

Sunday Message: March 21, 2021

Meet Jesus | Welcoming Father, Part 1, Luke 15:11-24

Danny Lamonte

Reflection Questions

1 Read Luke 15:11-13. What is one gift in life that you are prone to enjoy above (more than) or beyond (apart from) God Himself—the giver of all gifts? What could it look like to enjoy that gift in relationship to God this week?

2 Read Luke 15:14-24. In what area of life do you try to earn, beg for, or reason for God's acceptance rather than simply receive and celebrate His grace? What could it look like to simply celebrate with God this week knowing you are His son or daughter—once lost, now found?

DIGGING DEEPER

The primary translation used on Sunday mornings is the ESV. The corresponding notes in the ESV Study Bible are helpful when reflecting on the questions below.

Text Exploration Questions

Read Luke 15:11-32. Take notes and discuss using the questions below.

Note – Pastor Danny covered verses 15:11-24 on Sunday March 21, 2021; verses 15:25-32 will be covered next week.

- Briefly Outline the content of the parable noting the transitions in the storyline.
- As Jesus continues his teaching on lost things, Luke 15:11 serves as an intro to what follows. How does this intro help us focus our attention on the main character and the subsequent characters? Recall the introduction from Danny's sermon.
- As you read the parable in totality, who does the Father represent? What about the younger son and the eldest son? Turn back to Luke 15:1-3 to see who Jesus is talking to. Recall the endings in the lost sheep and lost coin. Any parallels to how this parable ends?
- What does the younger son's request and lifestyle tell us about the kind of person he is (15:12-16, 30)? According to Danny, what (or who) is the son rejecting and rebelling against?
- How do we know the younger son had a change of heart and to whom does his heart change toward (15:17-19)? Danny refers to this as self-awareness. From reading the text, do you think self-awareness transitioned to actual repentance? (15:18-19, 21).
- What do the actions of the Father reveal about the Father's nature (15:20-24)? Talk about the lavishness of grace in how the Father reacts to the return of the younger son. It may be helpful to list the ways in which the Father blesses the younger son. Note expressions of grace.
- Heavy hitting theological question: What is the relationship between remorse/repentance of a sinner and the acceptance/forgiveness of the Father? Is the grace of the Father withheld until a condition of remorse/repentance is experienced? Is the Father's running to the younger son prior to hearing a confession of sin an indication that grace precedes repentance? How does the theme of repentance and celebration of salvation appear through the teaching on lost things (lost sheep, lost coin, lost son – see 15:32)? Examine 15:7, 10, 18, 21, 24, 32.
- Regardless of how you answered the previous question, it is abundantly clear that God (The Father) welcomes sinners, like the younger son, extending the undeserving gift of grace. How does this shape our understanding of God and His offer of salvation and frame our relationship with him and His relationship with us (include your "neighbor" in your answer)?
- If you have a hard time getting your head around God's great gift of grace or internally struggle with the actions of the father toward the younger son despite all that he had done, you are not alone. Take a risk and do something uncomfortable. Share your hesitations, frustrations, and questions with your group.
- For personal consideration: if you have trouble relating to or appreciating the Father's response to the younger son (you are not alone), you might find yourself resonating with how the elder son responds to the Father. Study the rest of the parable (Luke 15:25-32) in preparation for the next sermon. Ask yourself if you identify with the elder son more than the younger son? Might not hurt to read the book of Jonah as well.