

What's Your Story- Hope for the Prodigal

Sermon Notes

May 8, 2022

When God goes off on poor theology...

- Lost Sheep
 - God is not satisfied with the present number in the fold.
 - God is a relentless pursuer of the wayward person.
 - God celebrates each person entering the fold regardless how far that person wandered.
 - God will grow his church—that is why he has not come yet.
- Lost Coin
 - He doubles down on his relentless pursuit of those who are his that are lost.
 - He doubles down again on his joy for gathering the one who was lost.
- Lost Son.
 - Here he gets personal.
 - He speaks not only of the Father but of the jealous brother.
 - He describes the journey of the typical wanderer.

The roots of journeying away from God. **Luke 15:11-13**

- **Want it now.**
 - We ask of God much, but rarely are we in trust of his timing.
 - Our eyes are upon things our hearts crave not upon what the Father sees as wise.
- **No trust of others**—the older brother to divide the inheritance.
 - Traditionally, the older brother is given charge of the estate and disperses to his siblings.
 - Self-centered perspective gives little care to how this affects family or friends.
- **Pleasure-driven** living that has little regard for future implications.
 - So caught up in the now that you rob your future.
 - Discipline and wisdom are cast to the wind.

The cost of journeying away from God. **Luke 15:14-19**

- You become vulnerable to the unexpected storms of life.
- You are no longer valued by society.
 - You are a risk.
 - Your skills are minimal.
 - Cannot be trusted.
- Humiliation leads to desperation.

Dilemma- I know where my help comes from, but...

The return of the prodigal. Luke 15:20-24

- Begins with a shame-filled and fearful posture.
- Desperate enough to submit to the mercy or judgment of the Father.

The Father God shines!

- He welcomes the prodigal with mercy and joy!
- He restores the full status of sonship to the prodigal.
- He celebrates his son's return.

The brother struggles to forgive.

- There is resentment.
- There is comparison.
- There is envy of the attention.
- There is self-adulation.

The Father shines again with the brother.

- He mercifully responds.
- He affirms him.
- He explains his heart for the brother.
- He invites him to celebrate too.

Interview: Phil and Lisa True

1. Phil, you and I have journeyed a lot of life together and I know there is much about this parable you relate to. Why don't you begin by telling us about your family and your upbringing?
2. Things changed for you where you began to walk away from God, and in many ways from your family. Tell us about that season.
3. As you look back, why do you think you went that direction?
4. At your lowest point, what was happening that caused you the journey back to God? What were some of your fears or concerns in returning?
5. Lisa, this is where you entered Phil's life. What were you observing in Phil and in God's pursuit of him during those early years of returning to Christ?
6. Phil, how would you describe the years of healing and growing in your relationship with Jesus? Where does LEFC play a part in that?
7. You have a word for siblings and friends who have prodigals in their lives.
8. You have a word for parents of prodigal children.
9. You have a word for the prodigal.