

135. The Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for adopting us as Your sons and daughters. Please forgive us for the times we sin and run away from You. Always welcome us back, and help us welcome other people who come to You also. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Luke 15:11-12. Some people accused Jesus of welcoming and eating with sinners. Jesus told them this story. "A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, 'Father, give me my inheritance now.' So the father divided his things between the sons."

- Again, people think Jesus is doing something wrong. What did the people say?
- In Jesus' story, what did the younger son demand? Could the father have said no? Why do you think the father gave the younger son what he wanted?

Luke 15:13-16. Soon, the younger son gathered everything and went to a distant country. He spent and wasted all his money in wild living. When the money was gone, the country had a famine. Almost no food grew, and the son became very hungry. He began working for a citizen of that country. His job was to feed pigs. The food he gave the pigs, he himself wanted to eat. But no one gave him anything.

- Did the younger son live responsibly? What happened to all his money?
- When the money was gone, what did the son do? Remember, Jesus is a Jew, telling this story to Jews. What did Jews think of pigs?

Luke 15:17-19. Then he thought and said, "Many of my father's servants have more than enough food, and I am here starving to death! I will go home to my father and tell him; Father, I sinned against heaven and against you. I am not worthy to be named your son. Make me your servant." Then he got up and started going home.

- Was this boy still his father's son? Did he live like he was his father's son?
- Did the boy deserve to be his father's son? Did he deserve to be a servant for his father?

Luke 15:20-24. While he was still far from home, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. The father ran to his son, hugged and kissed him. Then the son said, "Father, I sinned against heaven and against you. I am not worthy to be named your son." But the father told his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Bring a ring for his finger and shoes for his feet. Kill the fat calf. Let's have a feast and celebrate! Because my son was dead and now is alive; he was lost but now is found." And they began celebrating.

- Who did the son say he sinned against? Every time we sin, who do we sin against?
- Did the father listen to what his son said? What did the father do? Why?
- When we sin, it is like we run away from God. Is God willing to welcome us back when we repent?

Luke 15:25-30. At the same time, the older son was in the field. He came near the house and heard music and dancing. He called a servant and asked what was happening. The servant said, "Your brother is back. Your father killed the fat calf and is celebrating because your brother is home safe." The older brother became angry and refused to go inside. His father came outside and begged him. But the son answered, "Look! Many years I worked hard for you and always obeyed you. But you never gave me a goat for me to celebrate with friends. But your son wastes your money with prostitutes, then he comes home and you kill the fat calf for him!"

- How did the older son react when his younger brother came home? Did the older son love his brother?
- Who came out to talk with the older son? Did the father love only one son, or both?

Luke 15:31-32. The father answered, "My son, you are always with me. Everything I have belongs to you. We had to celebrate and be glad, because your brother was dead and is alive again. He was lost and now is found."

- The younger son wanted all his inheritance early so he could spend it. The older son wanted to keep what was his and do what was fair. What did the father want?
- What should be our attitude when "sinners" become interested in God and His church?