

# Message Notes

## How God feels about lost stuff - pt 2

# Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

**Introduction** - "Brothers?"

**Today's Message:**

*How God feels about lost stuff (Part Two)*  
Luke 15:11-32

**Act One - I wish you were dead** - Luke 15:11-12

*"Jesus continued - Luke 15:11a, 1-4*

*The younger brother (Luke 15:11b-12a)*

*The father (Luke 15:12b)*

*The older brother (Luke 15:11)*

**Act Two - How's that working out for ya? -**

Luke 15:13-19

*Let the good times roll, baby! (Luke 15:13)*

*Your best thinking... (Luke 15:14-16)*

*A plan for economic security (Luke 15:17-19)*

*The boy goes home (Luke 15:20a)*

**Act Three - The Prodigal God** - Luke 15:20-24

*The father's compassion (Luke 15:20b)*

*The father's justice (Luke 15:20c)*

*The father's joy (Luke 15:20d)*

*The son's speech (Luke 15:21)*  
Rehearsed vrs. Actual

*The father's lavish reconciliation (Luke 15:22-24)*

**Scene Four (BONUS!): The 'good' son -**

Luke 15:25-32

*How he finds out (Luke 15:25-27)*

*WHAT?!?! (Luke 15:28a)*

*The Prodigal God to the older brother (Luke 15:28b)*

*The older brother's entrenched bitterness*  
(Luke 15:29-30)

*The invitation... (Luke 15:31-32)*

**Gospel Application** - "Will you come home?"

*Will you party with those who do?  
Do you resemble the Prodigal God?"*

**Luke 15:11-32**

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

<sup>13a</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. <sup>17a</sup>When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup>I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' <sup>20</sup>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.

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

<sup>22a</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup>For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

<sup>25a</sup>Meanwhile, the older son was in the field.

When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. <sup>27a</sup>'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

<sup>28a</sup>The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!

<sup>31a</sup>'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup>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.' "

**Deuteronomy 21:17**

He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.





The Gospel of  
**LUKE**

Setting His Face to Jerusalem  
Luke 9:51 to Luke 19:44

## Luke 15:1-10

<sup>1</sup>Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. <sup>2</sup>But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

## Luke 15:1-10

<sup>3</sup>Then Jesus told them this parable: <sup>4</sup>“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?

## Luke 15:1-10

<sup>5</sup>And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders <sup>6</sup>and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' <sup>7</sup>I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.



*Jesus the Good Shepherd* sculpture, circa 3rd century  
Bibliotheca Alexandria Museam, Alexandria, Egypt

## Luke 15:1-10

<sup>8</sup>“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? <sup>9</sup>And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ <sup>10</sup>In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

[W]hen God rejoices, Heaven (his angels) rejoice as well. Why this heavenly rejoicing of God and his angels? It is because a sinner *repents!* He turns from sin. Her life changes. St. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote that “the tears of the repentant form the wine of angels.” What exquisite spiritual poetry! The angels drink the wine of the tears of sinners and rejoice.

~ R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 137.



## **Luke 15:11-32**

<sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.

<sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

## **Luke 15:11-32**

<sup>13</sup>“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.

## Luke 15:11-32

<sup>14</sup>After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

## Luke 15:11-32

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

## Luke 15:11-32

“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.’

## Luke 15:11-32

<sup>22</sup>“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. <sup>23</sup>Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup>For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

## **Luke 15:11-32**

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

## Luke 15:11-32

<sup>28</sup>“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

## Luke 15:11-32

<sup>31</sup>“ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup>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.’ ”

**Today's Message:**  
*How God feels about lost stuff – Part Two*  
Luke 15:11-32



# The Father and his Two Sons: *A Play in Four Acts*



*Act One - I wish you were dead*



# I wish you were dead

## Luke 15:11-12

<sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.

<sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

**I wish you were dead**  
*“Jesus continued...”*

**Luke 15:11a**

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

## Luke 15:1-4

<sup>1</sup>Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. <sup>2</sup>But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” <sup>3</sup>Then Jesus told them this parable: <sup>4</sup>“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them...

