

The parable of the two sons

Read : Luke 15:11-32

We all have read the parable of the lost son at one stage or another but do we really take in the full teaching in it. We all understand that the son was lost and now he's found. That our sins are forgiven no matter how bad we lived but is that all we get from this parable.. Certainly not..

You see the parable is actually about two sons not one. We have named it "the parable of the lost son" because we get this from it but in the very first sentence Jesus tells us what it actually is, He says.. once there was a man with two sons... so let us call it "the parable of the two sons" with good reason..

God is teaching us much more than being lost and found here..

The lost son represents us drifting in the world until we come to Jesus, but the second son, the elder that stayed at home and worked for his Father his whole life represents those who have been in "church" so long, or for such reasons that they have fallen into works instead of relationship, in other words the religious..

Let me just clarify one thing quickly, many are quick to say the religious are those that sing old hymns and talk in "thee" and "thy's" and fall asleep in church.. Unfortunately it runs quite deeper than that, the religious are those that serve God for selfish reasons, those that try to buy Gods love and salvation through their acts instead of accepting the free gift of salvation that Jesus brings, those that judge others that don't look like them, those that don't have a personal relationship with God, those that think the pastor must hear for them from God, those that think God doesn't speak anymore, those that judge the gifts and movement of the Spirit as "super spiritual" because they have never experienced it themselves, those that jump up and down because the pastor says it makes them spiritual instead of asking God how He wants to be worshipped, and then doing it in Spirit and truth... no my friends the religious sit in any kind of church, even the most "evangelical" churches have religious people sitting in many of the seats..

Lets get back to the parable.. and look at it in total..

The sons that comes "out of the world", is saved and becomes "on fire" for God, just enjoying the amazing "feast" God puts out for him, Gods love, Gods touch, Gods words, Gods provision, intimacy with God ect.. he just loves his Father for who He is, no strings attached.

He knows he can never earn any of it and don't try to because He knows it is for free, paid for by Someone else, so he just enjoys the feast, just loves his Father,

talks to Him, spends time with Him, thanks Him for the undeserved gift of love and salvation.

He who is forgiven much, loves much... (Luke 7:47)

But this is not where the parable stops as many believe.. no the most important lesson comes from the second brother.

He comes home, finds out his brother is back and the Father is holding a feast for his brother and he is mad, really mad..

His Father comes out and says "join the feast" .. He is actually pointing out to the eldest that he too could have this "freedom from works" if he wanted it but the brother doesn't understand it, all he see's is his younger brother "gets it all for free" ..

He says "I have worked hard for You my whole life but never once did you throw a feast for me" .. and what does the Father reply.. "all I have is yours".. what is God saying.. He is saying " it has always been there for you to enjoy the feast, everything was available to you but you never wanted it, you were too busy working to enjoy the possible feasts you could have had".. the eldest was so hard trying to earn his Fathers love that he never just accepted it, he was so hard trying to earn his Fathers blessing and provision that he never just said "thank You" and took it as it was offered to him..

You see the eldest son suffers from religious pride.. He thought he was earning the Fathers love, earning his own provision, earning his right to a "feast" (that he never actually partook in himself) .. he was actually spitting in the Father's face, slapping away the hand of grace and holding on to his own dead works as his own source of "salvation and provision".. And he thought his "good works" made him better and more worthy of his Fathers love and provision than the "lost" brother who just threw himself on the Fathers mercy and grace..

And he suffers from religious jealousy.. He is jealous of the feast his younger brother has, the experience, the revelation, the intimacy, the word, the love, the freedom.. He doesn't want anyone else to experience what he doesn't because then he can keep telling himself that he is in right standing with God.

Dear friends this is such a common occurrence.. People stuck in their own religion, having become their own little gods, rejecting grace, rejecting the free Gift of the Salvation and Complete Work of the Cross of Christ (even though they claim to be Christ followers they reject Him just like the Pharisee's did and try to earn salvation and provision through works, thinking themselves "more saved" than the people who throw themselves on grace but in fact they are the ones in need of grace and saving as they are more lost than the other brother ever was.. they are in the Fathers house but don't see Him.. just their works, their programs, their practices, their rituals..)

But unfortunately many that started out as the younger brother at some points become like the elder...

