



## One More Series

### Part 3

August 20, 2023

The Gospel of Saint Luke 15:11-32, <sup>11</sup>And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>“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! <sup>18</sup> I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.” <sup>20</sup> And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> 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.’ <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. <sup>25</sup> “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. <sup>27</sup> 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.’ <sup>28</sup> But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, <sup>29</sup> but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup> And he said to him,

**‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.’<sup>32</sup> It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”**

May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word Today, In Jesus Name!

Last Sunday, I taught on the lost sheep and tied the correlation of the Good Shepherd to the Father who restored the Prodigal Son. The Lord has impressed upon me to teach a part 2 in this same vein of text because I do not believe the Lord is done restoring us in so that we will be empowered to restore others...

Last Sunday I was moved to tears because it is my truest heart as your pastor to ensure that we never fall prey to any form of self-righteousness and to always be willing to be a part of Christ’s divine love story for His Church! Church, if not for Grace, where would we be?

I’m glad that Christ sees us through us of Love and Compassion! And its from that place and heart that I want to dissect a few thoughts from my time of study of this passage of text this week. So with that said, Point #1...

**1. The Father was always watching for his son to return and then ran to him when he was seen on the path coming home!**

- a. Church family, note the hope found in this text above all others... the Father never stopped looking for his return. The Father never gave up hope that his son would return; some way, somehow, the Father was believing that the son who was wayward would return home.
- b. In Luke 15, you have two stories very paralleled in many ways but in the story of the lost sheep, the shepherd went out to find it. In the story of the prodigal son, the father waited on the son to find his way back home.
- c. Friends, sometimes the pursuit of the sheep is necessary and sometimes it is prudent to wait on the person to come to themselves. This is why the wisdom of the Holy Spirit is so important! Sometimes we must give chase and other times, we must stand in faith and remain resolute in prayer for the heart of the person to shift.
- d. Proverbs 11:30 states, **“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise.”** And there is wisdom found in following the leadership of the spirit when it comes to reaching people and seeing the prodigals return home; we must be wise and sensitive to the spirit of the Lord.
- e. And it is this truth that lends insight to a major misunderstanding and issue seen in the life of the elder brother.

- f. The elder brother did not see the value in the Father's Grace because he was more motivated by his own works than he was by freely receiving the Father's Love for him.
- g. Friends, the scripture is clear that Salvation is accessed by Grace through Faith, not of works less any one should boast; to take ownership of own's salvation by one's own works. The spirit of the elder brother was service unto good graces; service is not the problem.
- h. Friends, we are human beings not human doings; we do not do to be but rather we be therefore. And if we are Christians, we do not service Christ to be a Christian, we are a Christian thus our nature is to serve Christ! But not only was the Father ever vigilant in looking for his son to return, Point #2...

**2. This Son had been living with pigs, lost all of his inheritance, and had dishonored his family but the Father's forgiveness removed every blemish of his bad decisions!**

- a. Friends, we may have made mistakes but our mistakes do not make us; the Father has the last word! Not your failures.
- b. Hear me by the Holy Ghost, the identity of the son was not destroyed by the decisions of the son.

- c. The Father was able to delineate between the two and choose to restore the identity of the son thus changing the decisions of the son. Friends, when we are in an identity crisis we will not demonstrate the true character of who we are; it will always manifest in a perverted way. (Culture around us for an example)
- d. And found within the discourse of this text, the identity of the son could only be restored by the Father
- e. And to speak to identity, the elder brother did not see the value in the Father's forgiveness because he was more motivated by inheritance than he was by relationship. Both brothers had the same ultimate problem; it was about what the father had for them and not who the father was to them. Friends, our relationships should always be balanced by our desire for a relationship with the person and not what the person gives you access too.
- f. The elder brother did not see the value in the Father's forgiveness because he was more motivated by inheritance than he was by relationship; failing to understand that the identity of both sons needed affirmation and confirmation by their relationship with their Father.
- g. Friends, we should always be willing to restore the ones who fail and celebrate the ones who are doing well!
- h. But not only was it the Father who restored, point #3...



3. The Father was willing to be reckless in his expression of love to his son before he fell into sin and was even more so when his son came home!

- a. The argument of the elder brother, which was a true and principled argument, was to challenge the father of why the father would celebrate the restoration of a son who lost his inheritance. Why restore a person who threw their future away and squandered their inheritance? But the portion given to the younger son was the Father's to give; not the elder brother's right to argue over.
- b. It would seem that though the argument of the elder brother was right and plausible, the Father was less concerned about the loss of inheritance and more concerned about loss of the relationship thus propagating a desire for reconciliation and restoration.
- c. The elder brother did not see the value in the Father's reconciliation of his younger brother because he was more motivated by feeling superior than by feeling compassion.
- d. And as I noted last Sunday about the shepherd with 99 in the fold and one lost, the Father did not simply settle for the elder brother (the one that didn't leave); like the woman with the lost coin and the shepherd with the lost sheep, the Father valued both of his sons equally.

- e. But not only was the father reckless in his selfless display of love and restoration, point #4...

#### 4. The Father was not ashamed to restore his son; even when the elder brother spoke otherwise!

- a. The Father was not afraid to reinstitute his son into the family even when others did not agree. And I want to note that in this text, the father was the only person in the position of authority to restore or renounce. (My role as a pastor)
- b. This is applicable to the bowl principle; are you going to wash your hands of people or wash the feet of people?
- c. What the elder brother failed to realize is that whatever measure of judgement or grace was to be measured to his brother would also be measured to him as well; he failed to see that this grace and mercy extended to his brother established a culture of grace over judgment in the house.
- d. The Father established a precedence of grace and healing with the restoration of the son who failed; but also showed the older brother what the protocol of Grace would be for him when he failed...



- e. (My role as your pastor; the manner in which I lead and restore is a precedence of how we will restore in this house) Jesus came in Grace and Truth... We can't be all one or the other; fair, balanced and righteous.
- f. Friends, I would always prefer to be found in error in the side of grace rather than found in error on the side of judgment