Family: Investing in Something That Lasts | Part 5

Lesson 7

Luke 15:11-32; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; James 4:1-2

May 19, 2024

Parenting Toward Restoration in the Relationship

INTRODUCTION

While the Parable of the Lost Son is Jesus' route to find "lost sheep" and restore them for God's kingdom, the objective of this lesson is to focus on the illustrative language of the parable.

Everyone, even non-believers, has heard of the Prodigal Son. The *adjective* "prodigal" describes a person who has wandered off course. "Prodigals" (*noun form* first used in 1596) exist in all families to some degree, but not all are dealt with judiciously.

The father in this parable, however, accepts his younger, repentant son in the same merciful manner as our Heavenly Father receives penitent sinners. But the older son's resentment of his father's rejoiceful reaction to the Prodigal's return introduces another element of family discord: sibling jealousy.

In the parable, the Lost Son was repentant, or remorseful, of his behavior. The key word is "repentant." Supposing the Prodigal is *not* repentant, what then? Let's take a closer look to see what wisdom Scripture has for us.

Memory verse: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud."—1 Corinthians 13:4

Pray, and read the passages listed above. What questions or observations do you have about them?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1.	How did the father respond to: 1) his younger son's request for his inheritance; 2) his younger son's return; and 3) his older son's response? (Luke 15:11-32)
2.	What did the younger son say to his father who welcomed him home with a hug and kiss? (Luke 15:21)
3.	What did the older son say to his father in anger? (Luke 15:28-30)
4.	What does love NOT do? (1 Corinthians 13:4-6)
5.	Why do some individuals not have what they want? (James 4:2)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. Look at your answers to Observation Question 1. Why do you think the father responded the way that he did in each of those situations?

2. Why do you think the oldest son responded the way that he did? (Luke 15:28-30) Do you think it was an appropriate response? Why or why not?

3. Read Deuteronomy 32:46, Psalm 78:5-7, and Proverbs 22:6, 29:17. How do these passages advise preventing prodigality?

4. In your own words, describe love as defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and provide some examples of love in action.

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. From the Parable of the Lost Son, to which of the two sons do you relate the most and why?

2. What does your response to Application Question 1 reveal about yourself and what God might be trying to refine in you?

3. What from this lesson's passages inspires you to take steps this week to follow Jesus and restore relationships? What are those steps?