

The Two Lost Sons and the Good Father

Part 1: The Younger Son

{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.' {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.'" [Luke 15:11-32 NASB]

Who is Jesus Speaking To?

- Younger brothers - tax collectors, prostitutes, sinners
- Elder brothers - scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees
 - Story of the Two Sons is the third of three rebukes given to the “elder brothers”
 - i. The Lost Sheep (Jesus the Good Shepherd)
 - ii. The Lost Coin (Holy Spirit the Light/Lamp)
 - iii. The Lost Sons (God the Father)

The Lost Younger Brother

- “Give me the share of the estate that falls to me”
 - This would have been a shocking statement and a sign of deep disrespect.
 - He was essentially wishing his father were dead.
 - He wants his father’s things, but not his father.
 - He is weary of the relationship with his father and wants out...NOW.

The Father's Response to the Younger Son

- The Father's response to the son was equally shocking.
 - “If a son were to do that to his father, in that day, in that culture, he would be beaten mercilessly.” -Kenneth Bailey
- “So he divided his wealth (bios) between them.”
 - The father was giving much more than capital to his son, he was parting with his life.
 - The father was giving up identity and stature in the community - facing shame, ridicule and humiliation for the way his son was treating him.

The younger brother
essentially asks the father
to tear his life apart.

The Distant Country

- {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. [Luke 15:13 NASB]
- We are sojourners, pilgrims, aliens and strangers in this world. (Acts 7:6; Eph. 2:19; Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 1:1; 2:11)
 - When we wander from being centered in the father's heart, we begin to get caught up in the ways of the world which lead to death.

Being “In Need”

- {14} "Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished (in need). [Luke 15:14 NASB]
- Impoverished
 - In need
 - Left behind
 - Come late
 - Inferior in power
 - Devoid of worth

- {15} "Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. [Luke 15:15 NKJV]
 - In that culture, where hospitality is of prime importance, you would support that person while they “joined themselves” to you out of respect for the tradition.
- “When he came to himself...” - he came back to his senses; he saw clearly, the deception had broken off, he was humbled

The Younger Brother's Plan

1. Return home and admit to dad that he was wrong and forfeit his right to be his son.
 - a. He understood that the community and more than likely his father would consider him to be “dead”.
 - b. When you
2. Ask dad to make me one of your “hired men”
 - a. Servants worked on the estate and lived there.
 - b. “Hired men” were tradesmen and craftsmen who lived in local villages and earned a wage.

The Running Father

- The father sees him from a “great way off” the father RUNS to him.
- The son did not have to grovel his way back into the father’s arms.
- The moment you come to your senses and start taking steps back to Father’s house - He comes and run out to you and meets you on the road to redemption.

The Restoration Process

- He ran out to meet the son.
- He puts the best robe on the son
- He put sandals on his feet.
- He put a ring on his finger.
- He killed the fattened calf.