



Free Chapel

Alberton AGF

“LIVING AMAZED”



The Parable of the TWO Sons



Luke 15:11-32 (MSG)

- Of repentance and reformation.
- Of return and forgiveness.
- Of acceptance and restoration.
- Of finding what was lost.











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prod·i·gal

/ˈprədɪɡəl/

Adjective

Spending money or resources freely and recklessly; wastefully extravagant.

Noun

A person who spends money in a recklessly extravagant way.

Synonyms

adjective. lavish - profuse - extravagant - wasteful – spendthrift

noun. spendthrift - waster - wastrel - spender - squanderer





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“LIVING AMAZED”

The Parable of TWO Sons

READ Luke 15:11-32 (MSG)

SLIDE

This parable is one of the best known stories that Jesus told.

SLIDE

It is a story about coming home.

- Of repentance and reformation.
- Of return and forgiveness.
- Of acceptance and restoration.
- Of finding what was lost.

It is a father welcoming home his lost son.

His joy at receiving back alive that which was dead.

For finding, of receiving back, that which had been lost.

We read about his happiness and his celebration.

But this is not just the parable of the one son, the parable says that the Father had two sons.

The story is about the two brothers: an elder and a younger, and about their father.

But the precursor to this parable is important to note.

SLIDE - Pharisees

Because of the testimony of Jesus the Pharisees became a grumbling mob and plotted to try and get rid of Him.

They did not understand and were biased towards the law which drove their faith.

And in response to this, Jesus tells parables.

And this parable addresses the Pharisees rejection of Jesus.

However, with return, leaving is implied.

With finding, first there is losing.

With coming back to life, first there must be dying.

Long before **turning** and **returning** the son left.

And his leaving was a **radical rejection** of his father.

SLIDE – Prodigal Son leaving

He rejected his father's home.

He rejected his father's heart, his father's love.

Let me ask a question?

Are you rejecting God today?

To understand this story we must understand the younger son.

He abandoned his father's love.

The younger son rejects his father's love.

And it is a Radical Rejection

It compounds defiant deafness, selfish searching and immoral living.

Jesus told these parables because his opponents were complaining that he was eating and drinking with sinners.

They thought that it was scandalous to entertain "sinners."

The Pharisees were separatists and because of this they **RADICALLY REJECTED** Jesus.

They muttered about the Lord that he "welcomes sinners and eats with them."

But let's get back to the parable

The story begins with the young son **requesting** the family assets that would eventually be his so that he might go on his way.

He says to his father, "Let me have the share of the estate that falls to me."

SLIDE – Show me the money

I want my benefit NOW

In the Middle East the custom was that the eldest would get two-thirds; the younger one a third of their inheritance from their father.

And what is amazing is that the father complies with this request WITHOUT question.

SLIDE – The rich father

From the parable, we understand that this father was not poor.

- He has servants;
- He can have a feast;
- He has fine robes and signet rings.
- He is a prince of some sort, or a very wealthy businessman.

SLIDE - Blank

He gives the young man his share of the estate. The young man gathers together all he received, turns it into cash, and leaves.

What is happening here is hurtful, offensive, and selfish not only to the Father but also to the elder brother.

It is about a bad attitude and rejection of spiritual leadership.

The Younger sons ATTITUDE!

He wants the money coming to him, and he wants it now. "Show me the money!"

Not only does he want his part, he wants to be able to do with it as he wills.

This shows that this young man is disrespectful to the extreme.

This is not just the desire to do some traveling, but it is the desire to be free, as he believes, from the restraints and constraints of living within the family home.

How can we say all this?

He does not ask for his inheritance.

Because with the inheritance would come responsibility.

With the inheritance would come customs, and honour, and tradition.

No, he just asks for the wealth, the substance of the estate; he does not care about the moral obligations that come with the estate.

He just assumes that since he is the son of his father, child of the household, that he has rights to the wealth and privilege.

This young man rejects responsibility.

He wants benefits, without obligation.

And there are many in the church today that say “This is voluntary” so I should get what’s coming to me – the Father’s inheritance.

We want benefits with obligation.

This parable is about the **relationship** between the Father and those of his household.

The Father and His Church.

It is about the Father in the covenant of grace and his people.

It is about his boundless mercy and compassionate love.

It is about grace unlimited and love unconditional.

Leaving home is much closer to our spiritual experience than we might have thought.

There is that radical separation that we so often engage in.

That taking for granted that the covenant inheritance is ours to do with as we please.

As if we had a right to the covenant inheritance and its riches!

