

## The Prodigal Son Pt 4: Forgot About Dre?

### Description

25 "The older son had been out in the field. When he came near the house, he heard the music and dancing.  
28 "The older son was angry and would not go in to the party. So his father went out to plead with him.

Luke 15:25-30 ERV

A quick recap of the 1st three parts in this series; youngest (prodigal) son asks father for his share of the inheritance while the dad is still alive, the son leaves home and goes to a foreign land where he parties and wastes all his money with people who leave him when his money is gone, he finds work on a farm as a pig keeper and as a result of his hunger and poverty, makes the decision the decision to return home and ask his father for a job as a servant because at least he'll have food to eat. Upon his return home, his father runs to embrace him, and throws a huge celebration as a result of his youngest, lost son returning safely. *Please read the entire passage: Luke 15:11-24 for the full story.* I want to take part 4 to look at the older brother of the prodigal son and his behavior as a result of his younger brother's return, and the joy that his father displayed.

27 The boy said, 'Your brother has come back, and your father killed the best calf we have.  
28 "The older son was angry and would not go in to the party. So his father went out to plead with him.

Luke 15:27-28 ERV

I would say that our introduction to the older brother is very interesting, the previous verses set up a scene that included humility from the younger brother, an intentional display of love by the father, and a joyous celebration, but in the midst of all this, someone is missing.....the older brother. What would cause a sibling to skip a party/celebration that is being thrown because of the safe return of their younger sibling? What would cause you to be unhappy when your sibling/friend/spouse, or brother/sister in Christ returns "home?" I believe to understand this moment we have to go back to the beginning. Possibly years before this, the younger brother decided to ask for his share of the inheritance and leave abruptly which caused several things; first, the older brother could have felt that part of his inheritance had been stolen by the young brothers selfishness. The younger brother cashing out early from the older brother's viewpoint could have meant that he would receive less later after the father died. When things happen, we often have the tendency to measure or see things materially. Rather than the older brother possibly trying to convince his younger brother to stay, or praying for his wellbeing, he only saw the personal hit to his own riches/inheritance. Secondly, I believe that as a result of the younger brother leaving, a greater responsibility or burden fell on the older brother. I believe that the father was training his sons to run and maintain the household/business for when they got older. As a part of their "training," they worked around the house, in the fields, and sometimes may have done similar work as the servants. The older brother by default probably had more responsibilities than the younger brother because of his age/experience, and the fact that he would normally be in line to take over the business. The departure of the younger brother would have shifted more responsibilities and pressure onto the older brother because he would be the only remaining heir, and therefore be responsible for the future of the family. Lastly, the younger brother's departure could have

had a profound emotional impact on the father who may have been inconsolable at the realization that his son chose to leave home (rejected the father), and the possibility that he may never see his son again. The older brother could have felt rejected or forgotten watching his father grieve, continually praying to God and asking that his younger son return safely, maybe working nonstop around the house to mask the pain, and sending out servants to check on his younger son's wellbeing. Unaddressed issues/concerns can breed resentment, anger, and ultimately un-forgiveness. As the time passed from the younger brother's departure, and the older brother watched the silent pain of his father, and he continued to work harder in spite of being ignored by his father, feeling unappreciated, and betrayed/abandoned by his younger brother's departure. All of these unaddressed issues/emotions presented themselves when he refused to enter the house and celebrate his brother's return with his father. It was hard for him to celebrate his brother's return when he felt that he had not been celebrated or appreciated in his brother's absence. It's hard for you to show love when you haven't, or don't feel it. When you have a void caused by hurt, it won't heal by ignoring it, trying to outwork it, or even just by praying about it, but at some point you have to forgive, or receive forgiveness for the issue/offence. Important to learn from the older brother is that when the father came to him, he was honest about his feelings; we can't experience true forgiveness or reconciliation without honesty.

## Reflection Time

Is it me? Am I holding onto a past offence, hurt, or issue that is preventing me from feeling and receiving love? Am I trying to work through the pain in vain? Have I prematurely given up on someone that you have given me? Is there someone that I need to be honest with about my issues/feelings in addition to you God? Lord give me the heart to forgive or receive forgiveness, and the words to express my true feelings effectively.

### Category

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