

Parables of Luke – **God's Word = Diamond** | Parables shine a light...and make the Truth sparkle

- Last Wk – Samaritan | Famous...encapsulates the Christian Experience | Belief + Behavior
- Parodical Son – Dickerson + Emerson 'Greatest Short Story Ever Told' | Songs – Art...heartwarming
 - Displays 3 characters – Youngest Son – Oldest Son – Father...Historically...**One son at a time...**
Parable = More than a story of a son coming home...story represents all of us...God's compassion
Perfectly displays our condition (represented by sons) and God's compassion (represented by father)
You & God = This parable | Your loved ones who have run off & God | **THIS IS THE PARABLE OF...READ**
Parable is like looking into a mirror...we're the sons...and we shouldn't like what we see...

- **Younger Son:** Outwardly rebellious, impulsive, dishonoring | Life: Recklessness and Self-discovery
 - In pursuit of finding his own truth - Own Happiness - Desiring never to conform = MY WAY
- **Older Son:** Inwardly judgmental, hardened, dismissing | Life: Lacking joy and self-righteous
 - Holds tightly to the standards around him and looks down on others as the problem

Now the star of the show...the one who changes the image in the mirror...the Compassionate Father

- **Father:** Loves deeply...invites them both to turn away from their lifestyles and sit at the table
More than a story... this is a demonstration of our Heavenly Father's love for all of us
Big Idea: The Father is saving the self-discoverer

Context: 15:1 'Now the tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to Him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying this man receives sinners and eats with them.'

Pharisees are always a good time...trying to catch you | 'Jesus isn't from God...but from the devil' Rude Basis...He hangs out with the devils people | Tax Collectors = Greedy | Sinners = Prostitutes & Beggars

Jews meant: Approving their actions - He's more comfortable 'sinners' than "righteous"

Jesus goes four parables on them: Lost Sheep – Lost Coin – Parodical Son – Dishonest Manager

Prodigal Son = Pinnacle, reps. Sinners & Pharisees | **Full human condition: Sin & Rejection + Repentance**

***** Also see Father's response...the Father is inviting...but who is He inviting? *****

1. **Father's Invitation Extends to: The Wayward and the Wandering** | Abandon path know should be on
¹¹ And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' – Demanding 1/3 or the total

Be appalled...**first century would have been** – Horrific = Demand inheritance while dad's still alive

- 'Honor mother & father' – Disgraced or Dead | I Didn't earn it – I Want it – 'You're dead to me'
 - **How'd father respond?** Gave it to him & let him go...¹² And he divided his property between them.
Shocking...Teaching 'God gives sinners the freedom to choose their course of iniquity' | Why?

A. **Wayward and Wandering Only Provides Temporary Happiness**

¹² And he divided his property between them. ¹³ Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴ And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need.

Took off...feeling good! - Squandered with reckless living – Spent everything – Ended up busted

- He got what he asked for...to not get what he wanted | He wanted it all...ended up with nothing
Mouse Trap | Sinful lifestyle promises temporary freedom, but it's a trap of emptiness and death
- **Sin is tempting for a reason...it looks good...feels good...starts easy...leaves us needing...empty**

B. **Wayward and Wandering Only Find Total Desperation**

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

¹⁶ And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

Jewish – Pigs were unclean – Slave to a citizen...longed for the pigs food...**Dog Food** | Rock Bottom

- This might have been you – Be you – Someone you know | Rejecting God...as the younger son did
Want His gifts – Refuse praise | Want His blessing – Refuse love | Pursuing satisfaction in wrong places
- **Self-help is a billion dollar market...all flawed by the title...'Self-Help'...not bad...just insufficient**
Apart from God, we all have a dissatisfied heart that longs for the Truth and affections of the Father

Aside: Parents – Children – Siblings – Friends of those living this wayward & wandering life:

- a. **You can't save them – Pray / Proclaim / Present | You be the witness!**
- b. **Jesus can save them – No one is too far gone! You be the witness...God is the Savior**

C. **Wayward & Wandering Are Found by The Goodness of God**

¹⁷ "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father,'

- He was hungry, hopeless, and hurting – he finally had a reality check and came to his senses.
- It wasn't the property that he missed and wanted to return to – Not the brother he longed to see
It was the goodness of his father that was bringing him to return

and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants." ' And he arose and came to his father.

- **Repentance – Acknowledging sin | Turning Away | Confessing | Turning Toward God**
This is the sinners part...being restored back to God – Read this last section...you in mind...loved one
But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, & is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' They began to celebrate.
- This is how our Heavenly Father responds to all of us who come through faith in Jesus Christ
"While he was still a long way off" – Those are beautiful words...I want you to remember...long way off
 - He ran to him - Embraced him - Kissed him repeatedly...unreal...before the confession
 - He hears the confession
 - Gets a robe = That he was welcomed into the family
 - Ring and shoes = Sign that he was a son
 - Kills the fattened calf = Celebrates that he's home.

According to the law, he deserved death... should have been a funeral...ended up being a feast
He was lost, now is found; He was dead, now is alive.

- **No matter how far you feel you have turned away from God, there is hope**
- **God extends an invitation to every guilty human**

This is the reality for all of us who run to the Father through Jesus – we're his son

Parable = More than a story of a son coming home...story represents all of us...God's compassion

Big Idea: The Father is saving the self-discoverer

That's the Parable of the Prodigal Son