

## SERMON-BASED STUDY: TWO LOST SONS

**Luke 15:11-32, ESV** – <sup>11</sup> And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. <sup>14</sup> And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

<sup>17</sup> “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! <sup>18</sup> I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’

<sup>20</sup> And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. <sup>27</sup> And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup> But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, <sup>29</sup> but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup> And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

### Notes:

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- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

## ENGAGE WITH THE MESSAGE

- 1 Refer to Luke 15:1-2. Explain how each person is represented in the parable we are studying today. How does this help us understand the parable?
- 2 What was the younger son's plan for how he would return to his father? How is the younger son's plan different from what happened? Why is this significant?
- 3 Define prodigal. Why is the father truly the prodigal in this parable?
- 4 How is the older son's condition different from the younger son's? How is it the same? Why is the older son just as lost as the younger son?

## DIGGING DEEPER

- A **Luke 15:7, 10, ESV** – <sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.  
<sup>10</sup> Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”
- 5 Looking at the passages above and Luke 15:32, what are the common threads we find in all these stories? Explain.
- 6 What determines the value of an item or person? How can one sheep, coin or person be more valuable than all others?
- 7 How can we rejoice when a person repents and surrenders their life to Christ in faith?

**B** *Psalm 51:1-12, ESV – <sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. <sup>5</sup> Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. <sup>6</sup> Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. <sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. <sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. <sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. <sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.*

**8** Describe some of the emotions and feelings that David was having as he contemplated his sin. How does David's understanding of his own sinfulness challenge you to look at your own life?

**9** What is true repentance? Why is true repentance the best response to the depth of our sinfulness?

**10** In what ways does Psalm 51 provide comfort and reassurance during times of personal guilt and regret?

## TAKING IT HOME

This week, we learned about two different lost sons and the father who loved them both. Which son do you most resonate with right now? What steps do you need to take to come back to God? Who in your life is like the younger son? Who in your life is like the older son? How can you be like the father to them. Share with your group what God is showing you. Pray together that God will show you the changes that need to be made in your life.

## PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUEST

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## FOR FURTHER STUDY

Zephaniah 3:17  
Luke 4:18-19, 19:1-10  
Acts 3:19-21  
1 Peter 5:6-11