. Isaiah 38:20 says "The LORD was ready to save me."
 4. He received him, embraced him, took him in, and kissed him. Clearly, God is not waiting to scold or punish the sinner. He wants you in the family where He can enjoy your fellowship.
 5. He received him as a son, not a servant (vs 22). See John 1:12.
 6. His son came wearing rags (Isa 64:6). He gave him a robe (vs. 22).
 7. His son came hungry. He was given a feast (vs 23). See John 4:14.
 8. His son came in misery and despair. He exchanged it for joy and rejoicing.
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THE ELDER BROTHER (the "good" church member)

1. He boasted of his own obedience (vs 29). His sin of pride equaled his brother's.
 2. He complained about the fatted calf (vs 30). He'd forgotten how good the father had been to him all those years at the dinner table. Don't complain when you see God blessing a brother or sister.
 3. He didn't care about his brother (vs 28). He refused to fellowship with the repentant sinner.
 4. He wouldn't call him his brother (vs 30). Don't forget that we have brothers and sisters in other churches.
 5. He exaggerated the faults of his brother (vs 30). Don't strain gnats and swallow camels (Mt 23:34, 7:3).
 6. He grudged him the kindness of his father. God is good to men who don't deserve His goodness.
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The Father's Treatment of the Elder Brother

1. He came out to where he was (vs 28).
 2. He reassured him that his treatment of his younger son did not diminish his love for him, the elder son.
 3. He reasoned with him. God reasons with us when we read the Bible. Don't close that Book!
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