

## FRIDAY, MAY 24 | The invitation.

*Luke 15:25-32 25“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ 28 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.30But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ 31 “ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ ”*

There is another purpose in this parable for this banquet. Jesus has been told in Luke 15:2 he “...welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So at the banquet he does just that! Just like the Lord’s Supper, sinners were invited to fellowship, they were here too, in demonstrations of his love at a great cost.

The characters here are the older son, who kept the law but is mad and believes he should be given some type of compensation because of his younger brother’s lack of law-keeping, who didn’t have to pay for his sins. He was given grace, not consequences. Actually, both sons were offered grace in the end.

Remember the crowd Jesus was speaking to? The Pharisees and teachers of the law and the reason he told this parable. He was responding to the above complaint and was telling about a father who was able to sit and eat with sinners. A clear picture of the gospel! He clearly put Himself in the father figure’s position. The prodigal son represents the tax collectors and law breakers Jesus was associating with, and the older son represents the Pharisees and the teachers of the law as the law-keeping brother. They were only concerned with keeping the law, not actually worshiping God in truth and in Spirit. This is also what the older brother lacked. He served his father, but he wasn’t in it with his heart.

Jesus wanted to show what the gospel really is – God isn’t an authoritative patriarch. He loves us and will do anything to repair our broken relationship with him. We also don’t earn it by working for it; he paid the ultimate personal cost. Jesus has and constantly takes the role of the servant. He awaits our decision to accept his grace then he runs to us. We then have a seat at the table where he eats with us to “seal that reconciliation”.

Here’s the question: Will we, or those we share the gospel message with, accept being found? What will be the response to that costly love? The table is set, will we join Christ at the fellowship table? Christ portrays a beautiful picture of the gospel message in this parable. He waits for an answer.

Q. Has this given you a deeper appreciation for how God loves you?

Q. Can you share this good news with someone in a different way to bring the gospel message to them?

*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.”*