

Heaven's Not for Good People

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[0 : 00] Well, it's good to be back behind this pulpit.

I'm sure that Brother Paul last week did a fine job of bringing God's Word.

! And I'm grateful that we have so many inside our church as well as outside of our church who can stand here and preach God's Word.

Grateful for that. But I'd rather be here. I'd rather be here. And so I'm glad to be here this morning. Take your Bibles. I'm going to bring a message this morning that I would have been bringing last Sunday.

So you're thinking, well, you should really be prepared. You've had a couple weeks, but I have honestly really struggled with this particular message out of this portion of Luke chapter 15.

[1 : 09] You're going to be turning to Luke 15. I guess I forgot to tell you that. Luke 15. But anyway, I've struggled with this portion of it.

We've taken two Sundays, or this will be our second Sunday on Luke 15. And we'll get it all in two messages. Because what we have here are three parables, three parables of Jesus that go together.

I explained this a couple of weeks ago. And though you have turned to the passage, I'm not going to read it all up front like I normally do. We're going to kind of walk through the passage.

And in particular, the third of the three parables that are given here in the chapter. I do want to remind you that it is in the first three verses of Luke chapter 15 that Luke clues us in to the occasion that precipitated Jesus telling these three parables.

That's always good when you're studying Scripture. You need to look at the larger context, and you'll always discover why a passage is there by looking at how it is introduced.

[2 : 25] And so we understand why Jesus told these three parables. We understand that by what Luke tells us in the first three verses. So that's where I want to begin.

And you can just kind of follow along with me. In verse 1, the Bible says here, Luke records, I'll get it right here in just a minute.

Now, this is good news. I mean, this is great news. This is a good bit of information. This is something you like to hear. This is exciting. It is when you think about it, and I hope you've thought about it.

Sinners are drawing near to Jesus in order to hear his gospel. Now, you admit that's good news. That's great to hear. These are sinners.

And I mentioned a couple of weeks ago that you could not find a more corrupt and sinful collection of sinners. And we understand that by the description of them, how Luke describes them. They're tax collectors and sinners.

[3 : 31] These people were openly sinful. That's what we need to understand about this. There's no bones about it. No pretense about it. There was no facade of religiosity in their lives.

They were open, flagrant sinners. These were, first of all, tax collectors. And tax collectors were drawing near to Jesus.

In fact, you remember that Jesus even called one of them to be one of his apostles, Matthew. And so these tax collectors, they're drawing near to Jesus. What kind of people were they?

They were traitorous people. Traitors to their own country because they worked for the Roman government. They hated Roman government. Not only were they traitorous, but they were thieves. They were thieves. They robbed from their own people, their own countrymen. And they were also corrupt. Corrupt because they were levying exorbitant amounts of taxes way beyond what the Roman government required.

[4 : 36] So they were hated people. These were sinners, bonafide sinners, certainly in the minds of the people of that day. And also they're sinners. We think that's just kind of a generic term, but this was just a term that would speak of the depth of the sin of these people.

These were harlots and drunkards and idolaters and thieves and insurrectionists.

And on and on we could go with the list. These were the dredge of the society, of Jewish society.

And these were the ones that were drawing near to Jesus to hear him.

Let's go on because we kind of covered all that last week. Verse 2, and the Pharisees and the scribes. So we have a second group of people here, don't we? We have the tax collectors and sinners.

And then we have the Pharisees and the scribes. The scribes were the teachers of the law. And so these were the religious people. Highly religious.

[5 : 45] These were the good people. All right, and I say that kind of tongue-in-cheek. They were good, by all indication. They were keepers of the law. They were good people, moral people.

And so forth. And these people were always there when Jesus said or did anything publicly. I mean, they're just always there. These Pharisees and the scribes, because they're watching him, you know, watching him closely.

All right, so the sinners drew near to hear Jesus. Praise the Lord. Wonderful. But the religious, what about them? Why were they there? And what were they doing?

Well, they were doing what they always did. In verse 2, the Pharisees and the scribes complained.

That's how it's translated in the New King James. It's a bit, I think, a bit soft of a word.

They were murmuring. I like that word better. It's an old English, King James-ish kind of word. But it kind of conveys the idea. They were murmuring. They were grumbling.

[6 : 43] They were criticizing. And why? They said, if you look at it there in the text, they said, This man, this so-and-so, that's kind of the tenor of it.

