

Make a Difference: Older Brother Goodness

Pastor Cory Johnson
Sunday, November 8, 2020
Luke 15:10, 17, 24, 28-32; 22:17-20
2 Corinthians 7:10; Romans 8:15
Romans 8:17

Forgiveness is absorbing loss and pain! Forgiveness is always a form of suffering.

¹⁰ In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents."
Luke 15:10

Life-giving repentance. Joy-producing repentance. Repentance that kicks off a party.

¹⁰ For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. 2 Corinthians 7:10

¹⁷ "When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! Luke 15:17

Coming to his senses: Triggered his repentance. Triggered healing and restoration.

²⁴ My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!' So they began to celebrate. Luke 15:24

²⁸ The older son was angry and would not go in to the feast. So his father went out and begged him to come in. Luke 15:28

The father comes out to both sons. Both sons are lost and disconnected from the father.

Jesus is saying nothing gets in the way between you and God like morality, goodness, decency, and respectability.

²⁹ But the older son said to his father, 'I have served you like a slave for many years and have always obeyed your commands. Luke 15:29

Obeys the father but doesn't understand the father. You can be with God and far from God.

Older son is more lost than the younger son. He is angry at what God is celebrating.

²⁹ But the older son said to his father, 'I have served you like a slave for many years and have always obeyed your commands. Luke 15:29

His goodness is masking his struggle with God. His obedience has made him entitled to his anger and opinion.

“The thing that really separates us from God is not our sin but our damnable good works.”
– John Gerstner

Symptoms of elder brother’s lostness: Struggling for control of God’s stuff (God’s blessing). Always angry, always feel entitled to better treatment.

Elder brother lacks assurance and joy in his relationship with the father.
He doesn’t know the father’s heart because he has only been after the father’s things.

³⁰ But your other son, who wasted all your money on prostitutes, comes home, and you kill the fat calf for him!’ Luke 15:30

²⁹ But you never gave me even a young goat to have at a feast with my friends. Luke 15:29

Other people have it better than me... God owes me...
Misery that comes from how you perceive other people’s lives.

³¹ The father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. Luke 15:31

¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” Romans 8:15

To receive this life you must repent of your goodness, not just your badness.
“Everything is for the asking and nothing can be bought.”

Elder brother sees duty but no beauty. Chopping firewood example

³² We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life!
He was lost, but now he is found!’ ” Luke 15:32

COMMUNION

¹⁷ Then Jesus took a cup, gave thanks, and said, “Take this cup and share it among yourselves.

¹⁸ I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until God’s kingdom comes.” Luke 22:17–18

¹⁹ Then Jesus took some bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the apostles, saying, “This is my body, which I am giving for you. Do this to remember me.” Luke 22:19

²⁰ In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup and said, “This cup is the new agreement that God makes with his people. This new agreement begins with my blood which is poured out for you. Luke 22:20