

God isn't mad at me

God will go all out to show how much He loves us

Outline Notes

Luke 15:11-32 (niv)

...Introduction

This passage of Scripture in **Luke 15** is commonly known as **'the parable of the prodigal Son.'** In it, Jesus reaches the climax in His response to the charge put against Him by the Pharisees and the Scribes (*the religious leaders*) with their accusations that *"this man (Jesus) welcomes sinners and eats with them"* (**Luke 15:2** niv). It was an offence to the Scribes and Pharisees that Jesus would associate with such *"dishonourable people."*

While it is commonly called **"The Prodigal Son"** it can rightfully be called the parable of **"The Loving Father."**

For it reveals more about the love and acceptance of the father than of the wrongdoings and foolishness of the younger son.

...Understanding the Parable

1. The Sons Departure

Luke 15:11-13a (niv)

The younger son asks his father to give him his portion of the inheritance due him. The father knew that if the son was ever to learn he would learn the hard way, so he granted his request. Now with money in hand, the younger son takes all that he has to a distant country.

2. The Sons Life abroad

Luke 15:13b-19 (niv)

He lives a **"prodigal"** (*wasteful, extravagant*) lifestyle, and is soon depleted all of his wealth.

In desperation, he hires himself to another to feed pigs. But this occupation was most degrading to a Jew as pigs were considered unclean. (see **Leviticus 11:7**).

Recalling how well fed his father's hired servants were and remembering they had plenty, but here he was, perishing with hunger!

So he resolves to return home. Note **verse 17a** in the (niv) it says; *When he came to his senses... (kjv) When he came to himself...*

Jesus believed that so long as a man was away from God he was not himself; he was only truly himself when he was on the way home to God.

Jesus believed that man was never essentially himself until he came to God in repentance.

3. The Sons Return Home

Luke 15:20-24 (niv)

The father's love is immediately evident; *He has compassion ... He runs to greet his son ... He throws his arms around his son's neck ... and He kisses him.*

Bring out the best robe and put it on him ... Put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet ... and to kill the fatted calf in order to celebrate his return.

All of which serve to reinstate the son as a person of importance and authority

What this means to the father is touchingly summarized in these words...

24: *"for this my son was dead and is alive again"* and *"he was lost and is found"*

It tells us much about the forgiveness of God. The father must have been waiting and watching for the son to come home, for he saw him a long way off. When he came, he forgave him without accusation.

4. The Son is Rejected by his Brother

Luke 15:25-32 (niv)

The elder brother was actually sorry that his brother had come home. He stands for the self-righteous Pharisees who would rather see a sinner destroyed than saved.

Jealously had got the better of the older brother which caused him to reject his younger sibling.

His attitude shows that his years of obedience to his father had been years of duty and not of loving service.

His attitude is one of utter lack of sympathy.

He was a self-righteous character who had a nasty mind.

The love of God is far broader than the love of man; and God can forgive when men refuse to forgive.

5. The Fathers Response

Luke 15:25-32 (niv)

The father recognizes the elder son's faithfulness in **verse 31**: "*you are always with me.*" And he reassures the son, the remaining inheritance is his "*everything that I have is yours.*"

Yet the father maintains that it is right to celebrate...

"your brother..." (note the contrast) when the elder son had called his brother, *"this son of yours."* The father emphasizes the brotherly relation, *"your brother," "...was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found."*

...Applying the Parable

1. Who do the Main Characters Represent?

- The father represents our heavenly Father (*God*).
- The prodigal son coming home represents the sinner.
- The elder brother reflected the attitude of the self-righteous Pharisees and scribes - see **Luke 15:2**

2. What are the Key Lessons to be Learnt from this Parable?

- **Our heavenly Father loves His children.**

Even when they turn away from Him, His heart yearns for them in love.

But especially when they return with a repentant attitude.

There is “*joy in heaven*” - **Luke 15:7**

There is “*joy in the presence of the angels of God*” - **Luke 15:10**

It was right to “*make merry and be glad*” - **Luke 15:32**

- **The faithful children of God need to understand the proper way to receive the erring child who returns back to God.**

Not with any sibling jealousy, but with joyous celebration! **Luke 15:32**

With a strong reaffirmation of love without judging:

As illustrated by the father in the parable.

As Paul instructed the Corinthians in **2 Corinthians 2:5-8** (niv)

...Conclusion

We must never forget that it was Jesus who said “*...it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*” (**Luke 5:31-32** niv)

May you be moved to repentance this by parable, “*the gospel within the gospel*” and may you never forget that your heavenly Father anxiously awaits your reconciliation with Him!

2 Corinthians 5:20 (niv) *We are therefore, Christ ambassador, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.*