

International House of Prayer of Greater Fort Wayne

...a day and night , city-wide, multi-church prayer and worship ministry

The Prodigal....

'wastefully extravagant...giving on a lavish scale'

Jesus' parable recorded in Luke 15 often finds us considering the actions of a son yet, Luke records Jesus' parable with these 4 words; **There was a man...**in Jesus' story we hear the tragic telling of a man and his two sons. One of who, according to some Ancient eastern tradition, could ask for his inheritance before his father's death. It was permissible and possible by the letter of the law but make no mistake, it was brutally painful in practice. A son who in essence declares to his father ***'I want to live as though you are dead.'***

The man divides his estate with his sons. The younger son goes to a distant land to make clear his disconnection from his father and all his father represents. In his disconnection he makes his life about the smallest letter in the alphabet i - for this son it was all about what he wanted.

Very quickly he finds deep dissatisfaction and something hits him, I love the way the Voice translation words this, *'in reflection he says 'What am I doing here?'*. When he returns he has this ready made speech for his father *'I am not worthy to be called your son'*. In other words, 'I have forfeited any right to be treated as your son.'

The Father, seemingly un-wavered by his son's groveling, embraces his son with what is IN himself-compassion and mercy. In so doing this Father proclaims what is obvious to him; Not that his son was no longer *treating* him as a dead man but that his son was dead and is now alive, lost and now found! The Father proclaims his son was dead to Love **but, the Father NEVER WAS!**

Then there is the older brother. He found himself existing in a loveless relationship, one that for him was reduced to duty and obligation, doing what was required of him. He was working hard for his father and in turn he expected to receive what he deserved! He gave his tithe, volunteered, and witnessed on Saturday...he saw what he received from his father as something he had earned, in a contractual kind of way.

You see while he never left town, his heart was also in a distant land. As soon as he heard about a party for his brother he is filled with anger and resentment. *'My brother doesn't deserve this kind of treatment'*; the underlying meaning was that he did. He was revealing his loyalty to duty and obligation but his disconnection from Love. **He was trusting his work not the Father's love.** Even after His father comes to him saying *'all I have is yours'*, the son refuses his affirmation . When you live disconnected from Love you live in fear of not having enough - its always about what you are lacking or failing to do to get what you need....sound familiar? He too was dissatisfied and to join his father's celebration would mean his definition of life, that acceptance must be earned, was not true!

Both sons **chose a distant land** trusting their contractual arrangements. The Father had chosen to Trust Covenant Love. The Father calls them both 'My Son'

Curiously Luke records using 2 different words for son - one for the younger and one for the older. In Luke 2:48 Mary says 'Son' why have you treated us this way. Son = **teknon** - *like a young man - not fully mature* this word used to describe Jesus and he is 30 years old. Luke 9:35 on the mount of Transfiguration, the Father said *'this is my Son'*. The word used for Son= **huios** - *a son who is fully mature that bears the likeness of the father.*

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And the secret is simply this: **Christ in you!**

Yes, Christ in you bringing with him the hope of all glorious things to come. Col 1:27b, JB Phillips

Now guess which word Luke records Jesus using to describe the older and the younger brother?
 To the older brother - my son - *teknon* - my son but not fully mature. To the younger who had squandered his inheritance but repented - my son - *huios* - my son who is mature and bears the likeness of the father!

Beloved, Jesus is pulling back the veil of our religious pride! Following Him is not about how well we have done our part. ***'I worked for all these years'***....so I have a place in the Kingdom. Oh *teknon* -son not fully mature - **this was never about what you have accomplished but what I accomplished in My love for you!** You can 'work' for Him for years and still not surrendered to Love! What does surrender look like? It begins with laying down our sense of controlling this relationship by our duty and obligation and choosing to believe that His Covenant of Love is abundant and enough! **He, our Father, has always known it is enough - He has never stopped believing that His love is enough, and He knows it is the only way to real sonship!**

The father, however, knows that love is the real way home. That is why the father runs to meet his son. He is there to protect him from the villagers, to see him safely home. The father stands between his son and the villagers with their judgement and harsh words. He brings the best robe. Sandals. A ring. The banquet. Over and over the father recommits himself to this runaway-come-home.

There was a man...

Beloved, the prodigal of the story was never about the sons, it was about the Father! And that Father is our Father - the Father who always trusts His love for His children more than He does the words, decisions, and actions of His children. And That beloved is Good News!

God of patient love, You await the return of the wayward and wandering and eagerly embrace them in pardon. You have clothed us with the glory of Christ and restored our inheritance: give us generous hearts to welcome all who seek a place at the table of your unconditional love. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

El Salvador Outreach—Update!

- We will have a team in El Salvador April 11-21 we have also seen close to 9000 raised!
 - This is much needed help for the people of San Pablo TachoChico and will be given to help over 50 families.
 - Monthly gatherings continue.
 - The Good News is Preached to the Poor...
 - Please pray about participating in El Salvador this year as we send a team.
- Join Us As we Pray**

 - Thursday 6—7 am—phone call meeting. Contact Ben @ 260-403-4948 to join.
 - Friday—7pm at 1414 Archer Avenue and On Zoom—833 669 278

With gratitude and integrity we steward your gifts. Thank you for partnering with the mission the Lord has given us in this hour as we partner with Him in His kingdom purposes.

Please make your **tax deductible** contribution to:

**IHOP Fort Wayne
 5907 West Wallen Road,
 Fort Wayne, IN 46818**

Ben and Denise, Please agree with us over these prayer needs for the next month...

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