



The Other Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

Sermon Study Notes

One of the signs that you may not grasp the unique, radical nature of the gospel is that you're certain that you do. The elder brother is a reminder that neither a show of religion nor the sham of respectability is a valid substitute for repentance. If the preaching from our pulpits and the practice of our parishioners do not have the same effect on people that Jesus had, then we must not be declaring the same message Jesus did. If our churches aren't appealing to younger brothers, then they must be more full of elder brothers than we'd like to think.

I. A Shameful Reaction (15:25-28)

The elder brother turns out to be just as lost and hopelessly enslaved to sin as his brother ever was.

II. A Shameful Refusal (15:28)

The elder brother was angry because he felt he had the right to tell the father how the robes, rings, and resources of the family should be deployed.

Elder brothers obey God to get things.

In the view of the gospel, everyone is wrong, everyone is loved, and everyone is invited to recognize this and repent.

The prerequisite for receiving the grace of God is knowing you need it.

It's impossible to forgive someone if you feel superior to them.

III. A Shameful Resentment (15:29-30)

The person the older brother resented most was the father.

For some people, grace isn't only amazing, it's infuriating.

Sinful hearts have an amazing capacity for self-deception.

Beware the selfish heart that seethes when God celebrates.

The true nature of sin isn't just breaking the law, it's breaking the relationship while you're keeping the law.

IV. A Shameful Response (15:31-32)

You can be separated from the Father's heart by working as easily as by wandering.

One tries to work it off; the other assumes he already has.

The main barrier between Pharisees and God is not their sins, but their damnable good works.

"Jesus doesn't love us because we're beautiful; we become beautiful through Jesus' sacrificial love." - *Tim Keller*