This so-and-so receives sinners and eats with them. That is, he welcomes those people. The despised tax collectors and the disgusting, perverted sinners.

And not only that, but he eats with them. That is, he really does welcome them and accept them.

These sinners. That's what they were grumbling about.

And so, verse 3, he spoke this parable to them. All right, so this introduces the occasion and why Jesus told these parables. And by the time Jesus is finished here, he tells three parables.

And as I've explained already a couple weeks ago, they all three go together. They go together.

And the first two are very simple, right? And they're consisting of very few details.

[7 : 54] You know, a shepherd has a hundred sheep. He loses one. He leaves the ninety-nine in search of the one. And when he finds him, there's a great celebration. That's pretty much the gist of the parable, the first parable.

And then the second parable, a woman has ten silver coins. She loses one. And she sweeps out the house in search of it. And when she finds it, there's a great celebration.

Very simple parable. And the message is virtually identical in these first two parables. Very simple. But then you get to the third parable.

And it's not only longer, but because it is longer, it is more complex. And it has many, many more details involved here. And the basic details are similar.

Similar to the other two parables. But there are some very significant differences. But we're going to discover, I think, that Jesus' purpose is consistent in all three parables.

[8 : 49] And his point is, his main point is very consistent in all three parables. And Jesus has something to say to the tax collectors and the sinners.

And he has something to say to the Pharisees and the scribes. Remember, both groups are represented in the parables. All three parables. And Jesus then has a message for both groups of people.

And we set our focus last time on Jesus' message to the tax collectors and sinners. That was the primary focus of the message a couple of weeks ago. And what was that message?

Well, the message was, Jesus received sinners. What a message. What a wonderful truth. By grace through faith, sinners are heavens lost and found.

Praise the Lord. And that's what we talked about two weeks ago. So, this morning, we'll take up Jesus' message to the Pharisees and the scribes.

[9 : 51] Because he is primarily speaking to them. And that message is, it may seem a little strange to you at first. But his message is basically, heaven is not for good people.

Heaven is not for good people. I've entitled the sermon that very thing. Heaven is not for good. Does that sound right to you? Maybe not at first. But heaven is not for good people. Otherwise, none of us would ever make it. Ever. It's not for good people. If it was for good people, then being good would be the way to get there. And, of course, the Bible says very clearly, there is none that are good.

No, not one. So, heaven is not for good people. And this is the message, the lesson that he is, I think, giving, clearly giving to the Pharisees and the scribes through really all three parables. But primarily, it comes out very strongly in the latter part of the third parable. The parable that we often call the parable of the prodigal son. All right.

[11 : 07] So, to get at all of that, let's just consider, first of all, here's number one. If you like to write notes and write down my outline. Here's outline point number one. The parable.

That's very simple. The parable. So, let's consider the parable itself. And I'm talking about the third parable. Now, though the basic storyline in each of the three parables is the same, you would have to admit that the focus of the first two parables differs somewhat from the third parable.

I know we've not read the parables yet, but we've read them a couple weeks ago. But I think you're very familiar with all three of these parables. You'd have to admit that the focus of the first two is somewhat different from the third parable.

In the first two parables, the main idea is that Jesus is intensely interested in saving even one sinner that repents.

That's the basic idea of the first two parables. Jesus is intensely interested. Confused and focused on saving even one, one sinner that repents.

[12 : 19] And that's basically the idea. And we even see that in the first part of the third parable. Really, the third parable has two parts, two movements or acts.

Act one, act two, the younger son, the older son. But even in the first part of the third parable, you still have that same idea. The prodigal son, remember, he returns to find that his father's arms are open wide to receive him and to restore him.

And he does restore him. And so that is basically the same idea. And so for all of the extra details in the first part of the parable, the point is essentially the same.

Jesus is intensely interested in saving even one sinner that repents. But then when you get to act two, we'll just call it act two or the second part of the third parable.

When you get to that, you have something different. Have something new introduced. And that new thing that is introduced is the elder son. The elder son.

[13 : 26] And really, he doesn't exactly correspond to the 99 sheep in the first parable. And he doesn't exactly correspond to the nine silver coins in the second parable.

And it is that difference, that difference that we want to explore this morning. And it is that difference that will help us understand why Jesus told this parable.

To whom he told it. Why he told it. And what his primary point was for his audience. And will be his audience here today. All right, so to get at that, let's first walk through this parable.

And this is what we want to discover. To whom is this parable directed? That is, who is Jesus' intended audience here?

