

Offering:

Intro:

Bald eagle fathers are known for building large nests for their families...

The largest bald eagle nest on record was discovered in **St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1963**. It measured **9.5 feet in diameter, 20 feet deep**, and was estimated to weigh over **4,400 pounds (2.2 tons)**. Eagles build these massive structures, known as aeries, by returning to and expanding upon the same nest year after year.

Ex. I stood at the edge of my father's estate, staring toward a world I thought could give me more than home ever could.

"Give me my share of the inheritance," I said.

I wanted freedom—no rules, no limits, no one telling me what to do. My father did not fight me.

With sadness in his eyes, he gave me what I asked for.

A few days later, I left.

At first, the far country felt like freedom. I had money, friends, parties, music, and excitement.

For a while, I lived like a king.

But the money ran out.

Then the friends disappeared. A famine hit, and I became desperate enough to feed pigs.

Every day, I stood in the mud, watching animals eat while hunger twisted inside me.

I had traded my father's house for a pigpen.

Then I remembered home.

Even my father's servants had food, shelter, and dignity. So I decided, "I will get up and go back to my father."

But I was not expecting to return as a son. I rehearsed my speech as I walked:

“Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Just make me like one of your servants.”

My clothes were torn, my body weak, and my heart full of shame.

Then I saw him.

Before I could reach the house, my father saw me from far away.

And he ran.

He did not wait for me to explain. He did not stand with anger in his eyes. He ran toward me, threw his arms around me, and held me.

I began, “Father, I have sinned...”

But he would not let shame finish the sentence.

“Bring the best robe! Put a ring on his hand! Put shoes on his feet! Prepare the feast!”

The robe covered my shame. The ring told me I still belonged. The shoes told me I was not a slave.

I was his son.

I came home expecting rejection.

Instead, I found mercy running toward me.

God is the most gracious, loving, redemptive Father of all time

He is waiting for us with open arms to run to Him and experience His love, compassion and restoration of identity and purpose.

Quote: J.I. Packer: “If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as His Father.”

Title: Run To The Father

Honoring Fathers And Loving God

Text: Luke 15:11-24

Luke 15:11-24 (NKJV) 11 Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. 13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."

20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.

22 "But the father said to his servants, '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 fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

Godly Fathers Love Their Children:

Luke 15:12 (NKJV) 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood.

Love does not control; it guides. Godly fathers teach, counsel, and pray, but they understand they cannot make every decision for their children.

*Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)
6 Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Fathers love beyond the disappointment

Luke 15:13-16 (NKJV) 13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

In *The Intentional Father*, Jon Tyson argues that one of the greatest crises facing modern culture is the absence of intentional fathers. Many men love their children, provide for them, and spend time with them, yet never develop a deliberate plan to guide them into mature Christian adulthood. Tyson challenges fathers to move beyond simply being present and

instead become purposeful disciple-makers who actively shape the character, faith, and identity of their children.

Quote: "The intentional father is deeply invested in discovering who his children are and how he can help them reach their redemptive potential."

Godly Fathers Lead With Compassion:

I watched my younger son walk away with the inheritance I had spent a lifetime building. He wanted his portion early. He wanted freedom without responsibility, adventure without restraint, and a life far from my voice. Every part of me wanted to stop him. I wanted to warn him about the world beyond our fields—the people who would use him, the pleasures that would empty him, the loneliness that would find him when the money was gone.

But love does not chain a son to the house.

So I let him go.

Every day after that, I watched the road.

I would stand at the edge of the property, looking past the fields, wondering where he was. Was he safe? Was he hungry? Did he ever think of home? At night, when the house grew quiet, I felt the empty place where his laughter used to be.

Then one day, I saw someone coming down the road.

At first, I could not believe it. The man was thin, dirty, and dressed in rags. His shoulders were bent low with shame. But then I saw the way he walked.

It was my son.

My heart exploded inside me.

Luke 15:20 (NKJV) 20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

Instead of only focusing on what his son had done wrong, the father focused on what God was doing right.

Psalms 103:13 (NLT) 13 The LORD is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him.

A GODLY FATHER RESTORES HIS CHILDREN TO THEIR PURPOSE

1. Godly Fathers Celebrate Repentance

Luke 15:21-24 (NLT) 21 His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. 22 "But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. 23 And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, 24 for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.

The father's goal was not simply to get his son home, but to see him completely restored... The father rejoiced when his son turned from sin and came home..

Luke 15:7 (NLT) 7 In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!

2. Godly Fathers Restore Identity

Luke 15:22 (NLT) 22 "But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet.

The father reminded the son who he was...he was his son

1 John 3:1-3 (NKJV) 1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

3. Godly Fathers Restore Purpose and Identity

Luke 15:24 (NLT) 24 for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.

The father saw more than the son's past failures - he saw his future

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT) 11 For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

God does not define people by their failures..He helps them discover God's redemption and purpose for their future.

Conclusion:

Ex. - I watched my younger son walk away with the inheritance I had spent a lifetime building. He wanted his portion early. He wanted freedom without responsibility, adventure without restraint, and a life far from my voice. Every part of me wanted to stop him. I wanted to warn him about the world beyond our fields—the people who would use him, the pleasures that would empty him, the loneliness that would find him when the money was gone.

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Then one day, I saw someone coming down the road.

At first, I could not believe it. The man was thin, dirty, and dressed in rags. His shoulders were bent low with shame. But then I saw the way he walked.

It was my son.

My heart exploded inside me.

I did not wait for him to reach the house. I did not wait for an explanation. I ran.

I ran past the fields, past the workers, past every question in my mind. When I reached him, I threw my arms around him. He smelled like the far country. He was broken, exhausted, and ashamed—but he was alive.

“Father,” he began, “I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

But I could not bear to hear him call himself anything less than what he was.

“Bring the best robe!” I shouted. “Put a ring on his hand! Put shoes on his feet! Prepare the feast!”

My son had come home.

He thought he was returning as a servant, but I restored him as a son. He thought he had lost everything, but mercy met him before he could finish his speech.

For this son of mine was dead, and now he is alive again. He was lost, and now he is found.

And that was enough reason for the whole house to celebrate.

God's love pursues us

God's love is patient for us

God's love pardons us

God's love protects us

God's love purposes us

Quote - Tim Keller “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God.”