As if they belonged to us because of us!

SLIDE – Not listening

And so with **defiant deafness** the young man leaves.

Just like many – **not prepared to listen** to the point of defiance.

So many leave home “the church” because of radical rejection and defiance of God’s truth.

And leaving home is the denial of the spiritual reality that I belong to God with every part of my being.

My life, my soul, my heart, my inner being.

But I am here aren't I?

Leaving home is a denial that my name is written into the Lambs book of life.

Leaving home is this:

Not hearing the voice of God. It is not following him.

Leaving home, going into the world is ignoring, not hearing, Jesus prayer that his own are not of the world, yet in it (John 17).

The young son seems to think that his father is in his way.

"It is always, 'Don't do this and don't do that!' It is always 'Mind your responsibilities!' Always it comes around to those infernal, 'You shall not's!' You and your commandments, rules, curfews and family laws! Let me out of here!

Many times people think of the church as a set of rules.

Home, in this parable, is where we can hear the voice of God.

It is where we hear the Word and teaching of our Lord.

It is where we hear the voice of the Son of God to set us free.

But this young man is deaf. He will not hear. He will not listen.

And to all intents and purposes we don't listen.

This is the great tragedy in the lives of God's people.

Time and again we reject the Father's love and go off into sin, seeking the pleasures of this world. We want to find our own way.

So many have become deaf to the voice that calls them, "beloved."

So many have left the only place where they can hear that voice, and gone off desperately hoping to find somewhere else that which they thought they needed and could not find at home.

And we need not even leave the church.

There are so many times that we do not hear. We murmur and grumble. We plug our ears.

We engage in defiant deafness.

And this then is the question:

To whom do we belong, to God or to the world?

The father and the son in this parable must have spoken many times.

The son might have said, "Father I want to be independent.

You must give me my freedom.

I can't go on living like this with all the restrictions you place on me.

I'm big and grown up now; quit treating me like a child. I want my liberty. I feel as if I am chained like galley slaves to oars.

I long for air; I need my space, I want my freedom."

And the father would have replied something like this.

"Do you really think that you're not free?

After all, you are a child of the house.

You can come to me whenever you wish and tell me of all and any troubles you might have.

You share in all the benefits of the family.

SLIDE

All that I have I share with you.

There are many who would be happy to have such a son's privilege.

Isn't that freedom?

My whole kingdom belongs to you.

I love you, and give you daily bread.

I forgive your sin with joy when you bring to me the burdens of your heart, your guilt, your conscience.

You are bound to no one: you are free: subject to no one, but me. And yet you say you are not free?"

And the son says: "Father I am sick and tired of all this stuff. This training, these rules, this restraint. You will not let me do what I want.

Freedom means doing what I want when I want."

But the father replies: "Freedom is not becoming a servant of your desires; a slave to lust and passion. It is not being chained to your ambition; your need for recognition; your love for money, wealth and riches.

Why do I forbid you these?

To limit your freedom? No, never!

But to secure your freedom.

That you might remain free.

That you might live worthy of son ship because you are my son.

You are already free.

Free because of my love for you and my grace to you."

But so many leave in search of freedom,
freedom to do as they please.

And so they go out in selfish searching.

Denying God's love they go out in search of
self-fulfillment.

In search of love.

Of fun.

Of passion.

SLIDE

The term "Prodigal" does not mean he who
returns.

It means squanderer or a compulsive person.

It describes a person at their worst.

One who in wild generosity consumes his
livelihood in immoral living?

The prodigal wants to cut loose.

"Is that so bad?

I'm just a young fellow."

That is often the attitude of people.

"Is it so bad to just let loose.

Go party.

Go to the bar.

Do some drugs.

Have some sex.

Buy some beer and throw the friends a party.
Why not?

My friends and I will have a blast. I mean, if I don't, then I'll not taste life to the full.

I might miss something.

This is the worst mistake that you can make.

Then when the time is right you will get what you've got coming."

And what does father do?

The unexpected.

He does not shout at him.

He does not deny him.

He does not discipline him.

He goes and gets the money.

The father's action demonstrates remarkable love.

Note, however, that the father's actions are not rejection.

For we know the father watches, watches, and watches for the return of his son.

He will wait and never stop watching.

The father did not stop waiting and watching till his son returned.

Conclusion

And so we come to the conclusion of the matter. In all of this we see God's covenant love.

Though the relationship is severed between son and father.

Between son and family.

Between son and community and congregation.

We will see next week how the relationship is restored.

SLIDE

And we need to learn this lesson to help us restore relationships.

Amen