

Monday, May 20 | The humility.

Luke 15:11-13 “11Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 12The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.”

Have you heard or read a story and the details didn't add up? Those who heard Jesus telling the parable of the prodigal son must have felt that way. The parable begins by breaking the bounds of traditions at that time. Customs and traditions were very important and were a way of life, not something to be questioned. With the younger son asking for his inheritance before his father had passed was disrespectful. He was basically treating his father as if he wanted him to die. It was shameful.

We're not just talking about dividing money. His father would have divided up animals, servants, personal property, and more. It would have taken away from the working family business. This son is breaking all relationship ties with his father. In reality, a father would not have even considered doing this. But here, this father is not a human father. He represents God the Father. This broken relationship is the basis for the son requesting his inheritance.

Something we don't talk about is this all happened in front of other family members. We seem to think it was a private matter between the father and the son. That doesn't fit within the confines of biblical culture. They lived with multi-generations together in small, dense villages. They knew what he had done, and when he sold everything and left, he would have been in danger of being disowned if he lost his inheritance to a Gentile. They wouldn't allow him to return to this community! He knew he had to have all of his inheritance if he decided to come back or he would be cut off from his family.

So where is the relevance for us? It reminds me of the double life we live but don't realize it. What have we asked God for without realizing we're being unrealistic, shameful, or hurtful? We can be so focused and have blinders on that we leave his will out of our decisions. We are disrespectful and breaking God's heart by throwing away what God has given us. Or, are we sitting around complacent, taking for granted what we have? No, we wouldn't dare throw it away, but we're not appreciating it. We're not rejoicing in it. We're not sharing the amazing love and salvation story we have with others. It's just sitting there like an old story on a shelf gathering dust. How sad!

There's not much difference between these two situations. God the Father doesn't want a broken relationship period. We don't have to actually walk out of the house like the prodigal or be complacent like the older brother. We can be in the act of making our own plans or just sitting around cold-hearted. In either situation the Father is right there, waiting for you to call his name! He has put himself in the place of shame and humility to save us. Call his name and fall into his arms before any more distance forms between you. Let our prayer be, "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." (Ps 139:23-24).

Q. What words from the scripture passage stick out to you today and why?

Q. Is a routine holding you captive from truly following God's plan today? Or is there something else you need to offer up to him to set you free?

MEMORY VERSE 1: Galatians 5:1, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."