

PARABLES

- OF JESUS -

WEEK 8 – THE LOST SON

Luke 15:11-32 [NLT]

¹¹ To illustrate the point further, Jesus told 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. ¹⁷ “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.”’

²⁰ “So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. 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.

²⁵ “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!’

³¹ “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!’”

WANDERING from our purpose does not remove our purpose.

We’re called to hold a **LOVE** for people that surpasses our opinion of **THEM**.

To love is to **RISK**.

“Love has the kind of power cynicism only wishes it had.”
- Bob Goff

SO WHAT?

:: Where have you **BEEN**?

:: What will you **DO**?

:: Who will you **BE**?

Romans 8:5-8 [NIV]

⁵ Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶ The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

NOTES:

How to start a relationship with God:

- 1) *Admitting that you, like everyone, wandered & need to come home.*
- 2) *Asking God to forgive your sins.*
- 3) *Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.*

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I receive you as my Savior; and I put my faith in you as my LORD. Help me to look to you and follow you all the days of my life. In Your name, Amen.

For Further Reflection:

- :: *Take a moment to reflect on our “Parables of Jesus” series.*
 - :: *What is one thing God has been teaching or re-teaching you?*
 - :: *How have you sought to live differently as a result?*
- :: *Read/Review this week’s parable [The Lost Son]*
 - :: *What do you find most helpful or challenging in this parable?*
 - :: *What do the sons different choices reveal?*
 - :: *What is the youngest son asking for when he finally returns?*
 - :: *What does the father’s response teach us?*
 - :: *Who do you most relate to in this parable? Why?*
 - :: *What does this parable reveal to you about God/yourself?*
- :: *Pastor Shawn said, “To love is to risk.”*
 - :: *What are some tangible implications of risking in love?*
 - :: *What are some potential implications of not risking in love?*
 - :: *Share how you’ve seen this truth play out in your life or someone else*
- :: *Identify 1 way you can more fully live into loving God & others this week.*
- :: *Invite someone you to pray for you & encourage you as you do it.*
- :: *Offer to do the same for them, or someone else.*

***“You can’t go back and change the beginning,
but you can start where you are and change the ending.”***

- C. S. Lewis

Unless otherwise noted, today’s Scripture is from the New Living Translation [NLT].
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