

A Compassionate Father. Luke 15:11-32

A young woman at a Bible study had the toughest time viewing God as a father. Her earthly father was abusive and was never in her life. She didn't understand a father's love because she didn't receive love from her biological dad. I explained to her that God is the ultimate Father; that our earthly fathers would do well to emulate God. **God is not like our earthly fathers but our earthly fathers should be more like God.** There is a story in the Bible that illustrates to us the kind of Father God is.

The religious people complained that Jesus welcomed sinners and ate with them. Then Jesus told them three stories to illustrate to them the importance and the joy of finding what was lost or bringing sinners into the kingdom of God. These stories demonstrate the heart of God in finding sinners (v7, 10. **There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.**)

The parable of the lost sheep (v.1-7)

The parable of the lost coin (v8-10)

The parable of the lost son (11-32)

Luke 15:11-32

A father had two sons and the youngest asked, demanded the share of the estate (the inheritance) that he would receive after the death of his father. With this action this son was wishing his dad were dead. He wanted to be independent of his father (**give me what is mine**)

The father divided the property between the two sons.

-The younger son left for a distant country and wasted his money on while living (v.14) *He spent everything he had and for the first time in his life he began to be in need (v.14).* His needs were supplied by his father when he was home, but now that he was on his own, he began to feel what it means to have unmet needs.

(v.15) he went to look for a job so he could meet his needs.

-feeding pigs (the lowest job in that region) This would sound repulsive to a Jewish audience.

-He was hungry for the first time in his life. He was so hungry that even the pigs' food was appealing to him.

Reality check!

Then finally it hit him. He came to his senses. (v.17). He finally realized that back home even the servant, the employee lived better than him. (even the hired servants have more than enough in my father's house and here I am starving to death.

.v18. I will set out and go back to my father and say to him. Father I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.

His father saw him while he was still far away. The father had compassion on his son. The father ran toward his son (fathers would not run in that culture) embraced his son and kissed him. This father went crazy when he saw his son returning home.

(The son's speech v.21) Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

The father interrupted the speech v.22

-Bring the best robe and clothe him (He is receiving him as his son, receive your place of honor)

-put a ring on his finger (you have the authority of the father in this house)

-sandals on his feet (this is the 3rd demonstration the father wasn't receiving a slave, but his son back)

Let's have a party because my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is now found. The moment the son walked away from his father, he was dead, he was lost because sin separated him from his father. But when he repented and came back, his father forgave him and welcomed him back as his son with all the benefits that entails.

There is rejoicing in heaven when sinners come to God. **There may not be rejoicing on earth as it's the case with the older brother. (v.28-32)**

When he found out his youngest brother came home and his dad threw a party he was angry and didn't want to go in the house.

The father had to come out and plead with the older son and reassure him why the celebration was needed.

31. You are always with me and everything I have is yours. (you can throw a party with your friends whenever you'd like). But we had to celebrate and be glad because:

Your brother was dead and is alive again. He was lost, but has been found. Sin separates us from our heavenly Father (it makes us dead before him). The good news is that God made it possible for sinners to come to him through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

When sinners repent, turn to God, there is a party in heaven. God is a compassionate Father who welcomes sinners and turns them into his children.

Ps.103:10-13

He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

It doesn't matter how bad you blew it or how messed up you are. The good news is get up and return to God, the father of love, mercy and compassion. He'll welcome you with open arms as his child.

Heaven is waiting to throw a party on your behalf.