

The Parable of the Prodigal son¹

Luke 15:11-32

September 5, 2021

Really it's the parable of the two sons, the Prodigal son and the Pharisaical son. Truth is, we are likely to be more like one or the other, probably most associated with the Pharisee.

Tonight we will look at the Parable of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin.

Quick observations:

- The older son would receive twice the inheritance than the younger son would get.
- It was at the discretion of the giver as to when and how they could give their inheritance.
- The **Prodigal** (vs. 11-19) son often gets the most focus here.

"A man's worst difficulties begin when he is able to do just as he likes." ~ **Thomas Huxley**

In the East old men did not run. The younger son had brought disgrace to his family and could have been stoned (Deut 21:18-21).

Far off country exists in all of our hearts (Pharisee).

- The Love of the **Father** (vs.20-21).

The father was looking for the younger son and saw him at a distance and had compassion.

The father embraced him. What a picture of what Jesus did for us on the cross! As we said earlier, he could have been stoned, but the people would have seen him embracing his son and throwing a party for him (vs. 22-24).

"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." **Luke 15:7**

It is significant that Jesus attracted sinners while the Pharisees repelled them.

- Elder brother – clear example of scribes and Pharisees. Publicans and sinners were guilty sins of the flesh, the Pharisees, sins of the spirit.

Is there a little Pharisee in me?

The **Performance** of a Pharisee (Luke 15:25-29)

"I have been serving you" (v.29, as if he owes him something). What was the older brother's reason for serving?

"Always did what you told me" (vs. 29). Older brother never brought disgrace, worked hard, would be considered a saint.

What he did for his father – wrong motivation, wasn't free, wasn't joyful, wrong reason.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone." **Matthew 23:23**

¹ Portion of outline taken from Adrian Rogers

They would **literally** count the leaves on the garden herbs and give God a 10%.

The older brother was self-righteous, announces the sins of his brother, had all the right outward actions, but was prideful, angry and didn't believe his brother deserved another chance.

The Whining (pouting) of a Pharisee.

"But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him. '" **Luke 15:28-30**

The Pharisee though doesn't often see the Pharisee in themselves.

The Pride of a Pharisee.

All about **I** (Luke 15:29).

*So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years **I** have been serving you; **I** never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that **I** might make merry with my friends.* **Luke 15:29**

⁹ Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' ¹³ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." **Luke 18:9-14**

All about what "I" do.

The Wrong Presumption of a Pharisee.

¹⁰ As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹² They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." ¹³ "Their throat is an open ^[d]tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; ¹⁴ "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways; ¹⁷ And the way of peace they have not known." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes." **Romans 3:10-18**

The older brother thought he was "better" than his younger brother and because of his "works" he deserved better and should receive more than his brother.

²⁷ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. **Matthew 23:27-28**

The Portion of a Pharisee.

But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' ³¹ "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours." **Luke 15:30-31**

Everyone experienced joy except the older brother.

God is looking for us to come back.

Prayer Focus:

- Are you like the younger brother (gone away from the Lord)?
- Are you like the older brother (self-righteous, all about you, a Pharisee)?
- Ask God to cleanse you!