The Father's Extravagant Love for a fractured family

Jesus old them this story: "A man had two sons.
12 The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

13 "A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. 14 About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. 15 He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. 16 The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.

"When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, 19 and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant."

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.

**Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, ²⁶ and he asked one of the servants what was going on. ²⁷ 'Your brother is back,' he was told, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.'

28 "The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, 29 but he replied, 'All these years I've slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. 30 Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!'

**His father said to him, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. **32 We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!'"

The Father's amazing love goes beyond our expectations

Here is a family that is breaking apart!

Son #1 in asking for the inheritance early is saying, "I wish you were dead so I can have the money now!"

The Father does not disown the son, but waits for him!

God is waiting for us when:

*We get fed up or tired of the way our life is

*We confess we need help→"when he came to his senses..."

*We offer our personal desires to God-- Notice how the young man's "Give me" now becomes "make me".



God welcomes us home

- The family is struggling over money and the older son over jealousy.
- The father pursues both sons. God runs to one who came home empty and defeated. He runs (something an elder never did) to his prodigal son.
- The father leaves the celebration to speak to his son, a shameful and embarrassing thing before the community. He reaches out to the son who is angry, a son who doesn't understand the father's compassion.
- How will the story end? Both sons were lost, the Father welcomes both sons home with extravagant, forgiving love!

The Story has application to all families

- God seeks reconciliation for the family through his extravagant love
- God does not give up on us and will restore us
- If we will turn to him, He will run to us!
- Love can overcome & restore a broken family

Psalm 18—Only God can offer such a promise to us!

God made my life complete when I placed all the pieces before him. (Get fed up) When I got my act together, he gave me a fresh start. (Confess your need) Now I'm alert to God's ways; (Offer up) I don't take God for granted. Every day I review the ways he works; I try not to miss a trick. I feel put back together, and I'm watching my step. God rewrote the text of my life when I opened the book of my heart to his eyes. (THE MESSAGE)