That's always important if you're going to exegete a passage. Who is the audience? Who are the readers? Who are those who were intended to receive this?

[14 : 28] And so, what is the answer to that here? Well, the parable will make a whole lot more sense, I think, when we discover the audience. And here's the truth of it.

He's not telling this parable for the benefit of the tax collectors and sinners in the crowd. Though they do benefit from this. He's not talking to them.

He is telling this parable for the benefit of the Pharisees and the scribes. There in the audience. And that explains why Jesus designed this parable to be so shocking.

Now, it doesn't seem shocking to us when we read it because we're looking at it through our cultural lens. And nothing about this seems odd. In fact, it's just an exciting parable and a heartwarming parable when we read it.

But to the original audience, and especially these Pharisees and scribes, this story was shocking. Shocking. Shocking. Shocking.

[15:30] And Jesus intended for it to be. Because he's speaking to the Pharisees and the scribes. Or he's speaking to that kind of mindset. That kind of spirit.

The elder sons in the audience there. Like the elder son in our parable. So, let's walk through it. Verse 11. Just follow along as I'm reading.

And I'm just going to kind of take it in little bits, little bite sizes. And comment a little bit upon each movement of the story. All right. So, here's how it begins.

Verse 11. A certain man had two sons. Okay. That sounds just like the other two parables. I mean, it starts out essentially the same. I mean, you have a man having 100 sheep.

We have a woman having 10 silver coins. And now we have a man having two sons. All right. So, it starts out pretty much the same. But now let's look at it. A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.

[16:37] And I'm trying to inflect my voice so that it sounds like what it probably sounded like in real life. And here's the first shocker of the story.

I mean, this is a shocker. The son wants his inheritance before his father dies. That's basically what it is. That's what he wants. And this would be unheard of.

As soon as Jesus started telling this parable, I mean, from the very beginning, the Pharisees and scribes, even anyone in the Jewish audience would have thought, well, this is scandalous, shameful.

I mean, he wants his inheritance before his father dies. That just would be unheard of. But in the culture of Jesus' day, this would have been the ultimate shame for a son to make such a demand. And what this son demanded was equivalent to saying, Father, you're living too long. That's what the problem is here. You just keep going on and on.

[17:43] You're just living too long. And so what his son is saying is, I wish you were dead. Father, you know, your life is just going on and on. And it's cramping my style and my plans for life.

I wish you would just go ahead and die. And then I could get my inheritance from you right now. And that way I could live the way I want to live. And that would be away from you and out from under your authority.

And that's basically what the son is saying. So give it to me now, he said. I want it right now. I'm tired of waiting for you to die. And this is the ultimate of disgrace and shame.

And this is the ultimate of rebellion. But if that wasn't shocking enough, notice what comes next. In fact, I would say the next thing is even more shocking to this Jewish audience.

So he, that's the father, divided to them his livelihood. This is crazy.

[18:51] This is shameful. It's bad enough that the son would ask for his inheritance before his father dies. But for his father to give in to that demand is just unheard of. This father should have taken his son to the woodshed and whipped him and beat him to the inch of his life.

That's what he should have. That's what they're thinking. He should have actually just kicked him out of the house. This is ridiculous.

But no, the father submits to his son's demand, doesn't he? In fact, Jesus said he divided to them. Did you notice that? He divided to them his livelihood.

That is, the elder son also received his inheritance. He didn't ask for it, but he received it. He would get two-thirds of the inheritance because he's the elder son. And then the younger son would get one-third.

And so the father gave all of his livelihood to his sons. Because his younger son demanded his portion right now as if his father was dead.

[19:56] All right, let's move on. Verse 13. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together. He got all of his stuff together and his inheritance. And he journeyed to a far country.

That is, he got as far away from his father and from his authority as possible. Even leaving his own country. And there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

That is, loose, extravagant, reckless, wild living. Verse 14. But when he had spent all... I mean, he squandered it all.

There arose a severe famine in that land. And he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country.

All right, so he's left his father. Left his country. And he sent him, this citizen of this other country. Sent him into his fields to feed the swine.

[20 : 52] And so the son also left his religious upbringing. Because no Jew would have any connection, according to Mosaic law, any connection with swine or pigs.

And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate. And this, as we understand it, was a type of fruit that was given to the swine to fatten them up for market.

And so the son is looking at that. And this is looking pretty good. He's hungry. And he would gladly have eaten that. And just, you know, just going on with his poor, terrible life.

