

Mar 05, 2023



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

James Haymon
Barry Hosford

Class Leaders:

Inreach: Pat Hester
Deacon: C M Hester

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

No one understands the struggle with prodigals better than our heavenly Father

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:

God hasn't just left the porch light on for us. He's out on the front porch watching, waiting, calling us home

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him
(Luke 15:20 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 21, 2016)

Series: Jesus Calls Us

UNIT 1: Called from the Margins of Society

NEXT WEEK

**The Greatest in the Kingdom
(Matt 18:1-9)**

The Prodigal Son Luke 15:11-24

Lesson Background and Introduction

At their core, biblical parables compare something familiar, like an object or experience, to a truth about God and his work. Parables function on two levels: their literal reference and their spiritual implications. Jesus taught with parables to challenge his audience to consider what assumptions or attitudes of theirs were at odds with God's work (compare Matthew 13:10-15). Today's Scripture is frequently called the parable of the prodigal son. While modern audiences sometimes use the designation "prodigal" to speak of the rebellion of the younger son, the word's meaning is associated with reckless waste and spending. This parable is the third in a series in Luke 15. The other parables describe a lost sheep (15:3-7) and a lost coin (15:8-10). All three parables include similar themes: (1) something valuable is lost, (2) the lost thing is found, and (3) celebration ensues. Jesus told these parables as a response to criticism from Pharisees and teachers of the law. These groups were upset because Jesus "welcomes sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2). Throughout his ministry, Jesus associated with people whom the religious leaders considered unclean. These people included Jewish "tax collectors" (Luke 5:30; 15:1) who collected taxes for the ruling powers. Tax collectors were hated and regarded as having betrayed their people because they assisted the Roman Empire and acted corruptly (see 3:12-13). Another group that Jesus frequently associated with was "sinners" (Matthew 9:11; Luke 7:34; 15:2). This title applied to people who had failed to follow the Law of Moses as interpreted by the religious leaders of the day. Jesus' association with these people was not limited to the public gatherings. He shared meals with them before they had sought the proper means of forgiveness and restitution as prescribed by the law. His association with them was critical to his mission to seek those who are lost (see Luke 19:10) and bring repentance and salvation (5:29-31). Today's parable invites all people to embrace the upside-down nature of the family of God. In this family, God offers and desires reunion where broken relationships exist. We may feel shamefully unworthy, as the parable's younger son felt. However, like the parable's father, God is generous and merciful. His generosity has been displayed for centuries (see Numbers 14:8; Deuteronomy 28:11; Ephesians 3:16; James 1:5; etc.). Like a shepherd who cares for his flock, God cares for his people and provides for their needs (see Psalm 23:1; 1 Timothy 6:17). Such actions give testimony to all people of God's generosity and faithfulness (Acts 14:17). God welcomes all people to become his beloved children in his family. He desires his people to feel hope and not shame (see Romans 5:5; 1 John 3:1). "And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming" (2:28).

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

The Sin - Rebellion (15:11-13)

Rebellion usually starts with impatience (11-12)

Impatience for wanting what we don't have (James 4:2)

Impatience because we expect great miracles when simple things will help (2 Kings 5:11-12)

Impatience for what we call fairness (Luke 9:54)

Impatience to do what we want and disregarding God's priority (Luke 10:40)

Rebellion thrives on thinking we know what's best for us (12)

Youthful thinking and decision making sometimes leads us to rebellion (Ps 25:7)

Rebellion by trying to follow the desires of our heart (Eccl 11:9)

Rebellion through arrogance (Deut 1:43)

Rebellion through following our corrupt and sinful nature (2 Peter 2:10)

Rebellion through trying to run from God (Jonah 1:1-3)

Rebellion ends in loss (13)

Loss of life and possessions (Num 16:30)

Loss of forgiveness (Ex 23:20-21)

Loss of God's intimacy (Isa 63:10)

Loss of God's blessings (Lev 26:14-20)

The Repentance - Coming To Our Senses (15:14-19)

Repentance begins with an unfulfilled need (14-15)

The need to clear ourselves of guilt (2 Cor. 7:11)

The need to find satisfaction (Amos 4:6)

The need to enjoy the fruits of our labor (Haggai 1:6)

Repentance involves circumstances that causes us to rethink our situation (16-17)

Rethinking our decisions that got us in the situation (Jonah 2:7-10)

Rethinking our attitude of pride (Job 40:1-5)

Rethinking our understanding of who God is (Acts 9:3-6)

Repentance results in a humbled changed mind (18-19)

Humbled by seeing our weakness (Luke 22:59-62)

Humbled by being made to feel ashamed (2 Thess 3:14-15)

Humbled by knowing that God's grace is sufficient (2 Cor 12:7-10)

Humbled by a changed lifestyle and service (Philem 10-16)

The Forgiveness - An Accepting Father (15:20-24)

Forgiveness starts with God's compassion (20)

Compassion that resulted in being made alive in Christ (Eph 2:4-5)

Compassion because God is slow to anger and abounds in love (Psalm 86:15)

Compassion that God longs to provide (Isaiah 30:18)

Compassion that resulted in not being consumed (Lam. 3:22)

Compassion that results from God's unfailing love (Lam. 3:32)

Compassion that causes God to relent from what we deserve (Joel 2:13)

Compassion that causes God to ensure that His elect will survive (Matt 24:22)

Compassion that allows Jesus to be a sympathetic mediator (Heb 4:15)

Forgiveness involves confession (21)

Confession that confirms guilt (1 Chron. 21:8)

Confession that agrees with God's view (Psalm 32:5)

Forgiveness results in rebirth and joy (22-24)

The blessings of a Spiritual Life (Isa 61:10)

The delights of God's word (Jer 15:16)

Desire to know and understand God's word (Acts 8:5-6)

Joy of reconciliation (Rom 5:11)