

## Topic: The Parable of the Lost Son

Text: Luke 15:11-32

### Intro:

On the traditional name for this story "The Prodigal Son" and the consequences of this lifestyle.

On Great Lent as a time of focus and preparation for the future: Resurrection and the last judgment

- A person's life can be counted in years and thus divided into yearly cycles as we progress toward the end.

- The yearly Gospel readings of the Orthodox Church calendar before Sunday of the Last Judgment and Great Lent always include:

The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican:

"Pharisee"

"Publican"

The parable of the Prodigal Son:

Younger Brother - a repentant sinner

Older Brother - a self-righteous hypocrite who could not celebrate over repenting sinners

Plus: The Loving Father - Our loving God who overcomes human sin

**Prop:** We should prepare by returning to God in repentance

Parable - A simple story that makes a comparison based on human life to teach a spiritual lesson. "An earthly story with a heavenly meaning."

One of three parables told because of the Pharisees grumbling - Luke 15:1-2 Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Lost Son

## Part One - The Younger Son

### A. Intro: Sin vs 12

He should: "honor your father and mother" Exodus 20:12 But he treated his father as if he was the living dead.

So the younger received (one third) share. But he forfeited fellowship with his own father.

### B. The Use of Material Goods - for Alienation & Humiliation:

1. Initial Stage vs 13

2. Final Stage Rom 1:24 "God gave them up"

a. Unkempt vs 14

b. Unclean vs 15

c. Uncared for vs 16 Ps 142:4

### C. Repentance - Lost Son's Role:

1. His Perception vs 17 Sin is deceitful Heb 3:13; We don't see correctly Rev 3:17; the God of this world has blinded unbelievers 2Cor 4:4

2. His Motivation - Contrition:

a. To God and his Father vs 18

b. Realization of Unworthiness vs 19a - He realizes his sonship was at stake

c. Willing to make Reparations vs 19b - This is the Prodigal Son's only "solution."

3. His Action vs 20a

Repentance is more than just remorse.

Repentance involved both a change of mind and a change in behavior Luke 3:8; Acts 26:18, 20, 1Thess 1:9

Note: The difference between Godly sorrow and worldly sorrow 2Cor 7:10-11

Illus: Judas Iscariot (Matt 27:3-10, Acts 1:1-20)

1) No Belief in Jesus as Son (only betrayal of an innocent man)

2) No Action in Coming to God for forgiveness (only goes to sons of the Evil One)

### C' Repentance - Father's Role vs 20b Lam 5:21; Mal 3:7

1. His Perception - Father saw him while he was still a long way off

2. His Motivation - Compassion

3. His Action - He ran and embraced him

The Son's repentance was not enough. It was the Father's humble display of love that makes reconciliation possible.

Jesus showed us this love when he ran to meet us in his humiliation & death. We too should be overwhelmed by God's gracious compassion!

**Note: His actual Confession vs 21-** The Father doesn't allow him to speak of reparations

### B' The Use of Material Goods - for Restoration & Exaltation vs 22-23

1. Best Robe - The Father's special robe Isaiah 61:10; Rev 6:11, 7:9; Gal 3:27

2. Ring - Signet ring (the seal used for authentication)

3. Shoes - a sign of his household authority - he is not a bare foot servant

4. Fatted Calf - a great honor and expense.

### A' Concl: Salvation vs 24

## Part Two - The Older Son

Just as the Younger brother believed he deserved less because of his sins,

so also the Older brother acted like he deserved more because of his supposed righteousness

### A. Intro - Initial Question about Celebration vs 25-26

### B. Celebration was Appropriate vs 27

### C. Older Son's Response - Anger and Refusal to celebrate vs 28a

### D. Father's Attempt to Reconcile vs 28b

### E. Complaint based on Use of Material Goods - Treatment of Older Son vs 29

### E' Complaint based on Use of Material Goods - Treatment of Younger Son vs 30

### D' Father's Attempt to Reconcile vs 31

### C' Older Son's Response (Intentionally Missing)

### B' Celebration was Appropriate vs 32

### A' Concl - Final Answer about Celebration (Intentionally Missing)

So the concluding responses of the older son are missing, but we do know how the parable would end - not well.

Reality is that Pharisees would not join with heaven in celebrating the return of repentant sinners.

Instead, they participated in killing the Prince of Life: Mt 27:62; Jn 11:47, 12:19, 42, 18:3

**Concl:** Will you be prepared? Will you respond to God's love and compassion by returning to him in repentance?

O Father, foolishly I ran away from Your glory, and in sin, squandered the riches You gave me. Wherefore, I cry out to You with the voice of the Prodigal, "I have sinned before You Compassionate Father. Receive me in repentance and take me as one of Your hired servants."