


A Father and Two Lost Sons pt 1

Luke 15:11 - 21

Presented by Bob DeWaay
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- 1 A son is lost – “give me my share”
- 2 Goods wasted in extravagant living
- 3 Everything is lost—he spent everything
- 4 The great sin—feeding pigs for gentiles
- 5 Total rejection—no one gave him anything
- 6 A change of mind—“he came to himself”
- 6’ Initial repentance—“make me a servant”
- 5’ Total acceptance—his father ran . . . kissed
- 4’ The great repentance—“I am no more worthy”
- 3’ Everything gained—robe, ring, shoes (sonship)
- 2’ Goods used in joyful celebration
- 1’ A son is found— “my son was dead . . . is alive”



An unthinkable, disgraceful request is granted

■ **Luke 15:11, 12**

And He said, “A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.’ So he divided his wealth between them.”



Cultural considerations

- The older receives 2/3; younger 1/3
- Asking for his inheritance while the father was alive is unheard of and utterly disgraceful
- Assignment of shares did not include the right of disposition (that happened when the father died)
- Asking for the right of disposition was the equivalent of saying "Father I cannot wait for you to die"



Cultural considerations

- The father's expected reaction to such a request: be outraged and punish the boy
- The request shamed the family throughout the village and totally disrespects the accumulated wealth and status of the family in the village
- The father grants possession AND disposition which is unheard of



Cultural considerations

- The older brother is lost too
- It was the older brother's obligation to defend his father's honor but he sits in silence
- It was the older brother's obligation to act as reconciler between the father and younger son; but he does not



Cultural considerations

- The father gains shame by granting the request
- Both sons fail to even try to live together in unity, which is a serious breach of the family's honor within the village



The “prodigal” son


■ Luke 15:13

And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living.



Cultural considerations

- “not many days” = a fire sale; precious family assets that took generations to accumulate are liquidated; everything is turned into cash
- He sold his birthright, broke all relationship with his family and the extended clan and got out of town and as far away as possible
- Gr *apode_meo_* = “to travel away from your home country”
- Gr *diaskorpizo_* = “scattered”
- Gr *aso_to_s* = adverb, “wastefully”




With no family and among gentiles, he was even more vulnerable

- **Luke 15:14**


Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.

- Gr *dapanao* = “to waste or squander to no benefit”
- A “powerful” famine in such a region at that time was an unspeakable horror



Cultural Considerations

- Losing family money to gentiles would result in a *kezazah* (cutting off) ceremony
- A “powerful” famine in such a region at that time was an unspeakable horror



He attaches himself to a citizen

- **Luke 15:15** (NKJV)

Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

- Gr = *kollao* = “glued”



Cultural considerations

- He likely forced himself on the citizen who probably assigned him a task he thought he would refuse to do to get rid of him
- If he had any honor left he would refuse
- As bad as it is, he is not yet willing to go home
- At home he would face scorn, ridicule, disgrace, and having lost his share of his father's estate to gentiles, likely the *kezazah* ceremony



He "lusted" to eat the pigs' food

■ Luke 15:16

And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.

- Irony: He had broken fellowship with his father and contemplates "breaking bread" with pigs!



The thoroughly disgraced son

- He disgraced himself by asking for his inheritance
- He disgraced himself more by selling it on the cheap to get money and leave the village
- He disgraced himself by squandering money to gentiles
- He disgraced himself by becoming a beggar among gentiles
- He disgraced himself by feeding swine and wishing to eat with them



He “came to himself” and began to think differently

■ **Luke 15:17**

But when he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!”

- Gr *misthios* = a hired worker who was independent from the household



Initial repentance

■ **Luke 15:18, 19**

I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.”



Cultural considerations

- His initial idea of repentance would be according to Rabbinic ideas: he is willing to work as a laborer to pay off what he wasted.
- “Reparations and atonement were made by the act of repentance” (Bailey, *Poet* 180).
- The prodigal intends to do what he has to do in order to make up for the money he lost but what about his family?



Cultural considerations

- His idea about how to survive and perhaps repay shows that he has not yet realized that his greatest sin was rejecting his father's love.
- The biggest problem that he cannot solve is the mockery, taunts, and abject humiliation that will come from the entire village.



The father's unexpected love!

- **Luke 15:20** (NKJV)

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.

- Gr. *trecho* a term from races in the stadium "raced"



Cultural considerations

- The father ran to the boy! It is considered humiliating and undignified for a Middle East nobleman to run.
- "The father then runs this gauntlet for him, assuming a humiliating posture in the process!" (Bailey, Cross, 182)
- The father searched for the son like the shepherd for the sheep and the woman for the coin.



Cultural considerations

- The public embrace and kiss of the son showed total, unexpected, unconditioned grace, mercy and acceptance.
- The father fell on his neck, and kissed him, thus preventing the son from kissing his hand or feet.
- The kiss is a sign of reconciliation or forgiveness.
- The father bore the public shame so his son would be spared it.



True repentance with no hint of works

■ **Luke 15:21**

And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son."



Cultural considerations

- By leaving "make me one of your hired men" out of his speech, the son showed a transformed understanding of repentance.
- He now knows that reconciliation is an unmerited gift from his father.
- He knows that assuming that he could pay his father back for what he had done would be an insult



Repentance

- After acknowledging his sin, the only thing to say is "I am unworthy"
- He understands the father's pain for rejected love
- His repentance comes from realizing he was lost
- He gives up the hired man idea because he knows the father has conferred full sonship



Implications and Applications

- 1) Christ endured shame in order to make us honored sons and daughters
- 2) Outside of God's grace we are all either prodigals or Pharisees



- 1) Christ endured shame in order to make us honored sons and daughters

■ **Hebrews 2:10, 11**

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,



- 1) Christ endured shame in order to make us honored sons and daughters

■ **Hebrews 12:2**

fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.



- 2) Outside of God's grace we are all either prodigals or Pharisees

■ **Isaiah 53:5, 6**

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.