And no one gave him anything. Really, what a picture of lostness this is. But let's read on. Verse 17. But when he came to himself.

And I love that statement. He said, how many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare? And I perish with hunger. So he's starting to think about this.

[21 : 54] I will arise, he said. And he's just kind of talking within himself here. I will arise and go to my father and will say to him. And so he starts kind of rehearsing what he might say.

Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. Which was really a graphic admission of the enormity of his sin. And I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

Make me like one of your hired servants. That is, I don't even deserve to live in the household as one of the household slaves. I don't even deserve that.

Make me a hired servant. A hireling. Now why would he ask that? Well, just as an aside here. He asked that. I think the implication is.

He asked to be a hired servant. So that he could eventually pay back the inheritance that he had squandered in that far country. Because that would be his only way back into the family. At least he's hoping.

[22 : 54] He'd be hopeful that that would restore the love of the father. And acceptance of the father. And the good graces of the father. And that he could come back into the household. And you know, really, that's what he's rehearsing in his mind.

And it's such a typical mindset of the unregenerate. The unredeemed. That we could somehow earn God's forgiveness.

God's saving grace. And then here comes the third shocker in the story. Verse 20. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off.

His father saw him. And I love that part of the story too. His father had never stopped looking for him. His father had never ceased to long for his return. So his father saw him as he was hoping he would one day.

But here's the shocker. Really a series of shockers. And his father saw him and had compassion. And unbelievably. He ran.

[23 : 58] He ran. I mean, are you getting this? Are you understanding this? I mean, to the Pharisees. This would just have been unbelievable.

I mean, Jesus in the parable. He's referring to a well-to-do man. A highly revered citizen of that village. He was a wealthy landowner. And for him to pull.

Essentially pull up his robe. And bear his legs. And run through the town. Like some commoner. Or like some kid. Some child.

Would have been the shame of shames. But that's what he did. And then what? He fell on his neck. His son's neck. And kissed him. Disgraceful. It doesn't seem that way to us. I mean, this seems like just a wonderful story.

[24 : 53] I mean, just because. See, the problem is. We understand the point of the story. Don't we? And also, we don't have the same culture. I mean, this would have been a very acceptable thing to happen in our culture.

For a father to forgive in this way. And to embrace his son. But in the culture of Jesus' day. This would have been unheard of.

This would have been scandalous. For a father to do this. But it gets worse. Verse 21. And the son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight.

And I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. That sounds familiar. Because that's what the son had been rehearsing. And so he's beginning to say what he had rehearsed in his mind. But he doesn't even get to finish it.

Did you notice? He doesn't even get to get to the part about, you know, I'll just be one of your hired servants. The father essentially interrupts him. Verse 22.

[25 : 56] But the father said to his servants, bring out the best robe and put it on him. And put a ring on his hand. And sandals on his feet. And all of that, of course, signifying full sonship.

This is incredible. And bring the fatted calf here. And let's kill it. Which, you know, the fatted calf would have been reserved for the greatest of celebration.

Then it would have fed hundreds of people. And he said, let us eat and be merry. So the idea is he invited the entire town into his home for a great celebration.

Because his son. And why the celebration? Well, verse 24. For this my son was dead. He was dead to me.

And is alive again. Born again. He was lost to me.

[26 : 55] And is found. And they began to be merry. And so that's part of the parable we really love. Isn't it? The part of the parable we're most familiar with.

And I guess if Jesus had followed the same basic scheme as with the previous two parables. It would have ended right there. That would have been the end of the parable. And then it would have been just almost pretty much identical to the first two parables.

But Jesus doesn't end it there. There's a second act to the parable. And so now Jesus introduces the elder son. Or elder brother.

And I have to tell you that for the Pharisees and the scribes. He would have been the hero of the story. He's the only one that had his head on right. You know he's the only one that was keeping with the traditions.

And the customs of the day. Verse 25. Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house. He heard music and dancing.

[27 : 56] So he knows this big party is going on inside the house. And so he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. He's confused by this. And he said to him. Your brother has come.

And because he has received him safe and sound. As the father received him safe and sound. Your father has killed the fatted calf. And by the way.

To whom did the fatted calf belong? To the older brother. The father had distributed all of his livelihood to his two sons.

That's not the only thing that I think the son is ticked about. In fact that's the lesser of things. And so verse 28. He was angry.

