

You Can Begin Again

When You Come Home - Part 2

Pastor Derwin L. Gray – November 12, 2017

1. Read Luke 15:11-32.
2. Open in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the capacity to soak in God's great love and for our hearts to be formed by His great love so we can learn to love.
3. Read Luke 15:20-21.
Pastor Derwin said when we come home, God the Abba (Father) welcomes us home with:
 - a. **Compassion** - to have deep affection, to suffer with, to pity.
Discuss why the Father ran to his son and the role of God's compassion towards the younger and us when we are far from home.
 - b. **Forgiveness** – a kiss denotes the Father's forgiveness.
Read and discuss Micah 7:18-19.
What are the implications of God's forgiveness extended to you?
How does that make you feel?
4. Read Luke 15:21-23.
Pastor Derwin said when we come home, God the Abba restores us into His family by giving us:
 - a. **A Robe of righteousness**
Read Isaiah 61:10 and Romans 3:22.
What does the robe of righteousness symbolize and mean for you as a child of God?
How does this make you feel? How does it make you feel about people outside of the faith?
 - b. **A Ring of sonship**
The ring symbolizes the son's authority is restored. What does this mean for you as a child of God?
 - c. **Sandals**
Hired workers didn't have shoes in this culture but sons and daughters did. We are sons and daughter of God, not hired workers. What does this mean for us as children of God?
 - d. **A Fattened calf**
Read Luke 15:23.
Jews only ate red meat on very special occasions. This was the most valuable meat available. Kenneth E. Bailey, in *Poet and Peasant/Through Peasant Eyes*, makes the comment that by killing the fatted calf it implies the whole community was involved. There would be too much meat just for the estate. If so, this implies that the father solves the problem of the younger son's acceptance back into the community by holding this feast. (Uteley, R. J. (2004). *The Gospel according to Luke (Vol. Volume 3A, Lk 15:23)*. Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International).

Note: The word prodigal means "lavish." The father lavishly loved his younger son.

Question: What did the younger son do to deserve this lavish love? What does this story tell us about God's character?

5. Read Luke 15:25-32. (Note the verse-by-verse insights below)

Pastor Derwin said the older brother was further from home than the younger brother even though he lived with their Abba.

Luke 15:25 - "older son"

If the prodigal represents lost and fallen humanity, then the older son represents the self-righteous attitude of religious leaders. This parable has two main truths: (1) God's joy over one who repents and (2) God's pain when part of His spiritual family will not forgive and accept other parts of the sinful family. In many ways nothing has changed. Sin and unforgiveness still live in the church building! There are two types of estrangement: (1) open rebellion and (2) hidden superiority and jealousy. Each of these sons, for opposite reasons, was out of fellowship with the father.

Luke 15:28 - "his father came out and pleaded with him"

God loves the Pharisees (self-righteous) also!

Luke 15:29 - "I have been serving you"

This shows the son's pent-up anger and resentment, possibly even jealousy and envy. The older son feels he deserves the father's love because of his obedience and continuance (i.e. self-righteous legalism, cf. parable at Matthew 20:1-16).

Luke 15:29 - "never given me a young goat"

This was a less expensive animal than the fattened calf. He feels neglected.

Luke 15:30 - "this son of yours"

This phrase shows the depth of the older son's anger and continued rejection of his brother.

Luke 15:30 - "with prostitutes"

This was only speculation on the elder son's part.

Luke 15:31 - "all that is mine is yours"

The remaining inheritance belonged completely to this son. The life and livelihood of the younger son was, in reality, in the hands of the older brother. The younger son was completely at the older brother's mercy once the father died. (1)

With the insight of this message and study guide, discuss how this story applies to our lives as the people of God.

Close in prayer.

(1) Utlely, R. J. (2004). *The Gospel according to Luke* (Vol. Volume 3A, Lk 15:25-31). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.