<b>People</b>	<b>The Lost Sheep</b>	<b>The Lost Coin</b>	<b>The Lost Son</b>
Jesus	the shepherd	the woman	the father
Irreligious Sinners	lost sheep	lost coin	the younger son
Pharisees	ninety-nine	the nine	the older son

Kenneth E. Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants*, Second Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005), 36.

# I wish you were dead

## *The younger brother*

**Luke 15:11b-12a**

<sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.

<sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

**I wish you were dead**  
*The younger brother*

**Deuteronomy 21:17**

He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.

As Joachim Jeremias (*Parables*, 1963, p. 128) has pointed out, there were legal procedures available if the father chose to divide the property, but naturally these procedures were expected to be used only as death approached. In such a case an heir was given the legal right of *possession*, but not the right of *disposition*. The property was his, but his father still had control over it. This is clearly the situation with the older son at the end of the parable where the father says, "All that is mine is yours."



But at the same time the father still has the authority to order the slaughter of the calf. In the beginning the younger son demands and is granted the right both of possession and of disposition. But this is not the real issue. Granted, the legal procedures were in place if the father chose to use them. But it is and most certainly was unthinkable for any son to request his portion of the family wealth while his father was still alive.

~ Kenneth E. Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants*, Second Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005), 41.



# I wish you were dead

## *The father*

**Luke 15:11-12b**

- <sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.
- <sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

# I wish you were dead

## *The older brother*

**Luke 15:11-12**

<sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.

<sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

*Act Two - How's that working out for ya?*



**How's that working out for ya?**  
*Let the good times roll, baby!!*

**Luke 15:13**

<sup>13</sup>“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.

**How's that working out for ya?**  
*Your best thinking...*

**Luke 15:14-16**

<sup>14</sup>After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

# How's that working out for ya?

## *A plan for economic security*

### **Luke 15:17-19**

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

# How's that working out for ya?

## *The boy goes home*

### **Luke 15:20a**

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

First century Jewish custom dictated that if a Jewish boy lost the family inheritance among the Gentiles and dared to return home, the community would break a large pot in front of him and cry out “so-in-so is cut off from his people.” This ceremony was called the *Kezazah* (literally “the cutting off”). After it was performed, the community would have nothing to do with the wayward person. By selling his inheritance and taking it with him the prodigal takes a huge risk; if he loses that money among the Gentiles, he burns his bridges and has no way to return home. He has no more “rights” to claim and no one will take him in.

~ Kenneth E. Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants*, Second Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005), 52-53.



# Act Three - *The Prodigal God*



# prod•i•gal \ 'prä-di-gəl\ *adjective*

**1:** characterized by profuse or wasteful expenditure: LAVISH

**2:** recklessly spendthrift ⟨the *prodigal* prince⟩

**3:** yielding abundantly: LUXURIANT

~ Frederick C. Mish, “Prodigal,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*.  
(Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

# The Prodigal God

## *The father's compassion*

**Luke 15:20b**

“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.  
<sup>21</sup>“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’”

# The Prodigal God

## *The father's justice*

**Luke 15:20c**

“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.’”

# The Prodigal God

## *The father's joy*

**Luke 15:20d**

“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.’”

As soon as they discovered that the money had been lost among the Gentiles the *Kezazah* ceremony would be enacted. The son would then be obliged to sit for some time outside the gate of the family home before being allowed to even see his father. Finally he would be summoned. With the boy already rejected by the village, the father would be very angry, and the boy would be obliged to apologize for everything as he pleaded for job training in the next village.



But this is not what happens. No one in the village thinks or acts as a separate person but as a part of the tightly knit village society. The individual's solidarity with that community is unshakable. The father, however, reacts in a very countercultural manner. He breaks all the rules of oriental patriarchy as he runs down the road to reconcile his son to himself. The word *run* in Greek (*dramōn*) is the technical term used for the foot-races in the Stadium...



