

Two Sons

- If there was an accident at an intersection and a person on each corner saw the accident. Each person would tell a slightly different story of the accident.
- We can look at an issue and have different viewpoints of the same issue.
- Today's story tells two reactions toward the same act of love.
- Prodigal- having or giving something on a lavish scale: spending money or resources freely and recklessly; wastefully extravagant:
- There are three people we will look at today and their actions or reactions.
- Our story opens up with the younger son wanting his share of his father's estate.
- Now it is customary for the first born to get two thirds of the estate and the rest went to the younger son.
- Now we can only speculate why the younger son wanted to do this. Maybe he was tired of living under his father's roof. He definitely wanted go and do his own thing.
- **Luke 15:13 "A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living.**
- This isn't a rare story. How many times have we heard stories of young men and women leaving home and living wild lives? Doing things that they wouldn't do while living at home.
- The father out of love allowed his son to go. When we love someone there are times that we just have to let them go.
- The story continues and things are so much fun for the young man.
- **14 About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve.**
- The party is over and things got worst. Starving and desperate the young man hired himself out to do a job that wasn't pleasing.
- **15 He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. 16 The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.**
- Starving and alone the young man hits rock bottom. He realizes that the life that he chose was not as good as the life that he had while living with his father. So he thinks out a plan.
- **17 "When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, 19 and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'"**
- Something inside of this young man knew that his father would at least hire him as a servant.

- The young man didn't understand the depth of his father's love.
- Let's look at the father.
- **20 "So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. 21 His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.'**
- **22 "But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. 23 And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, 24 for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.**
- I want to point out some things about this story of the father's love for his son.
- As the son was a long way off the father sees him and runs to him.
- Now I want us to think about this. Do we think that the father just happened to be looking down the road at the very moment that the son returned?
- I believe the father watched the road every day hoping that his son would return.
- When the father saw his lost son he was filled with love and compassion and ran to him.
- On Facebook you see videos of soldiers surprising their loved ones when they come home. You see scenes of people running toward each other. This ends up in an embrace that looks as if it will never end.
- I imagine that was the scene for this father and son.
- Now something interesting happens. The son begins to speak this rehearsed speech and the speech is there in the scripture but he didn't need to hear or even listened to his son's speech.
- **Luke 15:21–24 (The Message)**
- **The son started his speech: 'Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned before you; I don't deserve to be called your son ever again.'**
- **22 "But the father wasn't listening. He was calling to the servants,**
- The father was so full of love for his son that he brought him back into the family.
- The robe, sandals and the ring.
- The father loved extravagantly. He didn't need to hear an apology. The father was glad to have his son back home.
- The father in this story is an example of God's love for us. He gave the young son free will to choose what he wanted to do and showed him forgiveness and acceptance. He restored his son to the family and he started a great celebration because his son was lost but now is found.
- There is another character in our story. The older son that stayed with his father.

- **25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, 26 and he asked one of the servants what was going on. 27 ‘Your brother is back,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.’**
- **28 “The older brother was angry and wouldn’t go in. His father came out and begged him**
- The older son was angry, not because of his brother’s return but because there was a great celebration for his brother.
- He was angry at his father’s act of love for the younger son.
- **, 29 but he replied, ‘All these years I’ve slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. 30 Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!’**
- Hear the anger? The oldest son worked hard the whole time the younger brother was out doing his own thing. There is almost hatred toward his brother. This son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes.
- The father tried to explain why they had to celebrate.
- **31 “His father said to him, ‘Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. 32 We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!’”**
- The oldest son always had everything that the father provided and at any time he could have had that celebration with his friends. The celebration is because the family has been restored. The wayward son is back, alive and well.
- In our story the common theme is the father’s love he has for both sons.
- What we see is the difference of the responses to that love.
- **Romans 3:23 (NLT)**
- **23 For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.**
- Every one of us has sinned. None of us are perfect.
- Despite our sin the Father loved us.
- **John 3:16–17 (NLT)**
- **16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.**
- How do we respond to that love?

- We may have already accepted Jesus as our savior. That's great because now we are part of the family.
- There are other responses to God's love after we are part of the family.
- Do we respond to other family members that have fallen short by being angry with them and their shortcomings?
- Do we respond by judging them? Do we ignore or talk about them?
- **1 John 3:10 (NLT)**
- **10 So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.**
- **1 John 4:8 (NLT)**
- **8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**
- This body we call Brownsville Church of the Brethren should be a safe place.
- This body of Christ should be a place where all are accepted in love!
- We should commit ourselves to loving each other. Our love should extend to those who aren't like us. They are different or they are living that wild life.
- Let's reflect the love of God in every aspect of our lives and that love will change people's lives.