

WORD

“It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.” **LUKE 15:32**

(Read also **LUKE 15:11-31**.)

Jesus told this parable of the prodigal son. It’s about a rebellious son who squandered his inheritance, and a loving, gracious father who threw a party when his son came back home. This parable shows the heart of God for the lost—His redemptive grace and mercy towards a sinner who repents and turns to Him. In this lesson, we will look at how the father in this parable responded, and how this is a reflection of our heavenly Father’s generosity, patience, and forgiveness.

1 Generosity

“And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them.” **LUKE 15:12**

The younger son became impatient towards his portion of his father’s inheritance. Instead of waiting for his father’s death, he asked for his share of property. The father responded to his request and even divided it between the two sons. In Jewish culture, the younger son deserved only half of the older son’s inheritance. But because of his generosity, the father gave the younger son more than what he deserved. The father was generous despite the son’s inappropriate request and lack of thankfulness. This is a reflection of the generosity of our heavenly Father. He blesses even those who are ungrateful. What does the Bible say about the grace of God? (John 1:16)

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2 Patience

“And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.” **LUKE 15:20**

The father was determined to see his lost son return. He saw his son *while he was still a long way off*, which meant that the father had been watching and waiting for his son to return home all along. When the father saw the son approaching, he ran to him and embraced him with open arms. God is also like this with His children. He waits patiently, with loving compassion, to restore us when we return to Him with humble hearts. What is the promise of God when we draw near to Him? (James 1:4)

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3 Forgiveness

²¹*“And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’*
²²*But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.* ²³*And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate.* ²⁴*For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.”* **LUKE 15:21-24**

The father’s response to his son’s confession is a beautiful picture of God’s unconditional love for His children, His readiness to forgive, and the grace and mercy He extends toward those who do not deserve it, but repent and return to Him. The Bible says that there is *joy in heaven over one sinner who repents* (Luke 15:7) so this shows that God doesn’t only forgive but even celebrates the return of His children. What is God’s response when we confess our sins to Him? (1 John 1:9)

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