

Parable of Two Lost Sons

Luke 15:11-32

Into the Lesson:

It has been suggested that "sibling birth order" has an impact on your personality. Check out the following lists to see how it fits with you and your siblings:

Firstborn children	Middleborn children	Lastborn children	Only Child
Responsible	Adaptable	Risk-taker	Mature
Role-model	Social butterfly	Outgoing	Loyal
Determined	Creative	Persistent	Confident
Rule follower	Competitive	Easy going	Curious
Bossy	Rebellious	Spoiled	Sensitive

(Adapted from Comprehensive MedPsych Systems Blog)

There will be time for rebuttal later as we know the "lastborn" will be whining about something.

Into the Word:

As you reread Luke 15:11-32 (it won't cause blindness to start at verse 1) and consider how the traits listed above compare with what we know about the two brothers.

Throughout this series we have been reminded to look at "the bigger picture" teaching that Jesus is providing.

How does the "preamble" (15:1-2) set the stage for this bigger picture?

Regarding the practice of inheritance, what does the youngest son's demand for his "share of the estate" seem to say about his regard for his father?

How could Proverbs 14:12 & 16:25 have helped the younger son to realize that maybe he didn't have all the answers after all?

How does Lane's comment from last week, "**what a waste**" fit with what we see of the youngest son's choices? How about the older son's attitude?

From Lane's sermon and commentaries, who is represented by:

The youngest son-
The oldest son-
The father-

How does II Peter 3:8-13 provide a glimpse of the personality trait of the Father? How do we square this passage with Matthew 7:13-14?

Into Life:

If Matthew 7:14, "...there are few who find it" is true (*it is*), what does it mean to our efforts to share the Gospel with others?

What about those who "have made a complete mess of their lives"?

Lane's opening statement, "When people meet up with Jesus, their lives are changed" is perhaps the "Super Bowl" of understatement. How do those of us who have met Jesus make a way for those who seem so far off?

Starting with Saul of Tarsus and including people you encounter daily, list those who appear to be headed for "the wide gate" (v.13).

How do we respond to those who say, "...God, I heard what you have to say- but I'm out of here"?

What role does "a humble heart and a spirit of repentance" play in the lives of those who have "played the Prodigal"? How about the church, who sometimes might look like the older brother?

What part must "forgiveness" play in the life of the church and we as individual "pituitary glands" of the body?

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

-Psalm 103:8-13