

Which Jesus do we See and Preach? III

“Jesus of the outcast”

Luke 15 :11-32 Younger son and older brother

Luke 15:11 Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. ¹² And **the younger** of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood. ¹³ And not many days after, **the younger son** gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. ¹⁴ **But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.** ¹⁵ Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ **“But when he came to himself,** he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”

²⁰ **“And he arose and came to his father.** But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, ‘**Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.**’

²² “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry. ²⁵ **“Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.** ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’ ²⁸ **“But he was angry** and would not go in. ²⁹ Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’ ³¹ “And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² **It was right** that we should make merry and be glad, for **your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.**”

- *Luke 15:11 -13* The choice
- *Luke 15:14-16* The chaos
- *Luke 15:17-20a* The chatter
- *Luke 15:20b-24* The celebration

I

The choice to curse his father and disconnect from the community.

Any Middle Eastern son who requests his inheritance from a healthy father is understood to want his father to die. *Vs 12*

The request would generally be met with a slap forehead and a smack backhand.

- Such a son is indeed dead to the family.

The father affirms that the prodigal was indeed dead *24b* but that now he is alive *32b*

II

There is chaos which comes from lostness and estrangement.

I have labeled this section, all is lost. *Vs 13*

He loses everything in two ways.

First, he loses his family by radically breaking relationships with it.

Second, he loses everything again in the distant country.

- This younger son was lost by choice.
- This younger son was lost outside the house.

III

The father's compassionate love desires to accept and recover all. *Vs 20*

Rejection and acceptance are a theme though out the narrative.

The father is willing to extend this form of grace because he is willing to endure the agony of rejected love.

This agony is the most painful form of suffering known to the human spirit.

The greater the love, the greater the pain when that love is not accepted.

In the end all is restored by the actions of the father. Vs 22

- The father does this by ordering restoration and celebration.

IV

The older brother is compliant but not connected to the father's heart. Vs 30

The older brother has privilege without proper perspective. Vs 31

The older brother is angry at his father and brother.

- The older brother was lost inside the house.

The parable ends with the son who went outside the house, inside. Vs 24

The parable ends with the son who was inside the house, outside. Vs 28

Reference Kenneth E. Bailey

Finding the Lost Cultural Keys in Luke 15