And would not go in. Would not go into the celebration. Into the party. He was not going to have any part of this. This is outrageous. This is shameful. And so.

[28 : 58] His father came out. And pleaded with him. That's significant in the story. And we'll get to that later. Verse 29.

So he answered and said to his father. Lo. Now that's how it's translated. The new King James. Lo. That's an old English word.

You know. Really. It should be translated. Look. With an exclamation mark. In fact. I think it may be that way.

In. In ASB. Or one of those. Look. That's what the word means. Look. And. And by the way. This. Was so disrespectful. On the part of the older son.

He's talking to his father. And literally. He is saying. Look you. That's what he's saying to his father. This. This is. This is so disrespectful.

[29 : 58] Not. Dear father. Or beloved father. Or revered father. But. Look you. These many years. I have been serving you. Can you get the.

The tenor of this. The emotion of this. All these years. I've served you. I never. Never. Transgressed your commandment.

At any time. Really. That's what he said. I. Am.

The model son. I'm the good one. The perfect one. I didn't go off. He said. He said. He said.

And yet. You never gave me a young goat. As you never did throw me a party. Make. Make. Mary. With my friends. That is.

[30 : 56] What does he say. He's saying. I have earned this from you. You didn't give it to me. I deserve this from you. I deserve this celebration from you.

But. As soon as. This. Son. Of yours. Wouldn't even call him his brother. This son of yours.

Came. Soon as he came. Who has devoured your livelihood. With harlays. Let me remind you. How sinful. This son. Has been. And you. Killed the fatted calf.

For him. I mean. You can get this. Can't you. I tell you. The Pharisees. Would have been rooting. For this elder brother. That's right. You tell him. They would have been rooting. For him. Well. I say they would have. Except. By now. They're beginning. To get this. By now. [31 : 56] The. Ford light. Has come on. You know. Oh. I see what you're saying. I see what you're getting at. You see.

Jesus meant. For them. To understand. This. That. The younger son. In the parable. Was just like. The tax collectors. And sinners. Who were drawing near. To Jesus. That's. That. That. That. That's. The. Who corresponded. To the tax collectors. And sinners. The younger son. But the elder son. Was just like them. That's what Jesus. Is getting at. Complaining. They're. Complaining. That Jesus. Was receiving. Sinners. And eating. With them. You're just like. Those. Pharisees. And so. The Pharisees. I think. Suddenly. Went from. Out. From shocked. To out. And out. Enraged. [32 : 49] They were. Offended. You see. The target. Of the parable. Is not. The overt. Sinner. The target.

Of the parable. Is the overtly. Religious. The ones. Who. Are always. Striving. To do. Everything. The bible. Requires. Every. Dot. Every. Every. Dot. Of the eye. And every. Every. Cross. Of the T. And. Proud. Of it. And. Placing. Their. Faith. In it. We're. Talking. About. The legalists. The. Moralists. We're. Talking. Here. About. The. Self. Righteous. And. Then. To finish. Off. The parable. Verse. 31. And he. That's the father. Said. To the son.

[33 : 44] Or to him. The older son. Son. You. Are. Always. With me. And all. That I have. Is yours. It was. Right. That we. Should make. Mary. And be. Glad. For you. Your.

Brother. Was. Dead. And is. Alive. Again. And was. Lost. And is. Found. And that's. How the parable ends. Just ends. Right there. So that's. The parable. And we can learn a lot. Just from. Kind of. Walking. Through the parable. And I hope. Hope. That we have. Second. The principle. The parable.

That's kind of the broad. Scope. Of this whole thing. Here. And answers. To whom is Jesus speaking here. And why. But then the principle. The principle. What is the main point. Of this parable. Well. The first thing we must do. Is notice the difference. Between. This parable.

[34 : 42] And the previous two parables. And there is a very significant difference. In the first parable. There is just. One lost sheep. Right. In the second parable.

There is just. One lost silver coin. But in this third parable. There is not. Just one lost son. There are two.

The two. The parable is not talking about. The saved son. And the lost son. He is talking about two lost sons. They are both lost. Now. We could say. One is.

The bad boy. And one is. The good boy. Right. Yet. Clearly. From the parable. Both. Sons. Are alienated. From their father. All right. So one is alienated. Because of his. Sinfulness. In life. The other.

[35 : 41] Is alienated. Because of his. Now get this. His goodness. His goodness. Has alienated him. From his father.

