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WARM UP

Can you think of a time when you were in an embarrassing situation? At the time, was it something you were able to laugh at?

WORD

Read [Luke 15: 20-32](#)

The Father has welcomed the wayward son home with open arms and a celebration. One might think the older son would also welcome his long lost brother with the same response, but apparently not. Let us look at how he responded and what we can learn from it.

NOTES

1 ODB - Old Dull Brother

²⁵Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

[Luke 15:25,26](#) (ESV)

The three stories in Luke 15 about finding the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son all end in celebration. But there is something different in this parable - there is an older brother who hears music and dancing, but does not recognise what is going on. He has forgotten how to celebrate.

Being in the Father God's house, we, as His sons and daughters, should have every reason to celebrate. We are loved, we are forgiven, we are made whole - all undeservingly. But like this older, dull brother, we can forget the power of what the Gospel does for us, which is to bring us back into a relationship with the Father.

- What do you think deserves a celebration?
- Do you honestly celebrate when someone who was once lost is now found and brought back to a place of hope and life? Or are you skeptical, even cynical towards this happening?

2 Where's Mine?

²⁷And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' ²⁸But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, ²⁹but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!'

[Luke 15:27-30](#) (ESV)

Comparison and entitlement are signs that we have embraced the, "Older Brother Syndrome": a disease of the spirit that causes us to compare ourselves to one another, pushing our actions and agendas towards what we feel we deserve. However, the Gospel understands we don't deserve anything at all, for to dwell with the Father God is to live the way He intended: ever thankful for His undeserved love.

- Have you ever seen someone get rewarded, but you were jealous because you felt you deserved it? What happened?
- Do you battle with comparison and jealousy?

3 Inside Out

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

[Luke 15:31-32](#) (ESV)

The older brother was always inside the property, but this parable ends with him outside the celebration. He was neither impacted nor moved to celebrate the return of his brother, and in a moment that should have moved him into the party with compassion, he was moved out of the house with unrighteous anger. We must be aware of our tendency to forget how good God is and not find ourselves outside with envy.

- Have you forgotten the reason we celebrate or forgotten how?
- When it comes to partying with the Father God upon the return of the lost, do you find yourself inside with the celebration or outside with feelings of comparison and entitlement?

PRAYER

- If you have lost your passion and celebration for God and His rescue for the lost, pray that God will restore your first love for Him. Psalm 51 says, "Restore unto me the joy of my salvation..."
- If you are not yet a follower of Christ, would you like to receive Him as your Lord, who laid His life down for you, forgiving and cleansing you of your sin, that you might follow Him? He wants to celebrate with you!
- Pray that you never stray from the Father's love and that you would have a love for the broken, the way He does.