Luke is a well-educated man who chooses his words carefully. Thus we can translate the phrase, “His father saw him and had compassion and *raced*.” It is not just a slow shuffle or a fast walk — he races! In the Middle East a man of his age and position *always* walks in a slow, dignified fashion. It is safe to assume that he has not run anywhere for any purpose for forty years. No villager over the age of twenty-five ever runs. But now the father *races* down the road. To do so, he must take the front edge of his robes in his hand like a teenager.



When he does this, his legs show in what is considered a humiliating posture. All of this is painfully shameful for him. The loiterers in the street will be distracted from tormenting the prodigal and will instead run after the father, amazed at seeing this respected village elder shaming himself publicly. It is his “compassion” that leads the father to race out to his son. He knows what his son will face in the village. He takes upon himself the shame and humiliation due the prodigal.

~ Kenneth E. Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants*, Second Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005), 66-67.



# The Prodigal God

## *The son's speech*

**Luke 15:21**

“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“<sup>21</sup>The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

# The Prodigal God

*The rehearsed speech vrs. the actual*

# The Prodigal God

*The rehearsed speech vrs. the actual*

**Luke 15:18-19 vrs Luke 15:21**

<sup>18</sup>Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

<sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.

# The Prodigal God

*The rehearsed speech vrs. the actual*

**Luke 15:18-19 vrs Luke 15:21**

<sup>18</sup>Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

<sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.

‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

# The Prodigal God

## *The father's lavish reconciliation*

**Luke 15:22-24**

<sup>22</sup>“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. <sup>23</sup>Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup>For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.



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# Act Four (BONUS!!) - *The 'good' son*



# The 'good' son

## *How he finds out*

**Luke 15:25-27**

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

# The 'good' son

## *WHAT?!?!?!?*

**Luke 15:28a**

<sup>28</sup>“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

# The 'good' son

## *The Prodigal God to the older brother*

**Luke 15:28b**

<sup>28</sup>“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

Everyone in the banquet hall tenses expectantly, awaiting the father's reaction. They assume the older son will be punished immediately or ignored until the guests are gone and then dealt with harshly. For the second time in the same day the father's response is incredible. Once again he demonstrates a willingness to endure shame and self-emptying love in order to reconcile. The parable briefly and succinctly states, "His father came out and entreated him." It is almost impossible to convey the shock that must have reverberated through the banquet hall when the father deliberately left his guests, humiliated himself before all, and went out in the courtyard to try to reconcile his older son.

~ Kenneth E. Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants*, Second Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005), 82-83.



# The 'good' son

## *The older brother's entrenched bitterness*

**Luke 15:29-30**

<sup>28</sup>“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

THE  
PRODIGAL  
GOD

Christianity Redefined  
Through the  
Parable of the Prodigal Sons

TIMOTHY KELLER

*Author of The Reason for God*

Nearly everyone defines sin as breaking a list of rules. Jesus, though, shows us that a man who has violated virtually nothing on the list of moral misbehaviors can be every bit as spiritually lost as the most profligate, immoral person. Why? Because sin is not just breaking the rules, it is putting yourself in the place of God as Savior, Lord, and Judge...

THE  
PRODIGAL  
GOD

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Pride in his good deeds, rather than remorse over his bad deeds, was keeping the older son out of the feast of salvation. The elder brother's problem is his self-righteousness, the way he uses his moral record to put God and others in his debt to control them and get them to do what he wants.

THE  
PRODIGAL  
GOD

Christianity Redefined  
Through the  
Parable of the Prodigal Sons

TIMOTHY KELLER

Author of *The Reason for God*

His spiritual problem is the radical insecurity that comes from basing his self-image on achievements and performance, so he must endlessly prop up his sense of righteousness by putting others down and finding fault. As one of my teachers in seminary put it, the main barrier between Pharisees and God is “not their sins, but their damnable good works.”

~ Tim Keller, *The Prodigal God*, pages 43 and 77.

# The 'good' son

## *The invitation...*

**Luke 15:31-32**

<sup>31</sup>“ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup>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.’ ”



# Gospel Application:

# Gospel Application:

*Will you come home?*

*Will you party with those who come home too?*

*Do you resemble the Prodigal God?*