

Parables of Luke, Lesson 1, January 7, 2020

Parables: fabulous works of art; no storyteller better than Jesus!

Would you consider the heart of the Father an important thing to know?

In these parables, we are given three classes of sinners that God saves and a fourth that can't be saved because they think that God owes salvation to them.

One sure thing to keep you from being saved is to think you don't need it!

VV. 1-2 – There are going to be people in heaven that you would never expect and others in Hell that you would never expect.

1. The Average Sinner – Like a sheep – Knows some things, but basically dumb about the things of God.

They got themselves lost, but really didn't know better.

What is God's attitude and heart toward a person like this? He loves them and will go after them.

VV. 3-7 – They saw how a shepherd would do this, but never saw God doing this.

They did not see God as loving, as gracious or merciful, only rigid, distant and unforgiving.

99 persons who need no repentance? = there is no such thing!

2. The Mindless sinner – Like a coin that has no power over what happens to it; sinners, but their lostness is really someone else's decision or carelessness.

VV. 8-10 - We are valuable because God assigns us value.

3. The Sinner who knows better and does it anyway.

The first two parables weren't really about sold out rebels, just people who are separated from God because of sin and have a Savior who hunts them.

This is really a story of a "Man who had two sons" **V. 11**

We tend to focus on the prodigal, but it's actually the Father who is the main focus. He is the One that we are misinformed about.

V. 12 – Of course you wouldn't do this in this culture; you would never shame your father and your ancestors in this way. Of course, a father would never do what this father does.

V. 13 - He devalues what was passed down to him; we can see that in this culture, but that did not happen in that culture.

He's fully aware that what he's doing is completely against the rules, but he doesn't care and tries to distance himself as far from what represents those rules as possible.

We tend to have mercy on the previous two lost cases: mindless and ignorant, but the fully aware and yet rebellious, we hope gets what he deserves.

Parables of Luke, Lesson 1, January 7, 2020, Continued

VV.14-16 – Rabbi proverb: “When the Israelites are reduced to Karob pods, then they repent.”

He has completely shamed and defiled himself and has become completely unredeemable in the eyes of his culture.

VV. 17-20a - This is the only way that he can gain respect: he’s headed back to a father who would not allow him back into his home and a society that would always reject him. He will be the community whipping boy so that he, his father, and the society and its norms can regain its honor.

II Kings 14:24 - He would never be redeemed, but the society would redeem its respect through his tortured existence.

What happens next is the final “Of course you wouldn’t moment” **V.20b**

1. Fathers never ran anywhere for anyone or any reason. That required you to gather your robes around your waist, which means you would see his legs. You only saw the legs of servants in this culture; it would have been very shameful for him.
2. If you did not allow the son to receive his well-deserved shame, you took the shame upon yourself!

The father would have lost his standing in the eyes of this culture.

The heart of the parable is the heart of the father: verbs such as felt compassion, ran, embraced, kissed. (aka – unconditional love – what does unconditional mean??)

VV. 21-24 – Reinstated as a full son, based on what? Repentance. “that no one should perish, but all should come to repentance”

Who paid the price for his reinstatement and bore the shame for the remainder of his life? The father.

A relationship with the father was all he needed to reinstate him.

Fourth Sinner --- the older brother who thinks the Father owes him his position and stuff. VV. 25-30.

Older son thought the father owes him these things; the older son saw himself as a slave to the father; the older son has no concept of grace and unconditional love.

The older son represents works religion wherever you find it. I’ve been a good person, I’m better than most, I’m better than him, not realizing that your relationship to God is strictly by grace, not works.