

Two Lost Sons

Luke 15:11-32

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Lesson Text: Luke 15:11-32
- B. There are two boys in this story our Lord related.
 - 1. Of the two, the wayward prodigal is by far the most likable . . . the most honest . . . And the most open.
 - 2. Both were equally lost
 - a. The younger prodigal in the far country.
 - b. The older in the comforts of his own home.
- C. The context is important.
 - 1. The parable was addressed to two kinds of people:
 - a. The scribes and Pharisees
 - b. The publicans and sinners
 - 2. The publicans and sinners saw themselves in the younger prodigal son.
 - 3. The scribes and Pharisees saw themselves, to their rage and scorn, saw themselves in the older brother.

THE REBELLIOUS SON.

- A. The rebellious son was the prodigal son.
 - 1. The Bible records three cries of the prodigal son:
 - a. **“Give me!”** (v. 12) He said that to His father regarding the inheritance..
 - b. **“Help me!”** (v.14) He said that to the local farmer in the far country.
 - c. **“Make me!”** (v. 19) He said that to his father upon returning home.
 - 2. His father gave him what he had not asked for:
 - a. Love
 - b. Son-ship
 - c. Family
 - d. Redemption
 - e. Acceptance

THE “RELIGIOUS” SON.

- A. He **actions** betrayed him before his words ever did . . . He was angry and would not go in.
- B. His **argument** betrayed him “All these years I've worked hard for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you

never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends.” **Luke 15:29**
 He was both angry and jealous.

C. His attitude betrayed him.

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| 1. “I” 3 times 2. “Me” 1 time 3. “My” 1 time | All 5 of these personal pronouns in one single verse the 29 th verse. |
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D. The older son's resentment rendered him just as lost to the father's love as his younger brother had been.

1. While the resentment of this older brother is easy to understand, his volley of words reveals the same sort of self-righteousness that afflicted the religious leaders of Jesus' day.
2. A torrent of pent-up anger and frustration flowed from his mouth, describing that he had been slaving away for his father, never getting any special favors.
 - a. He did not take a moment to understand that he would inherit everything that he was working for and that he was dearly loved by his father.
 - b. He only felt angry that his father was celebrating "your son's" (not "my brother's") return home.

CONCLUSION:

A. Some has said: “Forgiveness has been called the virtue we profess to believe . . . Fail to practice . . . And neglect to preach.

B. This is really the parable of the Father’s heart.

1. The father is mentioned no less than twelve times in the double parallel.
2. It gives us a glimpse of God almost unique in the Bible.
3. The New Testament reveals God to us as our Heavenly Father.
4. I have read that the number of incidents in the Old Testament wherein God is referenced as Father, can be counted on one hand.
5. Jesus came to teach us a new name for God, the greatest of all . . . **Father!**

C. Observations:

1. Unfortunately, many today emulate the prodigal son who wanted to be free of parental restraints, and have to hit bottom before they come to their senses.
2. The father forgave because he was filled with love . . . The older son refused to forgive because he was filled with bitterness about what he felt was an injustice . . . Don’t let anything keep you from forgiving!
3. Listening friends:
 1. For many, it is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend.
 2. For many, it is easier to forgive someone outside the family than it is to forgive someone in the family.
 3. For some brethren, it is easier to forgive someone outside the church than a brother or sister in Christ.

4. One can be last while still at home as well as away from home . . . What about your family?
 5. While each brother had a will of their own, their loving father reached out to help both attitudes. God wants all of us!
- D. There are none so good that they can save themselves . . . And none so bad that God cannot save them.
- E. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**