The elder brother. Is not alienated. From the father. Because. Of his sins. He is alienated. From his father. Because of the pride. Of his own. Goodness. The pride.

The faith. That he has. In his own. Goodness. I guess. We could say. The faith. He has. In his own. Faithfulness. You know. You can have faith.

In your own. Faithfulness. And think. That. Will gain you. Entrance. Into. Heaven. Faith. In your faithfulness. Faith. In your goodness. A pride.

In your goodness. An assurance. That comes. To you. A false assurance. Comes. To you. Through your. Goodness. Before God. Your. Your. Your. Your. Desire. And striving.

[36 : 39] And ability. To obey. God's word. At every major point. That's just like. This older son. He said.

To his father. What did he say? He said. I. Have. All these years. Served you. I. Have. Never. Disobeyed.

Your commandments. That's what he said. To him. And so. The implication is. I deserve. Your blessing.

I deserve. This celebration. And so here's the principle. And listen to it very carefully.

If. If. Now listen to me. If you believe. That God. Should bless you.

[37 : 37] And help you. And save you. Because. You have tried. Always. To obey his word. And to serve him.

And to be a good person. Listen. That's what you believe. Then. He is not your savior. You are. You are. You are. In effect. Serving as your own savior. You. Jesus.

May inspire you. Jesus. By his very life. Described in scripture. May be. An example. To you.

Some model. To follow after. But he is not your savior. You are. You are.

[38 : 38] See. Sin. Is more than what you think it is. Sin. Is not just breaking God's laws. It is that. It is that.

But it's more than that. Sin. Is. Pride. Or faith. Or an assurance. In your ability.

To keep God's laws. To obey God. And so because. Pride. In your own goodness. Trust in your own goodness. Put yourself.

In the place of God. Then you become your own savior. Your own judge. Your own Lord. This. This is the. Essence of.

Religious moralism. As a means of salvation. And there are many. Many. Even in churches. Like this one. Who have bought into that.

[39 : 36] And their faith. Their assurance. Their very salvation. Is based upon. Their goodness. One.

Man said. That there are many people. Who. Don't need to be. Forgiven of their sins. They need to be forgiven. Of their damnable goodness.

And there are a lot of people. Like this. Think the way. To God's pleasure. And God's blessing. His salvation. Is goodness.

God wants you to. Do good. Absolutely. You can't deny that. From scripture. Does God want us to obey. His word. Absolutely. Any kind of faith.

You put in that. Is to put it in yourself. And effectively. Make. Effectively making yourself. Your own savior. That's what we learn.

[40 : 42] From this. Older son. This is religious moralism. In her book. These strange ashes.

Elizabeth Elliot. Tells a fictitious story. That I think. Kind of captures. All of this. Listen to it. One day. Jesus said. To his disciples. I'd like you.

To carry a stone. For me. He didn't give. Any explanation. So the disciples. Looked around. For a stone to carry. And Peter. Being the practical sort.

Sought out. The smallest stone. He could possibly find. I mean. After all. Jesus didn't give. Any regulations. For weight and size. So he put it. In his pocket. Jesus then said.

Follow me. He led them. On a journey. In about noontime. Jesus had everyone. Sit down. And he waved his hands. And all the stones. Turned to bread.

[41 : 40] And he said. Now it's time. For lunch. Eat. In a few seconds. Peter was finished. With his lunch. When lunch was done.

Jesus told them. To stand up. And he said again. I'd like. You to carry. A stone. For me. This time. Peter said to himself. Aha. Now.

I get it. And so. He looked around. And saw. A small boulder. And so. He hoisted it up. On his back. And it was painful. And it made him stagger.

But he said. I can't wait for supper. Jesus then said. Follow me. He led them on a journey. With Peter. Barely being able.

To keep up. Around supper time. Jesus led them. To the side. Of a river. And he said. Now.

Everyone. Throw your stones. Into the water.

[42 : 34] Father. And he. And they did. Then he said. Follow me. And began to walk. And Peter. Looked at Jesus. Dumbfounded.

But Jesus. Sighed. And said. Peter. Don't you remember. What I asked of you. Who were you.

Carrying. That stone for. You see. The self-righteous. Those who have played.

Who have captured. Their assurance. Of salvation. Based upon. Their goodness. Their good works. Their service. Then.

They are expecting. That this will bring. God's blessing. To them. Be it. Their salvation. Initially. And their continued.

[43 : 36] Salvation. Or other blessings. God owes me that. Just like this elder. Son. You see. God owes me that. Look at what I've done.

