

Finding and Navigating The Narrow Way

Lesson 3 – *The Father's Heart*

INTRODUCTION

Another way to look at the story of the Prodigal Son, is to look at the story from the Father's side. Oddly, the title "Prodigal Son" was not applied to this story by Jesus, it was applied by people who in seeking to give the Bible titles and paragraphs for reading. It is perhaps one of the most well known stories of the Bible. Consider it. A son, goes to his father and demands his inheritance, which by all right should only be given when the father passes away. Whether then or now, it is a shocking thing to consider – from a parent side, it is like a son saying, "Hey Dad..wish you were dead because I want my money now." Technically, in that society and day, this attitude and type of rebellion was punishable by death. Yet, in the story, the father does not judge the son, he just gives him the inheritance to do with as he wishes. The story gets even more complicated, when the older son gets jealous when the younger son comes back and the father accepts him back.

Stop and consider, that this is YOUR FATHER! What kind of father, gives an inheritance away to a rebellious son and then in an embrace of love welcomes them back as though nothing occurred? This is GOD – your FATHER as Jesus introduces Him and as He is meant to be known.

SCRIPTURES FOR THIS LESSON

Luke 15:31,32 And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'

Psa 91:1,2 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Psa 136:1-5 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever; to him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever; to him who by understanding made the heavens, for his steadfast love endures forever

John 3:16-18 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

John 5:19-23 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. or the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing.

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And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him

AFFIRMATIONS

- God is infinitely good, far more loving, gentle and kind to His children than any earthly mother or father imaginable.
- God is infinitely complete – there is NOTHING that can threaten or disturb Him. There is NOTHING that can be taken from Him so as to make him less than complete, nor added to Him because He is already complete and needs nothing.
- WE – YOU are made in the likeness and glory of God the Father. We are finite, yet in God through Jesus, we are in and have complete union with our Father and our Father with us. In this relationship, we ARE risen in Him, seated in heavenly places and there is NOTHING that can separate us from the love of God.
- Before you can know WHO you are, you must come to know WHO God is!
- REMEMBER – your Father holds your robe, your ring, and your seat at His Table even now, eagerly awaiting for you to come to the realization that YOU are HIS child and that HE loves you.

QUESTIONS FOR THIS LESSON

What part of the story of the Prodigal Son story impacts you the most at this particular time? _____

Has there been a time in your life when you either wanted to or tried to separate yourself from God?

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Which of the sons in the story of the Prodigal Son do you identify with more? Are you one who runs after the world, or one who judges those who do? _____

Is there a time when you have experienced God's grace? What was it like? _____

Is there a time when you have experienced God's correction? What did it feel like? _____
