

The Prodigal Son Pt 3: There Is No Place Like Home.

Description

17"When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the h
20"So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, h
Please take me on as a hired servant.'

22"But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the h

Luke 15:17-24 NLT

If you love them, Let them go

Unknown

The first two parts in this series have focused on the prodigal son and the choices he has made that resulted in several consequences. Part 2 ended with him coming to his senses and deciding to return home, to the same circumstances and father that he had previously rejected. I referenced the familiar quote above to highlight what I believe the father of the prodigal son had dealt with earlier when his son rejected him and the way of life that he had been instructed to live. Do you love them enough to let them go? Do you trust God to protect and keep them in the midst of their confusion, disfunction, wildness, unbelief, etc? Do you believe that God loves them more than you AND is able to keep them better than you are able to? I believe that the father of the prodigal son understood these concepts, and even if he didn't, I believe that he had the faith without completing understanding that God was able to protect his son, and bring him home one day to assume his rightful place as an heir. The passage doesn't explain anything about the family before the youngest (prodigal) son requests his share of the inheritance from the father and decides to leave. Allow me to recreate what life might have been like for the father after the son had departed.

I can believe that when the youngest son was walking off, the father was flooded with thoughts of; "What did I do wrong?", "What should/could I have done to make him stay?", "Will I ever see my son again?" I'm sure that nobody was able to comfort him initially, possibly for a few days, weeks, months, or even years, even his older son who remained at his side during this time. I'm sure that sooner or later, the father realized that life goes on, and though his heart longed for his youngest son to return, he had a God-given assignment/duty on Earth that he was still responsible for completing. I believe that if the father didn't realize it himself, he probably had wise council nearby that instructed him that his son had chosen to leave, and there was nothing that he could do to change that right now, but he still had another son who stayed with him, a house/land to run, servants who depended on him for direction, work, and compensation, and a God who still expected him to be fruitful.

Are you so busy crying over who has left you, or what you have lost that you have failed or are failing at your God given assignment? In the midst of your mourning, are you neglecting or forgetting about those that have remained with you in the midst of struggles and/or disappointment?

When the father realized that at this point all he could do was pray for his youngest son, and have faith that God would protect him during his absence, and hopefully bring him back home one day, I believe that he received a peace that only God can give; which enabled him to effectively continue and complete the work that God had assigned for him to do. Great faith is displayed when you are able to continue praying, trusting and believing in God to complete what you're praying about in spite of not seeing the results immediately or when you want it to come. I believe that the father rested in the promises of God, and because of this he was able to continue his work on his land, and whatever else his heavenly assignment was.

20" So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, h

Luke 15:20 AMP

This verse is very important, but often overlooked. This verse illustrates that as the prodigal son was returning home, that the father saw him coming and ran to meet him. Allow me put my spin on this, but I believe that the father often looked out towards the road/field, into the distance, expecting and hoping that his son would return home any day. That was very important when you imagine that he earnestly prayed for his son's well-being and safe return home, that he waited with expectation that his prayer would be answered. We must never lose hope or faith when we are praying, because God is able to do what he said that he would do (check out the song by Deitrick Haddon "He's Able"). It's quite possible that the father who had servants and resources would send his servants or others to check on the wellbeing of his son while he was out living his life, or that he would have them stand guard at the gate to the house watching for the son's return, and sometimes he may even sit up into the dark hours of night on the porch, or in the living, and sometimes even at the gate anxiously waiting for his son to return. For those of you praying and waiting for a family member or friend to return to their senses, or home, continue to keep your faith and hope that God will keep them and bring them home. Also to note is the father's response to his prayer being answered in the son's return, he runs to meet his son, embraces AND kisses him. He doesn't greet him with a lecture, scold him for his actions, give him the silent treatment, or relegate him to the class of a servant. This is important because what a returning family member, friend, or brother/sister in Christ needs after they have been away is LOVE, not rejection or criticism. The prodigal son knew that he had made a mistake in leaving, he knew that he had lived wrong and was guilty of sin while away, he knew he had wasted his inheritance and his father's money on materials that didn't matter, but he had humbled himself enough to return home and ask for forgiveness. When someone takes the step to correct things, those of us who call ourselves followers of Christ should take two steps toward them to welcome them "home" where they belong.

22" But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the h

Luke 15:22-24

The father understood a God concept of restoration, where the son believed that because he had made an error in the past, he no longer was worthy of a position that he was born into. He couldn't lose a title or position that he was born into. The father understood that regardless of the prodigal son's actions, he was still his son, therefore he was of royalty, and regardless of his actions, the father's love for his son overruled his mistakes.

8 Most important of all, love each other deeply, because love makes you willing

1 Peter 4:8 ERV

Because the father loved his son very much and valued him over the materials or possessions that he had (and the possessions that the son had wasted while gone), he chose to love and appreciate his son's presence, and that God had restored his son over the sins of the son which could have ruined this reunion if he wouldn't have chosen love and forgiveness over pride/anger. Let this father be an example to you for the power of faith, hope, love, prayer, and forgiveness. Pray for the return of those who are lost, believe that God is protecting them, will return them, has forgiven them, and that you can forgive and love them as well.

Reflection Time

Is it me? Am I believing God to heal, protect, and restore a family member, friend, or loved one who is lost? Am I willing to forgive and love them in spite of what they have done when they return? Am I remaining faithful to the calling/assignment that God has given me in spite of some disappointment that I may be experiencing at the moment? If I'm (you) the returning prodigal son, what do I hope to receive when I return? What am I prepared to experience upon my return?

Category

1. Is It Me

Tags

1. Forgiveness
2. Is it me?
3. Love
4. Luke
5. Quarantine2020
6. Restoration
7. The Gospels
8. The Prodigal Son

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