



## “Lost and Found”

### Part 2

#### Luke 15:11-32

September 10, 2023

#### Luke 15:1,2

- 1 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.
- 2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, " saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

#### Luke 15:11-32

11 And He said, "A man had two sons.

12 "The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them.

13 "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living.

14 "Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.

15 "So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 "And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.

17 "But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!

18 'I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight,

19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'"

20 "So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

21 "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

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• This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> parable in "Lost and Found."

- Lost sheep.
- Lost coin.
- Lost son.

• Jesus has said in the first 2 parables that eating with sinners is like going after a lost sheep or a lost coin.

• In this 3<sup>rd</sup> parable, please watch the context. Not said to parents per se. This is said to the Pharisees.

• In this parable there are 3 main characters:

1. The rebellious son
2. The gracious father.
3. The self-righteous son.

• To get the attention of the Pharisees, the parable includes some very illogical, abnormal things.

• "prodigal" – wasteful. The outgrowth of rebellion. Rebellious fits better than prodigal.

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#### THE REBELLIOUS SON

• Vs. 12 – In that culture it would be abnormal: 1. For the younger son to ask for his inheritance. 2. To ask for it before the father died.

• Estates were divided like this – 2/3 to older son. 1/3 to youngest son.

• That brings us to the next abnormality: The father gives it to him. "What?? That's crazy!"

• By now the Pharisees are going out of their minds. "This is really out of line."

• This is like 14:18-20. Excuses given to reject gala dinner party.

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- He probably turns his 1/3 into cash. Sold it at a discount.
- So the rebellious son takes off to “sew his wild oats.”
- Wants to be free. Get away from home.
- He wants his share and he wants it now.
- **Note:** There is no indication he was raised in some legalistic environment.
- Where is the oldest son, whose job it was to protect the estate?
- Goes far away to distant country.
- So he ends up blowing the entire inheritance.
- Rebellion often leads to a loss of sensibilities. Irrational thinking can bring poverty.
- “loose” – reckless, wild, abandoned living.
- In that Jewish culture, what he just did was an outrage.

14 *"Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.*

15 *"So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.*

16 *"And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.*

- So his foolishness catches up with him and now a famine strikes the land.
- So he’s broke.
- He gets desperate and goes for help. Does not run to God.
- When you run from God, it will not turn out good.
- And when your life runs out, and you never ran to God, it does not matter if you died a billionaire in a mansion or a beggar in a cardboard box on a sidewalk under a bridge, you will spend eternity with everyone else who rejected Christ.
- Lands a job in the fields feeding the pigs.
- He has nothing and no one is giving him anything.
- Ends up eating with the pigs.
- “pods” - carob pods. When ripe, these pods are filled with a dark honey like syrup.
- The first one might be ok but by the 5<sup>th</sup> one you’re getting sick.
- Pigs can eat just about anything.
- At this point the Pharisees are saying, “Serves him right. He had it coming. Hope he dies in his filth.”

17 *"But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!*

18 *I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight;*

19 *I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."*

- He finally sees himself for what he really is. Like waking up from a dream. In his rebellion, he hasn’t been himself.
- Think how far he has fallen.
- He is at the bottom.
- “What is the matter with me?” “What have I done?”
- This drives him back to his father. The father is a generous man vs. 17.
- Notice his repentance and confession.
- He has sinned against God and his father.
- **Note:** the humility in vs. 19 – “not worthy.”
- Willing to take the lowest position.

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#### THE GRACIOUS FATHER.

- Father was probably looking every day.
- Then one day, in the distance, there he was.
- Pharisees were thinking he should just ignore him. Make him pay for his rebellion. Make him sit in his rags and filth.
- But the father heads down the road and **RUNS** toward him. Estate owners do not run. Very undignified.
- Only time in the Bible that God is depicted as being in a hurry – When? When He welcomes a repentant sinner home!

#### Deut 21:18-21

18 "If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them,

19 then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown.

20 "They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.'

21 "Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death;

Think about it . . .

