

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE LOST SON

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OUR VALUE

How does God view human beings? What value does He place upon us?

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” **John 3:16-17***

THE PRODIGAL SON

God is a Father to all believers in Christ. It doesn't matter if you are man or woman, bond or free, Jew or Gentile, we are all one in Christ. **Galatians 3:28**

Jesus begins a parable that features a father and two sons. The father represents God, the older son is represented by the Pharisees and scribes, while the younger son is represented by the publicans and sinners. The Pharisees and scribes were proud that they were not like their fellow man whom they despised, nevertheless, these sinners were still loved by God. **Luke 15:11**

The younger son wasn't content with his father's discipline and wanted to run his own life, so he demanded a portion of the inheritance because he thought he could manage it better than his father. **verse 12**

Sinners want to put as much distance between themselves and God so they can live their lives how they want and not be under His watchful eye. Looking for instant gratification, the younger son left for a far away city, did everything his soul desired and gave no thought to the future. **verse 13**

*“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” **Galatians 6:7-9***

The dictionary defines “prodigal” as 1. one who spends or gives lavishly and foolishly. 2. one who has returned after an absence.

This younger son had misused everything he had in the way of talent, money and time. He used it to gratify his carnal desires instead of serving God.

Eventually the money ran out and so did his options. As long as he had money, everyone was his friend, but no one was willing to help him. **verse 14**



A sinful state can be described as a famine which sinners bring upon themselves and continue in because of their refusal to repent.

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.” Amos 8:11-12

In desperation, the younger son hired himself out take care of the pigs. **verse 15**

Jesus said, ***“Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” John 8:34***

If you join yourself to someone, you are agreeing to do his work, to be at his beck and call, and most importantly, depend upon him to sustain you. It is important to note that the citizen didn't send the younger son into the fields to care for the sheep but to feed an unclean animal like the swine.

He would have eaten the food of the swine but it wasn't offered. This husk was not a corn husk but came from the kharoub tree and was used to feed animals. **verse 16**

REPENTANCE

Separation from God is being in a state of death and it was in this frame of mind that the younger son came to his senses. He had left his father's house, gone to a far away land, spent the money, become a beggar, joined himself to the Devil and was looking at the possibility of competing with pigs for food. The younger son considered how much better it would be if he returned home. After all, there was food to spare, his father's servants had a much better life than he did now, and he was dying of hunger. **verse 17**

Every step of backsliding from God must be accompanied with a step back in return to Him. The younger son decided on a course of action that would include confessing his willful sins against God and his father, denying himself the privilege of being a son, and demoting himself to a servant. **verses 18-19; 1 John 1:5-10**

He set off without delay and was spotted by his father who ran out to meet him and greeted him with a hug and kiss. **verse 20**

Jesus gives us an example of how the father welcomed home his prodigal son. He could have been harsh with this foolish and rebellious son but we see God's desire to meet sinners who are ready to repent. The younger son came under a burden of fear and shame but the father ran to meet him with arms outstretched in mercy and a kiss that assured his welcome and showed he was forgiven.

Even though he was forgiven, the younger son still confessed his sins, which showed a broken and contrite heart, and carried out his plan of denying his sonship. **verse 21; Psalm 51:10-17**

The final part of the plan to be a servant was nullified by his father's reaction. Jesus was showing us that when God forgives the sins of a repentant person, He forgets and remembers them no more and there isn't a need for a verbal rebuke.

The rags were replaced with the best clothing in the house, a ring was a mark of authority, and the shoes were the mark of a free man since slaves did not wear them. **verse 22**

The conversion of sinners is greatly pleasing to God. We know the younger son was hungry before he went home so there is no doubt he was famished from the long trip. The feast was not just about feeding the prodigal, but it was also a festival for the whole family that was started by the father, with the rest of the household acting in accordance with the master. **verse 23**

The prodigal had disappeared in the far country and was essentially dead to his father. This is also indicative of the spiritual state when we depart from the presence of the Lord. There is no life apart from Him. **verse 24**

THE OLDER SON

This parable was a gentle reprimand to the Pharisees and scribes for their murmuring (verse 2) against publicans and sinners because of the compassion showed to them by Jesus.

The older son had been obedient and came in from working in the field to find a party going on for his little brother. **verses 25-27**

The older brother (Pharisees and scribes) was not happy to hear that his younger brother (publicans and sinners) had repented and come home. His refusal to join the party brought his father out, who could have sent a servant, but wanted to personally ask his son to join the party. **verse 28**

The older son was offended that his brother had wasted his inheritance and had the nerve to show up and be welcomed back with open arms. He boasted of his own virtue and obedience and complained that he had never received a small token of love like a goat, let alone the fatted calf. **verse 29**

It would be illogical to think that the older brother had never participated in a family feast before this time. He had never asked for anything like a fatted calf and in all probability did not desire it because he had always been fed at his father's table. It was wrong to overstate his younger brother's faults in an effort to make his father angry and turn him against the prodigal son. The older brother was filled with envy and tried to deny his brother pardon, peace and any other gift that the father chose to bestow upon him. **verse 30**

This is not how God operates but was in the same spirit of the Pharisees and scribes who looked with contempt upon those who were mired in sin. They failed to understand the grace that was being offered by God and thought too well of themselves and would not receive those whom God has forgiven.

The compassion of the father is evident in his assurance that the attention given to the younger son in no way negatively affects the older son; his anger was

improper because he received his part of the inheritance at the same time his wasteful brother had received his share. **verse 31**

*“I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: **in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.**” Psalm 16:8-11*

The father gently rebuked the older son by reminding him that this was his flesh and blood who had been dead in sin and lost to the family but now he was found and a reminder that God extends grace and forgives sinners. **verse 32**

SUMMARY

The prodigal son couldn't stay because he was convicted of his sins. He went back to his father because he was a son and was accepted upon his return by his father as one of the family.

Jesus was trying to reconcile the grace which God (father) offered to the publicans and sinners (younger brother) to the Pharisees and scribes (older brother) who had an attitude problem and were not happy to see sinners come to repentance.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10