



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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The Father Is Waiting

Focus Verse: Luke 15:32 - It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Lesson Text: Luke 15:11-32

Truth About God: God loves the prodigals and waits patiently for their return.

Truth For My Life: All who wander can return to their loving, heavenly father.

Luke 15:11-32 tells us about a younger son who wanted to pursue a life of self-determination. He requested that his father give him his portion of his inheritance. After he spent all of his money and ran out of friends. They turned on him as fast and they had turned to him. From that night forward, it would appear his life took a turn for the worse. Actually, his life took its first turn toward home. If only this young man would have realized his father was not trying to keep him hemmed in; he was trying to keep danger out. On his return home, his father called out to the servants to kill the fatted calf.

The younger son had an older brother who stayed at home. He appeared to be everything his younger brother was not. While the younger brother ran away to spend his entire inheritance, his older brother remained at home to help his dad tend the farm. He appeared to be faithful, content, and loyal. This firstborn son appears to be the character in the story we should example, but he is not. He lived a self-righteous life. When he returned from the field, he heard the celebration in honor of his younger brother who ran away but returned home. Jesus revealed the hideous crack in the older brother's armor: self-righteousness. *"And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him"* (Luke 15:28). The older son's whole relationship was built on work, not love. His father said to him, *"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found"* (Luke 15:31-32).

God has also blessed us with authority figures to keep us safe and to keep danger out. From the beginning of Scripture, God established parents to be the authority figures for their children (Deuteronomy 6:4-8). Pastors and ministers are another God-given authority for our spiritual well-being. According to Ephesians 4:11-12, *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."* Living in submission to God-given authority is a blessing, especially when that authority is living in submission to God.

When God restores people who walked away from Him, do not be jealous of them; rejoice with them. Luke wrote, *"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance"* (Luke 15:7). If there is joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents, there certainly should be joy on earth.

We do not want to model our lives after the younger son. He left home with everything and came home with nothing. Neither do we want to live like the older son. He stayed home, but his heart was far from his father. He was seething with self-righteousness. However, the father allowed both of his sons to make their own decisions.

If you walked away from God, you can come home. You can return to God and receive the same grace-filled reception the prodigal son received. You have not done too much or gone too far or been away too long. **All who wander can return.** If you have remained faithful and loyal to your walk with God, remain. If your heart has strayed, and you serve God more out of duty than devotion, you can return to right relationship with Jesus. God wants to restore you and remind you that your reward may come later, but your reward will surely come.

Let us live in a way to be closer to our Father and serve Him out of wholehearted devotion for who He is and what He has done!