*if they would have thrown any stones they would have hit the father! The father has him covered from the effects of the Law.*

Slow are the steps of repentance,  
but swift are the feet of forgiveness.

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#### THE GRACIOUS FATHER.

- His compassion for his son drove him to embrace and kiss him. This is abnormal. Son should be bowing down and kissing the feet of the father. And then receive his punishment.
- And the son blurts out his confession.

**Rom 2:4**  
4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

22 "But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet;

23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;

24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 "And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be.

27 "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.'

28 "But he became angry, and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him.

29 "But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends;

30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'

31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.

32 'But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'"



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• 5 things the gracious father does for his repentant son:

1. Put a robe on him. No need to clean up.
2. Put a ring on his hand. Insignia ring. 1. Shows who you belong to. 2. Has authority to act on behalf of the father.
3. Put sandals on his feet. Sons only wore sandals, not servants or hired hands.
4. Brings the fattened calf. Usually reserved for a wedding. Would probably feed a couple hundred people.
5. Let's celebrate.

• These 5 things are for honor and not for necessity. Abnormal.

• Pharisees – "This is outrageous!!"

• This is all grace.

• What a picture of what God does for us at salvation! We were dead and God made us alive. God at once makes us sons.

• Time to celebrate -

**Luke 15:6,10,24**

6 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'

10 'In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

24 And they began to celebrate.

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**THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS SON.**

- Older son is detached from the family. Unaware of what is going on. Where has he been?
- He hears the celebration and inquires.
- He is told of the celebration.

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"he became angry" – at this point the Pharisees are cheering for this self-righteous son. "This guy is right-on!" "He gets it." "Give that younger, rebellious son what he deserves." "Make him pay."

• You see, it at this point in the parable that the Pharisees (represented by the self-righteous son) enter the picture. This is pure genius on Jesus' part.

**Matt 23:13**

13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."

28 "But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him."  
 29 "But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends;'  
 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him."

- Notice that the father treats this son with the same grace – he pleads with him. Abnormal.
- This self-righteous son knows nothing of grace. He is a hard-nosed, hard hearted, cold, individual –
  1. "Look . . ." Disrespect for father.
  2. "serving", "neglected a command". His relationship to his father (one who issues commands) has been all legalism. These are words of a servant, not a son. This is the way man-made religion is – "working hard, practicing hard, grinding it out."
  3. "you have never" . . ." Jealousy. "I performed, he didn't."  
 "The proud and the self-righteous always feel that they are not treated as well as they deserve." – Henry Morris
  4. "this son of yours . . ." No mercy, no grace. Only justice. Totally detached.

**Gen 3:12**

12 The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."  
 5. "devoured", "prostitutes" – self-righteousness always points the finger at another's sins.

**Ps 130:3**

3 If You, Lord, should mark iniquities,  
 O Lord, who could stand?

31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.'

32 'But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'"  
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- Again, notice the grace of the Father in vs. 31.
- "But we had to . . ." - The rejection of the gospel will never deter heaven from celebration. There comes a time to move on.
- **Note:** The Pharisee will never understand the conversion of the thief on the cross nor the forgiveness of the woman caught in adultery.
- Every person born on this earth has available to them the grace and mercy provided for everyone through Jesus Christ. Not through works or some set of legalistic rules.
- But every person must come to Christ for salvation by grace, through faith.

**Rebellious Son**

- Open rebellion
- Unrighteous
- Immoral
- Repented and restored

- What is the ending?

**Self-righteous Son**

- Hidden rebellion
- Self-righteous
- Moral
- Hurt and hardened

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**Application**

1. "Tax-collectors and sinners" need to come to Christ. Self righteous religious people need to come to Christ.
2. You don't have a choice to sin or not to sin, only what category it will be in!
3. If you have never trusted Christ as Savior, you need to "come to your senses" (see your wretched condition) and repent a trust Christ for salvation.
4. We "eat and receive" those who are lost, that they may be found and move from death to life.