

ONE UNHAPPY BROTHER Luke 15:25-32

Instruction in view of rejection 12:1-19:27

True nature of rejection 13:10-16:31

Series of incidents demonstrates the true nature of the rejection.

Their theological objections are a smoke screen, intended to veil their true motive

THE PHARISEE'S COMPLAINT 15:1-3

Notice who's gathering around to hear Jesus! **15:1**

"Now the tax collectors and 'sinners' were all gathering around to hear Him."

What are the religious leaders doing? Muttering!!! **15:2**

"But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, 'This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.'"

They don't come to listen to Him—They don't *want* to hear Him.

It's the *sinners* who gather around to hear Him!

The Pharisees' respond by complaining.

They reject Jesus because of the unacceptable people who follow Him: tax collectors and sinners! 15:1-2

JESUS' RESPONSE:

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS MINISTRY 15:4-16:31

Two major themes:

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' MINISTRY FOR THE LOST

15:4-24 3 stories – – parables ↓↓

Parables demonstrate the Father's attitude toward the lost:

Like the shepherd with one lost sheep (15:2-7), . . .

. . . the woman who lost one of her coins (15:8-10), . . .

. . . and the man who lost one of his sons (15:11-32),

Jesus' concern is not those who remain securely where they belong.

He's concerned about the one who has become lost,

separated from the law, but able to be rescued.

Three main principles: [revealed in all three parables]

1. Value of the lost to God [shepherd/owner/father/ GOD]

2. His desire to see the lost found

3. His celebration over the return of the lost. Each ends with celebration!

[We want to look more carefully at one significant aspect of the third story:]

ATTITUDE OF THE YOUNGER BROTHER:

Appeal is based on the fact that

he is not worthy to be called a son

15:19, 21

19 *I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'* . . . 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.'

ATTITUDE OF THE FATHER:

Chooses to treat him as a son, to give him all the rights and privileges,
and to celebrate his return

–EVEN THOUGH HE IS UNWORTHY!

15:22-24

22 *"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. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast*

and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

The Father ignores the son's premise!

His value isn't based on his own worth!!

His value is based on the fact that he's a son—and he's lost!

[The second major theme these parables develop . . .

The owner's/father's desire to see the lost found introduced by . . .

"Until he/she finds it, . . .

When he/she finds it, . . . "]

["BUT THEN"—contrasts to the celebration that concludes each parable, directs our attention to . . .]

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' MINISTRY

FOR THE PHARISEES 15:25-32

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

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

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

The attitude of the older brother:

His appeal is based on the fact that HE IS WORTHY! 15:29

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.

He has done so much—but the father never celebrated because of *him*!

For him, no one gave so much as a baby goat!!

"I slave away, and no one cares about me!!

Why does HE get a party?"

He sees the younger brother as belonging to the father
—*not* to him.

"This son of yours!

—the one who consumed all you own with harlots—remember!!!"

"He had all the fun!"—while I was here as a slave to you.

For him it was drudgery to stay there and serve the father.

He missed out on all *the fun*!

The father's response:

The older son has had the father's presence,
and has been able to enjoy all the father owns!

"You've been here with me the whole time!"

What more does he want?

"He gets the fattened calf—but you've had everything I own!"

"He's been dead! He's been lost!
 You've had everything! – Now he can share in it too!"
 That's cause to celebrate!

At last, he's alive! Now he's found!

The father tries to help the brother see their relationship:

He is: "this brother of *yours!*"

They're brothers—he ought to care. BUT HE DOESN'T!

For him there was never anything to celebrate—nothing ever changed!

He just went on *slaving away!*

– doing what was expected

– just waiting for the day when it would all be HIS!!

He has no joy because he doesn't appreciate what the father has already given to him >>> *HE DESERVES IT!!*

The basis of the conflict:

The older son wants everything for himself!

He doesn't want the brother to come back to the Father

He really doesn't care about what the father cares about

–He only cares about himself—His friends, and his benefits!

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PARABLE

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PHARISEES

Attitude of brother who stays home is like the Pharisees.

The brother disagrees with the father's decision

He opposes his joyous response to a wandering son
 who recognizes his sad state and comes home.

That attitude reflects the Pharisees' attitude
 toward the salvation of the lost.

Throughout Luke, Pharisees don't *want* to see the lost brought in.

By rejecting repentant sinners, they're fighting God's decision to save the wayward
 because of His love,
 in spite of their lack of merit.

THEY OPPOSE GOD'S DESIRE TO SAVE THE LOST.

In fact they really don't care what God wants.

They're looking out for their own interests!

IMPLICATIONS FOR US:

Do *WE* care about what God cares about?

Do we share His perspective?

Are *WE* just *slaving away*?

–Never enjoying what we have,
 because we're with the Father all the time
 and sort of bored by it all?

–Inwardly jealous that we can't go out and have fun?

Maybe we need to wander away for a while

so we can appreciate what the Father has given to us?

Maybe we need some time out in the world,

eating out of the slop bucket to remember what it's really like out there.

MY TRIP TO GOWER—feeding the hogs

He wanted to get down in the mud and fight the pigs for the corn husks!

Maybe we need to go back to the pig pen

–to remember where God has taken *US* from

–so we can appreciate what we have!

So we can get excited when God brings others out of there!

So we can get excited about helping them out of the pig pen.

Do we care about the lost?

No one came to help the lost boy – no one cared! **15:16**

He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating,

but no one gave him anything.

Sunday School Times carried a testimony of a 16-year-old girl.

"Only God knows what my Sunday school teacher has done for me. I was saved when I was 14, but my family made fun of me. I guess I was a weak Christian, for soon I went back to my old ways. Most church members turned against me. But my teacher stuck with me, even when I was cruel and mean to her. One evening she put her arms around me and said with tear-filled eyes, 'Oh, my dear, I just love you so much. Jesus knows all you've had to fight. Someone held on to me, when I was your age. I understand.' Her example and concern drew me back to the Lord."

No one cared enough to come help the lost boy! Do we?

Do we only care about ourselves and our own interests?