

Lessons From A Foolish Father

The Story:

Luke 15:11-32

Four Family Truths:

- ① God loves us enough to let us **leave**.
Luke 15:11-13 Romans 1:21-32 Mark 10:21-22 Judges 16:20 Psalm 81:11-12,
Proverbs 1:22-33 Matthew 23:37-39 Acts 7:39-43

- ② Turning to God is the only option that **makes sense**.
Luke 15:17 Proverbs 12:5 2 Timothy 1:7 Colossians 2:2-4

- ③ The road back home starts with an **attitude change**.
Luke 15:12 & 19 2 Chronicles 30:6-9 James 4:7-10 Mark 14:36 Romans 12:1-2

The core of rebellion = **“give me”**

The core of brokenness = **“make me”**

- ④ Unconditional love has to be **accepted**, not **earned**.
Luke 15:22-29 Luke 10:38-42 Ephesians 2:8-9 John 3:16 John 4:10 Titus 3:3-7

The Moral Of The Story:

We have a God that would rather **rescue** than **punish**.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 9, 2016

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Our siblings and childhood friends have often been present during some of our most memorable times. What's a great memory you share with your siblings or childhood friends?

2. Chris mentioned turning to God is the only option that makes sense. As much as this is true, we often turn to other things when we should be turning to God. What are some things people are tempted to turn to when stressed or going through a trial?

Can you think of any things you default to when running from God?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. While it's OK to present our desires to God, we also need to be aware of the possibility of only having a self-seeking type of relationship where we only seek God when we need something. In the Bible, the book of Psalms gives examples of prayers and praises that offer us a different perspective of what prayers can look like. How could the following verses help move us away from only praying "God give me" prayers?

Psalm 51:10-12 *New International Version (NIV)*

- ¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Psalm 26:2-3 *New International Version (NIV)*

- ² Test me, LORD, and try me,
examine my heart and my mind;
- ³ for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love
and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness.

Psalm 25:4-6 *New International Version (NIV)*

- ⁴ Show me your ways, LORD,
teach me your paths.
- ⁵ Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.
- ⁶ Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love,
for they are from of old.

What could be some people's hesitations or fears of putting the kind of prayers we see in these verses into practice? Can you think of any ways they might benefit you? If so, explain.

2. This weekend we were introduced to two brothers with completely different issues. While it's easy to point out the fault of the one brother who walked away, it can be easy to overlook the brother who held tightly to the rules but in hopes of personal gain. Jesus wanted to make the point that getting lost in our work and service to God can be just as damaging as getting lost in the world. Read the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42 and answer the following questions.

Luke 10:38-42 *New International Version (NIV)*

At the Home of Martha and Mary

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

If Mary and Martha were seeking your help to work out this problem, how would you explain each of their positions in your own words?

Can you think of any ways serving God can become a distraction from "choosing what is better?" If so, explain.

Which one of the actions in 1 Peter 4:7-11 would be most helpful to you in remembering how to serve God without getting lost in what you're doing?

1 Peter 4:7-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

3. The irony in this week's parable was that both sons were searching for the unconditional love that their father had already given them from the beginning. How do the following passages help us gain further understanding of the same love that has also been given to us?

Romans 8:35-39 *New International Version (NIV)*

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 3:16-19 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

1 John 4:9-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Which of the above verses is most meaningful to you and why?

TAKING IT HOME

Are there any “God make me” prayers you’d like to incorporate more frequently into your prayer life?

Prayer Requests:

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REAL MAN WEEKEND – “The Palomar Experience” - Oct. 28-30

Lookin’ for some crazy guy stuff to do? Want to kick back or get refocused on God? Join us for another epic man’s weekend that will get you recharged and refreshed as a man following God. The weekend will also include plenty of man event options like paintball, high ropes course, skeet shooting, archery, zipline, horseback riding, etc. Space is limited so don’t delay! Register online at: northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend.