

Long Story Short: Relentless Pursuit of God's Grace

Reflect

Have you ever been physically lost?

What emotions were stirred up when you were lost?

What did it feel like to come home?

When have you felt very far from God?

Read Your Bible

Psalm 51

Luke 15:11-24

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. What would happen to you if you asked for your inheritance from your parents before they were dead?
2. Even as the younger son delivers great insult to his father, what does the father do? What does that tell you about your heavenly Father?
3. Describe the younger son when he hits rock bottom. When have you come to your senses?
4. What does the younger son do? What does this say about you?
5. What does the father do when he sees his son? What does this say about God?
6. Why do you think the older son was so perturbed?
7. Have you ever been angered like the older son?
8. How should we respond when lost sons are found?

Conclusion

Jesus tells this story to a mixed audience. Some are obvious sinners and yet others are the religious elite who wear façade of righteousness. The religious are critiquing Jesus for His association with the sinners. So, Jesus critiques the religious with telling the parable, and teaching all of us about the heart of God. The father in the parable stands for our Father in heaven who is far more patient than an earthly father. He takes the shame of his younger Son, and then watches for his return. When the younger son is finally spent financially, and emotionally, he returns penitent. And the Father welcomes him home, back into the family, and the celebration erupts to the dismay of a sulking older son. The heart of God is waiting for sinners to come home. God is yearning for the sinner to turn from sin. God is running to welcome the lost home and celebrating with abandon when a lost child is back in the family.

Pray

Patience and waiting Father, when I am far from You, help me come to my senses and realize that You are good, and in Your presence is life itself. Receive my confession and restore me according to Your abundant grace. When I see my brothers and sisters returning to You, to Your home, let me rejoice with You and celebrate their return. Let me shout with You, "Here is my brother, here is my sister who once was lost and now is found, who once was dead, and now is alive!" In Jesus' name. Amen.