

OF A FATHER AND SON

(Luke 15:1-10)

Introduction:

1. The context for the parable of the man who had two sons (aka the prodigal son) is the complaint of the religious leadership about Jesus coming in contact with sinners (like they weren't sinners). Jesus tells two short parables in order to set up the religious leadership for the main thrust of His lesson. He speaks of the lost sheep (1 of 100) and the lost coin (1 of 10) in order to emphasize the importance of lost men (2 of 2).
2. Let us consider this parable in a way we maybe have not done before, and let us strive to get all that we can from this instruction from our Lord.
3. Let us consider that the prodigal son left his father, came to himself, and then came to his father; and finally we will address his brother's problem.

Discussion:

I. He Left His Father.

- A. The son asked for his inheritance while his father yet lived (Luke 15:11-13).
 1. He wanted the money without having to wait for his father to die.
 2. He wanted to be the master without the responsibility of his aging father.
 3. Note that after insulting his father he traveled a long way away from his father.
- B. We often do the same thing with our heavenly Father.
 1. We want the many blessings of existence without the acknowledgment of the provider (Rom. 1:21).
 2. We want the freedom without the responsibility (like children do).
 3. We want the protection and comfort without the authority.
 4. We want heavenly reward without earthly devotion and service.
- C. As we begin to travel down this road, we too seem to seek lands farther and farther away from our heavenly Father.
- D. The amazing thing to consider is that our heavenly Father gives the blessings and allows us to insult Him and forsake Him. What love and faith/trust he has in us (Rom. 5:1-11).

II. He Came to Himself.

- A. The son lost it all and found himself in need of his father (Luke 15:13-19).
 1. Easy come, easy go. The young man spent his fortune on "prodigal" (excessive) living.
 2. He soon found himself having gone from being in charge of servants in his father's house to being a servant to pigs, and jealous of them to boot.
 3. It was at this moment that he "came to himself" (regained his sanity; cp. Dan. 4:34).
 4. Repentance followed his recognition of reality, and he determined to return to his father no matter the blow to his pride.
- B. We too need to come to ourselves. We need to see ourselves as we really are when we are not with our heavenly Father (Jas. 1:22-27).
 1. This often occurs at times of great change in our lives (a birth of a child, a death of a relative, a sickness, or some other tragedy). Sometimes the worst thing that can happen to a person separate from God is worldly success (cp. Ps. 73).
 2. When we see ourselves for who we truly are and determine where we want to spend our eternity, repentance will follow and we will humble ourselves and seek our heavenly Father in order to serve Him (cf. Is. 6; Ezek. 1, 2; Luke 5:1-11; Rev. 1:17-20).

III. He Came to His Father.

- A. The son returned to his father who was waiting to welcome him home (Luke 15:20-24).
 1. The son journeyed the long distance to his father's home, where we find the father looking far down the road in hopes of seeing his son return.

2. The son begins his atoning speech, but his father stops him, embraces him, and exalts him as the master's son! The father does so rejoicing, not shaming the son.
- B. If we could just understand that the same and more is true for us if we resolve to return to our heavenly Father.
1. He is always looking for us (and He sees us always) and hoping that we will return (1 Tim. 2:4).
 2. When we resolve, He is already right there, embracing and exalting us; rejoicing with the angels in heaven!
 3. How much glory and joy we deny ourselves and our heavenly Father because of our pride. We think we have too much sin= we deny the power of God! We think we are alright and do not need to be so close to Him, that is the sin of the devil = pride.

IV. His Brother's Problem.

- A. Almost as an aside we are introduced to the older brother who did not insult his father or depart from his father's house.
1. But what we see in his heart is self-deception, pride and contempt of his father.
 2. He is just as separated from his father even though he was in his house every day.
- B. This is a haunting warning to all those of the household of faith.
1. We too can serve the father grudgingly, thinking that by doing so we are somehow owed special treatment (Luke 17:7-10; Job 35:6, 7).
 2. We too can look down on "sinners" not recognizing our own sin and our equal need for a savior (1 Cor. 4:7).
 3. We too can be far from the father even though we are in His house often and surrounded by His people (white washed tombs-Matt. 23:27).

Conclusion:

1. Our Lord is truly the master teacher. A familiar story, yet every time we consider it we can gain some deeper, more profitable understanding.
2. Let us recognize what this story teaches us about the wretched sinner and about the deluded sinner. Let us learn that as different as they may appear they are exactly the same and must respond exactly the same (humble repentance and submission).
3. Invitation.