For him. Look at what I have denied. In my life. That all these other people. Are doing. And love doing. And look at the straight. And narrow. That I've been walking. For the Lord. And he owes me. Blessing. And like the elder brother. In the parable. When. When that happens. And things don't always.

Work out. The way. They thought they should. Then they get confused. Just like the elder son. He said. What is the meaning of this? And then.

They get angry. Just like the elder son. Verse 28. He said. The Bible says. He was angry. And would not go in. So the parable.

[44 : 34] The principle. And then. Third and finally. And quickly. This morning. The prodigal. I thought we had already talked about the prodigal.

I mean. You know. We typically call this. The parable of the prodigal son. And that's true enough. Isn't it? I mean. We get that from verse 13. He.

You know. He wasted his possessions with. Prodigal living. All right. So. You know. Certainly that describes the. Younger son.

Doesn't it? The prodigal. The Greek word here is. A sotos. And. And it's an adjective. And. And we could translate it. Reckless.

We could translate it. Extravagant. We could translate it. Lavish. And so the idea is.

[45 : 37] He spent all. Extravagantly. Right. He did. That's why he's called the. Prodigal. The prodigal son.

That's what he did. And he did it with his father's. Livelihood. His. His father's wealth. His portion of it. That the father had. Had freely and graciously. Given to him.

But the word also. Perfectly fits someone else. In the parable. Do you know who it is? It's the father. It's the father. The word could be used. Of the father. Now think about it. How. Extravagant. And really. Reckless.

Is his love. For this. Rebellious. Sinning. Son. I mean. Running through the town. Burying his legs.

[46 : 38] In such an. Indignified way. And. Didn't care what anybody else. Thought. And he. Runs and embraces. His son. The son. That had. Spent all of his.

His. His wealth. On. On. Harlots. And. And. Riotous living. And. And. What. How extravagant. Was his love. And he does all that.

Even for his son. Has a chance. To make any restitution. For what he did. And he does. He even does it. Before his son. Is able to recite. In full.

The speech. That he had been practicing. Because. You see. The father is not. Interested in restitution. We got to get that. In our heads. Our father is not.

Interested in restitution. You see. His love. Cannot be bought. And he.

[47 : 34] Bestows his love. So extravagantly. It's. It's the. Prodigality of God. It's an amazing. Parallel here.

In the parable. That we. We tend to miss. And he reveals that. To this. Younger son. Who had done. All that he had done. What about the elder son?

Was he any different. Toward the elder son? Not really. I mean. The elder son. Was just as alienated. From the father.

As was the younger son. He had no respect. For his father. None. Whatsoever. He too. Thought the father's love.

Was something to be bought. Bought by. By service. And good deeds. And how did the father. Respond to him? How did the father. Treat him?

[48 : 33] Hmm. Very same. The bible says. He. Came out. And. Pleaded. With him. Just as.

Undignified. As what he did. For. The younger son. Pleaded. With his son. To come into the house. Come in. With him. And join in. The. The great. Celebration. Which is. By the way. I think.

A picture. Of the. Marriage. Supper. Of the lamb. What a picture. Of our. Prodigal father. Heavenly father.

John. First. John. Three. One. Says. Behold. What. Manner. Of love. The father. Has. Bestowed.

[49 : 33] Literally. Lavished. On us. That we. Should be. Called. The children. Of God. Wonderful. And.

By the way. Did you notice. That Jesus. Leaves. The parable. Open-ended. No end. To it. I. That. You have. The invitation.

Of the father. The pleading. Of the father. To come in. And he gives that. To the elder son. But nothing. Is said. As to whether or not. The son. Ever came into the party.

Do you notice that? Doesn't say anything. About that. And so. It's left to our speculation. Perhaps. This was a veiled invitation.

To all the elder brothers. Present when Jesus told the parable. The Pharisees. And the scribes. Did they ever.

[50 : 31] Come in. I think some did. Most did not. But the pleading.

Is there. Come in. Perhaps. It is. An invitation. To the elder brothers. Today. All.

Elder brothers. I don't know. If there are any here. Trusting. In your own. Goodness. Proudful. About your own. Righteousness. Thinking. Somehow. That heaven. Heaven. Is only. For good people. When all the while.

Heaven. Is just for sinners. Just for sinners. Who will admit that. And repent. Amen. Amen.

[51 : 30] Amen. Thank you.