

Part 6: The Father's Heart

Luke 15:17-24

17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men 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 men.' 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.

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 3:16

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

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Message notes:

Ask questions about stories in the Bible: what does this teach me about _____?

A good father is _____.

He is the God of _____.

The father has _____ when he runs to the son.

The Father's kisses are cleaning him. This is the heart of _____.

God's _____ is infinite and immeasurable.

It is _____ when God gives us what we least deserve—restoration and righteousness.

The point of the story is to reveal who God the Father is to us and for us to _____ like Him.

Any attribute of God is only worked in my life by _____ grace enabling strength.

Additional notes:

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Discussion Questions:

1. The Prodigal Son only truly understood his father's heart after failing him. Have you ever experienced a situation where failure led to a deeper understanding of God's forgiveness and love? How did that situation shape you?
2. Pastor Jamie points out that our perception of God as a compassionate Father affects how we relate to Him and other. How does viewing God as compassionate influence the way you respond to your own mistakes or those of others?
3. The father shows mercy by withholding judgment and grace by restoring his son. How can we balance mercy and grace in our interactions with others, especially when they have wronged us?
4. The message encourages us to embody attributes of God, such as being joyful and generous, as a response to understanding His nature. What are some practical steps you can take this week to live out these attributes in your relationships?
5. Throughout this series we have looked at many of the attributes of God. What attributes have stood out the most to you and why?

Ministry Time:

The Prodigal Son recognized that he could go home to his father—surrendering to him—and find mercy and acceptance. Pray for anyone who has been afraid to fully surrender all of their life to God the Father.

The message spoke about the father's kisses bringing cleansing to the son. Pray for anyone who feels separated from God because of shame or guilt from their past.