

## The Respectable Son 2020-05-17

### Luke 15:25-32

*"Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.'*

*28 But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, 29 but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!'*

*31 And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"*

Self-righteously proclaim "I'm not like prodigal. Never do what he did."

- But this parable about two rebels...very different but both in need of grace and the Father who loved them....might be like elder son!
  - Main point: Salvation is not reward for works but God's gracious gift.
  - Lesson: Receive Father's blessings/favor by sonship not works.

Society calls younger detestable but calls older responsible, respectable.

- His outward actions (obedience and diligence) maybe blameless, but inward attitudes were grotesque. Luke 15:27-30

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father forgave/blessed brother so elder responds with years pent-up anger/frustration

- disrespects his father and accuses him of favoritism.

Real issue not what happened that day with brother/father but what it revealed about what been happening for years in older son's heart. Matthew 23:25-28

- Doesn't say how or why but older became self-righteous.

Saw himself as model son so judged prodigal brother by his standard which defined sin primarily in terms of outward actions not inward attitude.

Matt 23:25...*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.*

Matt 7:3 *Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?*

- Jesus reveals in gospels that prayer, giving, preaching, generosity can be sinful if motive of our heart wrong.

Prodigal was breaking father's law while older kept it to letter but his obedience was motivated by joyless self-righteousness and legalism.

- Believed basis for obtaining father's favor/blessings was works.
  - Was trying to earn by works what already had through sonship.

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Saw self/father relating as master/slave not father/son.

- Dishonors God to treat him as master in need of slave labor.
  - Cross purchased our freedom from slavery and was means for our adoption and sonship! Gospel

Elder expected to be rewarded on basis of his works.

- He is worthy of celebration and father ungrateful for all his work.
  - self-right always feel not get credit/treated as well as deserve.
- Felt his father owed him something for his faithfulness...we can too!
  - church attendance, spiritual disciplines, generosity, serving so God owes me easy, comfortable, healthy life.
- Became angry with father when blessed "undeserving" son but not him.
  - So consumed with justice/equity that not see value of brother's repentance and return. 1 John 2:9-11, Luke 18:9
  - Elder had EVERYTHING and lose nothing by brother's return. Luke 15:31

Luke 15:31...*And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.*

- Get angry/frustrated when God blesses other Christians?
  - No loss to us, if God graciously blesses others.
    - See God's kindness, innumerable daily blessings.

Elder saw prodigal's outward sins but not own respectable religious inner sins.

- Good news is same gracious Father who embraces outwardly sinning one is also ready to hold and forgive self-righteous, legalistic one.

- Here Father's desire was not to get elder to perform right action but awaken him to what their relationship of love was like.
    - Then obedience would be from delight not duty!
- More than merely outward obedience is expected of son.
  - God desires childlike faith in his all-sufficiency.
- understanding that all His gifts (salvation, grace, mercy, wisdom) inheritances for sons, not wages for slaves. Romans 11:6, Titus 3:4-7
  - You have Father's blessings/favor thru sonship not works.