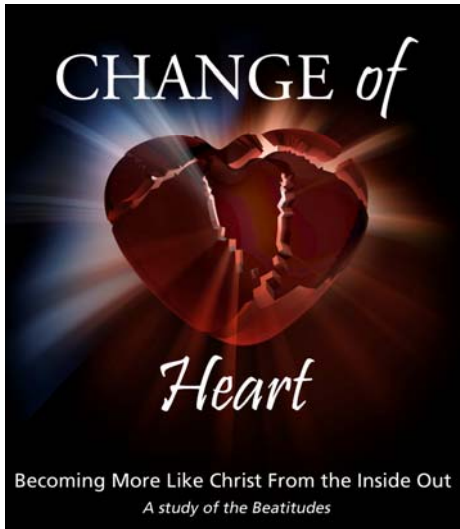


LIFE Community Sermon Notes



The Power of Love

Luke 15:11-32

The Parable of the Lost Son

11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' 20 So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

25 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

31 " 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' "

G R A C E C H A P E L

LIFE Community Sermon Notes

Sunday, Nov 25

Big Idea: God's unconditional love is the most powerful force on earth.

Key Verse:

luke 15:20

So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Opening Question:

What was the best part about your Thanksgiving week?

Alternate question: How many brothers and sisters did you have growing up? Did you get along or was there a lot of conflict? Share in groups of 2 or 3.

Read the passages.

Questions in bold are for special focus.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Luke 15:11-32.
2. What word, phrase, or sentence jumps out to you as you hear these verses read? Why?
3. **The turning point of the story comes with the following statement - "he got up and went to his father". As you read this phrase, what thoughts come to your mind? Why is this the turning point?**
4. **In many ways, the younger brother and the older brother had the same misunderstanding—they thought their fathers love was based on their performance. How did this misunderstanding play itself out in each of their lives?**
5. **Do you ever slip into "performance mode" in your relationship with God? - either running away from God because you think you can't live up to the expectations or trying harder in order to earn God's love?**
6. Which son in the story do you most identify with—the younger brother or the older brother? Why?
7. **What details in this story demonstrate the father's attitude towards his younger son? His older son?**
8. **Unconditional love seems like a risky offer. Why? Why is God's unconditional love so essential to our ability to relate with Him?**
9. What do you think life was like back on the farm when the son returned? What makes you think so?
10. **Are there people in your life that you need show unconditional love to? Who is it and why is it difficult?**
11. **"Love may be the most powerful force on earth" - have you found this true in your own life? When and where have you seen the power of love?**

Pray for one another.