

## Our Heavenly Father Luke 15:11-32

### Introduction

1. This parable has captured the attention of many.
  2. Deep lessons about love and relationships are contained in our Lord's Words.
  3. One of the greatest lessons to be gained from this passage is about our Heavenly Father Who is personified in this parable.
    - a. Parables are said to be earthly stories with heavenly meanings.
    - b. Mark 4:30 reveals that great attention was given to accuracy in such parables.
- I. Our Heavenly Father Allows Choice, Though Often Disappointed (vv. 11-19).
- A. God made us free moral agents.
    1. In order for us to be able to chose between right and wrong, those two sides must exist.
    2. Did God create evil? No. He allows it because its existence is vital to our make up.
  - B. Our choices often hurt the heart of God.
    1. Adam and Eve (Genesis 3)
    2. David with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:3ff)
    3. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Exodus 4:21; 7:3 & Exodus 7:13, 14)
  - C. How many disappointments do you think God has felt as a result of man's freedom of choice? Hundreds? Thousands? Millions? See Ecclesiastes 6:11.
    1. One might wonder why God created man. See Psalm 8 and 144:3. God created man in spite of the disappointment that would come for the same reason that a husband and wife desire children.
    2. One might wonder why God doesn't do something to curb the disappointment that He feels. He could take away man's freedom. Then, however, man would not voluntarily love God; it would be forced. That *love* would be unfulfilling.

**II. Our Heavenly Father Awaits Change That Brings Someone Back To Him (vv. 20, 21).**

- A. God is pictured as a waiting, watching Father Who desires the return of the prodigal.**
- B. To many, God is a vicious Being Who desire to cast man into hell.**
  - 1. “Why else would God send people to hell, or why did He even make hell?” are some of the questions people ask.**
  - 2. Hell was not created with any of us in mind (Matthew 25:41).**
- C. God will forgive whoever will repent.**
  - 1. Saul was forgiven (1 Timothy 1:15).**
  - 2. Luke 17:4 and 1 John 1:7-9 have wonderful teachings on forgiveness.**
  - 3. There has not been one penitent person whom God has denied forgiveness.**
    - a. Many people don’t understand repentance, thus forgiveness is not extended to them.**
    - b. Some *repent* for the wrong reasons. They, therefore, cannot be forgiven.**

**III. Our Heavenly Father Approves Conformity To His Will (vv. 21-32).**

- A. The Father of this parable was eager to accept His son.**
  - 1. No third degree was given!**
  - 2. No motives were judged (by the Father)!**
    - a. The other son (perhaps he was the *real*/wayward) was harsh toward the returning son.**
    - b. That ungodly practice in contrasted with the right way.**
- B. There is a wrong kind of conformity.**
  - 1. Romans 12:1, 2**
  - 2. 2 Corinthians 6:17**
  - 3. 1 Corinthians 5:10**
- C. No only does God approve conformity to His Will, He demands it!**

**Conclusion**

- 1. This parable which person describes you the best?**
  - a. Are you like the prodigal son? He abandoned the Father’s Will.**
  - b. Are you like the other son? He was *there*, but he was wayward (in spirit). He must have had a false sense of security! That’s dangerous!**
  - c. Hopefully you are like the Father.**
- 2. What will you do?**