

Introduction: Jesus redefines God

- The Occasion Luke 15:1
- The Conflict Luke 15:2
- The Parable Luke 15:3-32

The one parable has 3 stories.

Each story has _____ things in common:

1. Something valuable is _____.
2. An intensive _____ occurs.
3. That which was lost is _____.
4. A great _____ follows.
5. The spiritual application is _____.

What do we learn from this parable? (Review)

- God deeply values irreligious, immoral, lost people.
- God is actively pursuing relationship with lost people.
- Heaven rejoices when one lost person repents.
- The value of that which is lost exponentially increases in each story.
(Sheep → Coin → Sons)
- The father in story #3 represents God.
- The two sons depict the “immoral sinners” (younger son) and “religious sinners,” Pharisees (older son).
- Both sons are equally lost, but not equally aware of their lost-ness.

What do we learn about the 3 main characters?

Luke 15:11-12

- The son's request: “I want _____ now!”
- The son's message: “I wish you were _____.”
- The implications for the father _____ and _____.

- The father's unprecedented response _____ his audience.
- The older son's shocking _____ revealed his broken relationship with his father and brother.

What can we learn about ourselves?

** Luke 15:13-17

- "... distant country..." where he's gone.
- "... severe famine..." why he doesn't just come home.
- "... feeding pigs..." can't get any more desperate
- Younger son "came to his senses."
 1. I will _____ "... go back home."
 2. I will _____ "... my sin to my father and God."
 3. I will _____ "... a hired hand."
 4. I will _____ "... he got up and went."

** The son's expectations, fears, and perspective from a Middle Eastern peasant culture is available in Dr. Ken Bailey's book: *The Cross and the Prodigal*

What do we learn about God's heart?

Luke 15:20-24

1. The best _____:
2. The _____:
3. The _____:
4. The _____ _____:
5. The _____ _____:

The father's response is shocking, _____, and completely unexpected as he takes the _____ his son deserves.

Jesus' message to us is...

Discussion Questions:

1. Where do you need grace in your life right now?
2. Which part of this story resonated the most with you?
3. Who in your relational network has hit "rock bottom" and needs to know God values them through you?
4. What step of faith do you need to take to draw near to your heavenly Father?