You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a hex on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it's obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the Cross was certainly set before you clearly enough. Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? Was it by working your heads off to please God? Or was it by responding to God's Message to you? Are you going to continue this craziness? For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God. If you weren't smart enough or strong enough to begin it how do you suppose you could perfect it? Did you go through this whole painful learning process for nothing? It is not yet a total loss, but it certainly will be if you keep this up! (Galatians 3:1-4)

But now that you have come to have knowledge of God, or more truly, God has knowledge of you, how is it that you go back again to the poor and feeble first things, desiring to be servants to them again? (Galatians 4:9)

And if you try to please God by obeying the Law, you have cut yourself off from Christ and his wonderful kindness. (Galatians 5:4)

He certainly spoke the truth. Get on them right away. Stop that diseased talk of Jewish make-believe and made-up rules so they can recover a robust faith. (Titus 1:13-14)

This is a sad but very common occurrence, saved by grace, forgiven, enjoying the "feast" and then they become trapped in religion... they fall into works, they fall into politics in the church, they become so use to jumping up and down they don't know what they are jumping for anymore, they go to church to see friends, to socialize, to meet life partners, to feel "holy", to deal with guilt and pressure ect.. any reason but God.. They get involved in outreaches and bible studies and prayer groups (which in themselves are not bad do not misunderstand me) and then they end up thinking the works of God are God Himself.. they think if they jump up and down, scream the loudest, sit in a building 4 days a week, join a bible study group, read the bible, do "warfare" in the spirit that all these things constitute relationship while they are all suppose to be "by-products" of the relationship you are building.. They become attached to the things of God instead of to God and think they are in relationship.. but they have actually fallen into works, they have become religious, they have fallen from grace right into religious pride, and they are too blind to see it.. And why do they do it.. They fear men's faces and approval more than they fear God.. They look to men to guide them, and end up worshiping men and ministry's teachings and approval and a man's "yoke" even though they think they are worshiping God.

They think that if they are experiencing anointing flow through them that means they are in right standing with God while God clearly states that your "anointing"

is a free gift that was given before the beginning of the world so others can be touched by God and not you.. They don't understand that actually the anointing is never ours, its Gods who work through us to reach others not us "fabricating it"..

'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY: "HEARING YOU WILL HEAR, AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE, AND NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEARTS OF THIS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM." '(Acts 28:26-27)

Religious pride.. Thinking we can "sweep up" the Holy Spirit, that we can make Him "come into" a place, that we bring others "into" the presence of God.. pride.. pride.. You just kill your own flesh more when you worship so you are more open to the real world, the spiritual realm so that you can experience the truth .. God is omnipotent and omnipresent.. God is always with you, "in the building", you are always "in His presence" His power is always a "all consuming Fire".. The bush is always burning.. but religious pride makes some so blind they run around looking for matches in their works to set on fire what God Himself is doing because if they stood still long enough they would see God there, experience His love and presence there, experience His grace and they would take of their shoes knowing they are on Holy Ground.. They would stop their works...

What happens when you take of your shoes in the desert.. You can't walk any further for the sand would burn your feet raw.. So what was God saying to Moses at the burning bush... "Stop trying to find it yourself.. stop.. look.. you are already on Holy Ground.. You have already found what you're looking for.. God.. You just need to stop from your own works long enough to realize I Am all sufficient for you.."

But our God *is* in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. (Psalms 115:3)

When will we stop trying to earn God's love, when will we stop judging others who come to God, when will we stop trying to control God, when will we stop thinking we can control God while He is God..

You cannot earn Gods love, you cannot earn salvation, you cannot earn blessing, you cannot earn anointing, you cannot earn calling, God is God, all we can do is love Him and live in His love and grace and grow in Him..

We feel sorry for the younger brother when we read the parable but when we sit down and think about it you will realize the older brother is the one in need of our pity for he was in the Fathers house his whole life but still didn't have a relationship with the Father and still tried to earn the "feast" His father would

have given to him any day and he judged anyone that did not "work as hard" as him for God's love because He thinks God is a man...

Let us throw off the yoke of works, the yoke of religion, the yoke of religious pride, the yoke of religious jealousy, the yoke of manmade rules and traditions, the yoke of manmade "spirituality" and just run after God.. Swim in His love, grow in His grace and allow Christ to be formed in us more and more each day..

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me--watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." (Matthew 11:28-30)

If you have fallen from grace, if you have fallen into works and religion and manmade laws, manmade "spirituality", burning profane fire by mixing manmade rules in with God's word, thinking you can make God do what you want and "go" where you want, repent.. Turn back to the grace of God and grow in His love..

Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; Cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about; See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong-- then guide me on the road to eternal life. (Psalms 139:23-24)

Jaco Kruger

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info@pojc.org

www.pojc.org