



Lesson 3: The Father's Heart

(Luke 15:11-32)

Introduction

- A parable of the Prodigal son or of the father's heart?

Context

- Luke 15:1-2 are key to understanding this parable.
- Three parables:
 1. Lost Sheep
 2. Lost Coin
 3. Lost Son
- **The main truth:** What we know of God is revealed in how we view ourselves as lost and how we deal with others as lost.

The Wayward Son and the Welcoming Father (15:11-24)

A shameless request (vv. 11-12)

- The younger son unashamedly requests his inheritance from his living father.

A shameless life (vv. 13-16)

- The son shamelessly squanders his inheritance in a far country.

- The Pharisees and a legalist would be content to stop here.

A shamelessness revealed (vv. 17-19)

- “But when he came to himself” represents a turning point.
- Acknowledgement of sin against God and others reveals true repentance.
- The humble statement from the son reveals his lack of knowledge of his own father’s heart.

Understanding the father's love

- The father unashamedly reveals his love for his lost son, showing that grace knows no boundaries for sinners who turn their face towards the Father's home.

- A. W. Tozer, *"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."*

The Respectable Brother and the Rejoicing Father (15:25-32)

The anger of the older brother (vv. 25-28a)

- The younger brother represents the _____ and _____ (15:1)
- The older brother represents the _____ and _____ (15:2)

- The older son disapproves of the father's actions.

- The older son would rather not have fellowship with his father than accept his father's treatment of his brother.

The plea of the seeking father (v. 28b)

- The father who humbles himself to run towards the prodigal likewise goes out to meet his oldest son.

The complaint of the older brother (vv. 29-30)

- The older son's reaction to the father's acceptance of the younger son's return reveals his rebellious heart.
- The older is like the younger and doesn't know it. The difference between the two is that the younger brother comes to a realization of who he is before the father but the older does not.
- The older brother exposes the Pharisees' rebellion against the Father and exposes ours also.

The father's extension of grace (vv. 31-32)

- The father will not and cannot withdraw his joy at the coming home of his son, nor can God and heaven but rejoice at the repentance of one sinner.
- The parable ends with an open invitation.

Application