

## **October 26 2008 – SERMON SUMMARY**

### **The Parable of the Lost Son Luke 15:11-33 (NIV)**

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. "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. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

"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! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' 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.

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

"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. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

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

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 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. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

" 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 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.' "

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- Jesus often spoke to large crowds filled with many types of people. Some were sincere believers wanting to know Him more. Some were seekers who wanted to know if Jesus was truly the awaited Messiah. Some came just to watch the miracles and to see the "show." Some were even there just to disprove the teachings of Jesus. We all fit into one of these categories. Regardless where we find ourselves today, may God make our present situation clear and our need evident.

- In this story we see a great picture of the Father's love. He was a Father that longed for His son's return, regardless of what the son had done. All the son needed to do to be welcomed home was to humble himself, take responsibility for his mistakes, and return home. How near are we to our Heavenly Father today? Are there things in our lives that are keeping us at a distance? Will we today humble ourselves, admit our sins against God and against others, and once again draw near to our heavenly Father?
- If we will look at the story closely we will realize that even though the older son had never left home, his heart was just as far from the father as that of the younger son. He had not asked for his part of the inheritance and wasted it all in sinful living in a distant country, but his heart was not in a loving relationship with the father. From the story we see that the older son had been doing the outward things expected of him, but his heart was not in it. Are there times that we do the religious activities of a committed believer, but then find our hearts far from Him. As we evaluate our lives today may God show us the condition of our hearts. May our motives be clear and "may the words of our mouth and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in His sight."

Pastor Tim L. Melton