

Gospel Lighthouse Church
6/16/24
Father's Day
"Life Changing Lessons"

Text: Matthew 11:27 Amp; Lk.15:11-32.

Introduction: According to scripture, part of Jesus' redemptive purpose included revealing God the Heavenly Father. The teaching of the Fatherhood of God was significant with Jesus. "Father" was His favorite term for addressing God, sixty-five times in the Synoptic Gospels and over one hundred times in John. In the Pauline letters God is described as "Father" over forty times (<http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical>, adapted and edited by me). The metaphor of Father for God in the Bible is used more than any other.

- Redemptive: acting to save someone from error or evil, "the healing power of redemptive love"—New Oxford Dictionary

The parable of the prodigal in our second text, the main application is Jesus teaches especially to the self-righteous Pharisees and Scribes about God's overflowing mercy toward repentant hearts. Although this is the main application of the parable, the father of the prodigal provides a model and map of value lessons concerning relationships, especially related to rejection.

- Rejection is one of Satan's greatest tools and he does not want people to overcome the impact of rejection in their lives. Lessons provided by the prodigal father.
 1. Don't allow hurt to harden you—v12.
 - a. Culturally the son's request signaled a rejection of the father's love, family values and wish for his death.
 - Cultural: the ideas, customs, and social behavior of different societies. Elder son's action similar.
 - b. In the most agonizing painful form of suffering of the human spirit the father acts out of love not pain.
 2. Don't get buried/coffin in humiliation and guilt —vv12-134b.
 - a. The quick sale to finance departing alerted the community—public knowledge of embarrassing situation.
 - b. The action viewed as dishonoring to the father by the community.
 - c. The father didn't esteem/give elevation to the shame/humiliation. Cp Jesus—Hebrews 12:2, "despising the shame."
 - Despising: to lower something in comparison to anything else you feel is far more worth it in the end.
 - Shame—focus on self (cause a feeling to want to hide), guilt—focus on behavior (something wrong).
 3. Don't ever lose compassion—vv20-23
 - Compassion: be inwardly moved by a circumstance or condition', have compassion, feel sympathy Mt 9:36.
 - a. Helps make connections and reconciliation easier—allowed immediate and total forgiveness—vv22-23.
 - b. Helps prevent unforgiving controllers—vv28ff.

This parable shows the heart of the Heavenly Father, from the rejection of Adam and Eve in Genesis through the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus—John 3:16. Not only does God forgive us, but he takes upon Himself our shame. He lifts off the weight we carry on our shoulders for our past mistakes/sins, and gives us a new start. This is what the prodigal son encountered upon returning to the Father: "But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him" (Lk. 15:20 NRS).

This message is to strengthen fathers and everyone else.

Helpful resources: Finding the Lost Cultural Keys to Luke 15, Kenneth E. Bailey and Social –Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh. JDF

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