

Overcoming Pride and Insecurity  
**Luke 15:11-32**

I know the prodigal son gets the lion's share of attention and rightly so because we all have been a prodigal son or daughter at some point in our lives before. The word "prodigal" means wasteful, extravagant, irresponsible, reckless. He is a person who spends money in a recklessly extravagant way. In one word, "Lost."

In correlation we all have been wasteful. Maybe not with money but with our time and talent. We've all been irresponsible and reckless. So this young prodigal is me, this young prodigal is you. The other factor in the story is the father and his love for his prodigal son. I love the reaction of The father in **verse 20** *"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. But the father said to his servants, quickly! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fatted 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."*

It's interesting interaction between the father and his wayward son. The father told the servant to go and get the best robe, a ring, sandals, and kill the fatted calf. Each of these things is a sign of position and acceptance. A long robe of distinction, a ring signifies authority, sandals are what you give your son, and the fatted calf for a special celebration. I love how the father does not hold back his love and how he restores when we are the protocols ourselves. He doesn't forgive us enough to tolerate us, he forgives us completely and put sandals on our feet and restores us as his sons and daughters.

But today I do not want to focus on the prodigal son, I want to focus on the elder son's reaction to the news that his younger brother is back and a party was held for him. ***Verses 25-32 "Meanwhile, the elder son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and ask him what was going on. Your brother has come, he replied, and your father has kill the fatted 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 disobeying 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 fatted 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."***

This elder brother is the darker side of us that we don't want to admit we have because no one wants to admit that they are prideful and entitled. So here's what I think:

We all want to get well, until we know the cost of getting well. We like the idea of becoming New and whole, until we realize what it will cost. We think that God should spare us from suffering because we have lived dedicated lives to him. Our entitlement inclines us to think that our healing will (or should) come quickly, painlessly, and without struggle.

The elder son in us thinks it's strange when rain starts falling on us when we are out in the field working but we forget that the rain falls on the just and the unjust. We forget as the elder son that straining, struggling, and persevering are doing a far deeper work in us then we possibly can imagine. We scarf at trouble and blamed God for being

untimely and not rescuing us from our troubles. You see the truth is the journey through healing change couldn't be more difficult. There is value in holding fast, straining forward, persevering, and walking by faith and not by sight.

**Our mission, if you choose to except it, is to learn how to let the suffering arise and enrich our lives rather than resist it.** We must not have a sense of entitlement when it comes to our own healing. Instead, we must gather the courage to enter into difficult emotional territory. We cannot taste resurrection until we have drunk deeply from the cup of suffering.

**Healing cannot be inherited or caught from someone else, we must take the death define pilgrimage of restoration for ourselves.** This involves embracing our stories, telling ourselves the truth about our conditions, grieving our suffering, and choosing to break unhealthy patterns in our relationships.

Jesus continually calls us to look at ourselves in the mirror and tell the truth about what we see and that step is a difficult one to take. Yep the sooner we can admit to our inner entitled elder brother, the sooner we can let go of the sense of entitlement that keeps us isolated from relationships and the very heart of the Father.

Can I ask you a tough question this morning? What do you think you're entitled to buy your heavenly father? What is it you have asked the father to do that you feel he is not doing? What is it that you feel like you deserve from him?

A prideful entitled attitude puts the focus on ourselves and what we think we deserve rather than on the grace of God that brings life and grace to every fiber, nook and cranny of our lives.