

PRODIGAL SON

Hello I'm Jim Fuller. I like to share a few thoughts with you about the familiar story in Luke 15 about the Prodigal Son.

I've been a Christian a long time. I've heard this story preached many, many times. It's usually presented as a story of a rebellious young son, who asked his father for his share of the inheritance and left home. He squandered his inheritance in wild living and eventually fell on hard times. When he finally hit bottom, he came to his senses and returned home, where his father received him beyond his expectations and his older brother was offended that the father received him so lavishly. Those are the basic facts of the story.

Jesus came to reveal our heavenly Father and His heart for his children and this entire world. This story is exactly that. It's a story designed to give us a revelation of our heavenly father and his unfailing, and never changing love.

Let me make a few observations about the prodigal son first.

The Prodigal was completely self-centered and focused on his own personal benefit.

He asked for his share of the inheritance from his father with total disregard for the father's plans and intentions.

By asking for his share of the inheritance now, he was basically telling his father, I wish you were dead. I'm only interested in what you can give me, I have no interest in you.

He wrongly assumed that being independent from his father would vastly improve the quality of his life.

He also assumed that separation from his father would bring absolute, and total, freedom.

When his frivolous choices produced unwanted negative consequences, he utilized his own reason and rationale, to try his backup plan, and settle for being a servant instead of a free son.

This prodigal son's attitudes and actions identically represent mankind in it's fallen state, living separated from God, motivated and directed by their own senses, and under Satan's deception.

Now, a few observations about the older brother.

The older brother was also completely self-centered and focused on his own personal benefit.

He was also ignorant of the father's plans and intentions.

He too was only interested in what he could receive from the father.

He wrongly assumed that good performance was the basis for his Father's love.

He was critical and judgmental of his younger brother's bad choices.

He accused his father of being unjust for not rewarding his efforts.

He was totally offended by the father pouring out his love on his unworthy younger brother

This older brother's attitudes and actions identically represent those of a religious man, doing religious effort for personal blessing and wellbeing.

It's a sad fact that many who are bound by religion, know as little of the father as those who are out running with the pack and chasing every kind of fleshly Indulgence.

Both of these sons were estranged from their father. One by unrestrained flesh, the other by religious performance which is also flesh. Neither one of them actually knew their father.

Jesus's intention with this story was to show The Father's Heart for his children.

When the prodigal returned with his, I'm not worthy to be your son speech and his offer to become a servant, the father would have none of it, he didn't even listen.

He immediately told the servants to get the best robe and put it on him.

He was effectively saying, you've squandered your life, but I'll cover you with mine.

Go fetch my ring and put it on his finger. Signifying that you are one with me and I am one with you.

Bring some sandals and put them on his feet. Servants in the house did not wear sandals, only the sons and the family members.

Signifying that he had been restored back into the family.

The Prodigal assumed that his bad behavior had disqualified him from being a son. The father made it very clear that, you're a son because of me, not because of you.

I'm sure that the older brother could never understand why the father would stand at the front of the house and gaze down the road, day after day, looking for his foolish younger brother's return.

When the older brother accused the father of being unjust for killing the fatted calf for his rebellious younger brother, and not rewarding him for his obedience, with even a little goat to barbecue with his friends, the father shared his heart with him.

Son, you've been with me always, and everything that I have is yours.

Both of these sons were separated from their father. One while being in a distant country and the other while living in the same house. Both by a lack of revelation of their father.

Look with me for a minute at 2 Peter 1.2-4. It reads,

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our lord, seeing that his divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and excellence.

For by these he has granted to us his precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

The father in this story was trying to convey his love, his heart, and his life to both of his sons. He wanted both of his sons to know that everything he was and everything he had, was available to them.

Our heavenly father is trying to convey his love, his heart, and his eternal life to us his children, so that we can share his life.

But it requires revelation from the Holy Spirit to give us the knowledge of God and his son Jesus Christ and the true knowledge of him, as this scripture declares.

Jesus explained in John 17. 3

That this is eternal life, that you know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

2 Corinthians 2.14 states,

Thanks be to God, who always leads us in his triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

The victory over sin and death, and our fallen nature, that Christ won for us at the cross, is our ongoing experience of his eternal life.

It enables us to manifest the knowledge of God every place we go.

Our Father intends for us to reek of eternal life, so that every nation, tribe, and people group can become members of his family.

God bless you.

Jim Fuller

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