

“Parable of the Prodigal Son” - - July 28, 2021

Tax collectors & sinners gathered... 3 parables- lost sheep, coin, son
3 characters – 3 types of people . . . which one am I?

Son who ran:

1 – wants his life now. . . Entitled. Impatient.

Misunderstands: life is now; not guaranteed tomorrow.

2 – Selfish. “I” want... make my own rules . . . no responsibilities.

-- You can run from life, but you can't from who you are – or God.

3 – “Wild living.” Here & now mentality; no future plans. Immaturity.

● *He finally makes a plan & does it. Follows thru. Goes home.*

-- He grows up... he changes... he matures. This is lesson learned.

Son who stayed:

1 – willing to stay & “slave” for others. . . Rule-keepers & People-pleasers.

Heart not in it; but no joy or happiness. **Bitter.**

2 – Selfish, too. Self-right. Unable to be happy for “bad”.

Insecurity. Envy. Feels short-changed by God ... we don't earn grace/love

3 – “distanced” living... walls up. Puts everything on everyone else:

- Never disobeyed Your orders; You never gave me...; son of Yours

○ He's living life, but there's no life in him.

● We don't know what happens to this son... Does he change?

Father:

1 – Love. Love welcomes. Love goes . . . Takes the 1st step; meets ½ way.

1st to apologize=bravest; 1st to forgive=strongest; 1st to forget=happiest.

He could celebrate. ** Father celebrates our return. Not anger/fear.

2 – Unselfish. Heart is big – loves those who love back & those who don't.

- Love b/c that's who He is; not b/c of others. Chose love.

3 – Stays. A constant love; He'll wait.

- Wait for heart to turn around; wait for heart to mature; wait . . .

- Willing to love ... to bring out the best in others.

○ God gives us clean slates. He's merciful & forgiving.

○ You can come back home. You can become like the Father.

Song: “Wandering Heart”-Lord Song. Stay positive. Test negative. Vaccinate!

¹¹ Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³ “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. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ “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! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

“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. ²¹ “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “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. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹ “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² 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.’”