

2025 11 16 / Luke 15:11-24
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The Good Father

The parable of the Good Father.

Luke chapter 15 verse 11-24, says this: “Jesus continued, ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” So, he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got all that he had and set off for a distant country and squandered his wealth on wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in the whole country, and he began to be in need. So, he went and hired himself out to a citizen in that country. He sent him to the fields to feed the pigs. He longed to fill his stomach from the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare? And here I am starving to death. I will set out, go back to my father’s house, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be your son but make me a servant in your house.”



So, he got up and he went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and he was filled with compassion for him. He ran to his son. He threw his arms around him and he kissed him. The son wanted to say, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” Verse 22, the father interrupted him and said to his servant, “Quick, bring my best robe, put it on him, put a ring on his finger, and sandals on his feet. Bring the fatted calf and slaughter it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For his son of mine was dead and is now alive. He was lost and found, so they began to celebrate.”

When the younger son left home, the father began to wait for his return. At night, he kept the lights on in case the son might arrive home in the dark. He kept his eyes fixed on the path the son had taken. One day, the younger son appeared on the horizon, and the father recognized him. It was undoubtedly the younger son, returning home. The father started running, but Jewish people never did such a thing.

The son was practicing his words to address his father. He repeated to himself, “Father, I am not worthy to be your son. Treat me as your servant.” However, the father interrupted him in the middle of his speech. He shouted to his servants, “Quick, bring out the finest robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring a fattened calf, and let’s throw a party!”

This is the story of what mercy and grace look like. First, let’s understand what mercy and grace are. Was he a good son when he left home? Absolutely not. He was selfish, reckless, and always seeking immediate gratification. He was overconfident in his own righteousness. Didn’t you say that whatever you do is right? And you justified it. I did.

Mercy is the act of forgiving a sinner and withholding punishment that is justly deserved. Grace, on the other hand, is the undeserved blessing bestowed upon a sinner. The Greek word for grace is Charis, which means unmerited favor, or blessings. Charis is derived from this root word, which means to rejoice and be glad, reflecting the joyful nature of God. When God offers grace, it is not out of necessity but out of his own desire and joy. This embodies the image of the father.

The younger son only needed a warm meal and a place to sleep. Yet, grace surpasses all expectations. It bestows upon us things we could only dream of, even things beyond our wildest imaginations, and things we didn't deserve.



The father sprinted towards his son, who had squandered his inheritance recklessly. He embraced him with immense compassion, placing him not in the servant's quarters but at the banquet table. With a wave of his hand, he restored his son's rightful place, restoring his sonship with a robe, signet ring, and sandals. The banquet commenced, and there were no ifs, ands or buts.

We all experience desert places, just as the Hebrew people had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years. This symbolizes the journey of human life. The world is a place filled with scorpions, snakes, and dangerous animals. It's a place of thirst and lack of shade for rest.

We need supernatural water, shadows, and supernatural resting places to survive. Without them, we will perish in the desert. It's a place of deception that blinds us and it is a place of death. We didn't realize this truth. We and you were prodigal, having lost all the gifts from our father.

You turned away from your pigpen, and God embraced you as beloved children of God. Together with Jesus, we will inherit all that God has. We may not yet know what it is like, but this love allowed the younger son to kneel before the Father with deep humility and tears of gratitude. This love is secure and safe. It is a power that brings transformation upon our return. There is no more fear of life or other people, but freedom welcomes you in the protection of the Father.

He was forgiven, not punished. It is mercy. He was embraced, restored as a beloved son of the father. It is grace. When I would have been happy just serving food and sleeping in the servant quarters, his grace calls us to sit at his banquet table as sons and daughters.

Grace empowers us on our journey with excellence!

When Paul returned to God after the encounter Jesus on the way toward Damascus, he became a passionate follower of Jesus. However, he had a great weakness like a thorn. Second Corinthians 12:7-10 recorded about the thorn in his body. We do not know what it is. It was written so vaguely. Is it an evil spirit attack, incurable sickness, or something else? He requested God to remove that thorn three times, but God answered him "No." three times. Listen to God's word, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

What does it mean? Human limitations were the very places where God's power could be manifested and strengthened. It prevents us from becoming prideful. It lets us rely on divine grace rather than our own abilities. Yes, it is. It's magnificent to experience the movement of God in your weakness. You vividly feel and know God's love and power. His closeness is like breath, even closer than the breath or blood in your vein. Your weakness is covered by the grace of God, and excellence of God shines through in your area. It is the word for you, not for anybody else. And you know very clearly who you are with weaknesses and mistakes. At the same time, Grace of God makes you free from your life's thorn. What an amazing life!

I want to share a story about a young man. During a Korean Christian gathering, God noticed a young man who was suffering from an illness in his private area. A man of God spoke a healing word, and "I see a young man. He is suffering from an illness in his private area. Because of shame, he didn't tell anyone about it, and he even couldn't visit the doctor. Jesus is healing you right now. Do not sin anymore and fill yourself with the word of God."

Later, in a couple of weeks, this young man, who is 32 years old, was openly interviewed by the team. He confessed, “Yes, my reckless lifestyle with women led me to this miserable state. I believed I would die of this disease. Every hour, I had to go to the restroom, and at night, every two hours. The pain persisted, and I couldn’t sleep. I yearned to turn back time. After I heard the word of healing, I felt nothing at all at that moment. The next day, when I opened my eyes, my body ached, but I noticed that I had slept through the night without waking up from pain or needing to go to the restroom. I slept soundly. And I weighed 128 pounds. In a couple of weeks, I had gained 7 pounds. I put the words of Brother Hyeok into my phone: “Sin no more, fill yourself with the word of God.” He showed his phone, and he shouted, “Jesus healed me, Jesus healed me!”



Grace transforms two fishes and loaves into a feast for thousands, as seen in Matthew 14:16–21. Grace resurrects the son of a widow, as recounted in Luke 7:11-17. It also transforms water into wine, as depicted in John 2:1-11. In essence, Grace offers us the finest wine, even if we didn’t grow grapes, press them, or engage in any other activities. Grace is a heavenly force that elevates us from our mundane existence and restores us to our true purpose as God’s masterpiece, the best version of ourselves, which was inherently present in the heart of God.

How beautifully patient God is! God never disqualifies you because of your weaknesses or heavy sins. At the table of grace, the cup is never empty, the plate is always full. And it is never too late. You are always welcome! You shout with joy over God’s grace toward you. Nothing can steal this joy! We should share our stories to the world, the wonders of God’s grace, and his and utmost care.

Is there anybody who wants to know the father and his forgiveness? Wants to know and receive the grace of the Father? Raise your hand. And meet me after the service.