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ENCOUNTERING JESUS

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INTERVARSITY INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT MINISTRY



A Father and His Two Sons

Luke 15:1-2, 11-32

Terms

Property - something that belongs to you

To divide - separate into different parts

To waste - to spend or use carelessly

Reckless - careless; to not care if something is safe

Severe - very serious, very bad

Famine - when an area has so little food that people die of hunger

Bean pods - outside cover of beans or peas

To come to one's senses - to begin to think clearly

Hired - to work for pay

To starve - die from hunger

To sin - break God's law, to do what God said is morally wrong

Fit - suitable, right, good

Servant - one who serves others

Robe - long, loose piece of clothes worn on the outside

Prize - something given in competitions and contests; something special that people want

Calf - a baby cow

To celebrate - do something special to honor someone or remember an important time

Feast - a very large and fancy meal

In the meantime - at the same time

Safe and sound - free from danger, harm, risk, or hurt

To beg - to really, really ask for help or for something

Slave - a person who belongs to someone else as property

To disobey - to not do what someone tells you to

Prostitute - someone who sells his or her body for sex

Comprehension Questions

1. What did the younger son want from his father?
2. Where did the younger son go?
3. What did he do with his money? Was he careful with it?
4. What did he look for a job?
5. What was his job?
6. Was he hungry? How hungry was he?
7. Why did he decide to go home? What did he realize when he "came to his senses"?
8. What did he hope his father would do?
9. What did he tell his father when he saw him?
10. How did the father feel when he saw his son? What did he do?
11. What did the servants get for the son?
12. What did they eat at the feast?
13. Where was the older son?
14. What did he hear on his way home?
15. How did he feel?
16. What did the father ask the older son to do?
17. Did the son agree? How do you know?
18. Why did the father want to celebrate?

Discussion Questions

1. Who are the three main people in this story?

2. What kind of person was the younger brother?
3. What do you think he went to a country far away?
4. What was his attitude when he left home?
5. What was his attitude when he went home?
6. How do you think he felt after he got home?
7. How would you have felt if you were the younger brother?
8. What kind of person was the older brother?
9. Why do you think he stayed home and didn't leave?
10. How do you think he felt about his younger brother?
11. How do you think he felt about his father?
12. Do you agree with his feelings? How would you have felt if you were him?
13. What kind of person was the father?
14. How did he treat his sons? How did he feel towards his sons?
15. Did the father love the younger son more? The older son more?
16. Did the younger son really die? What did the father mean?
17. Why did Jesus tell this story? What does it mean?

Thoughts for Later

1. What is Jesus telling us about God in this story? What is God really like? Have we ever thought of God like this?
2. What is Jesus telling us about turning to God? What must we do to have a relationship with God?
3. What is our relationship with God like? Is it like either the younger son or the older son?

A Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-17

Terms

Paralyzed - not able to move part or all of the body

Tile - piece of clay or stone used to cover roofs, walls, and floors

To dare - to have enough courage or bravery to do something scary or difficult

To insult - to hurt others by treating them as not as good as you

Amazed - surprised, filled with wonder

Marvelous - great, wonderful, fantastic

Shore - land around a lake, sea, or ocean

Lake Galilee - very large and important lake in Israel

Outcast - one not accepted by society or allowed to be a member

Respectable - worthy of respect; correct in character or behavior

To repent - to recognize you are not a good person, ask for God's forgiveness, and begin to change your life

Comprehension Questions

1. What town was Jesus teaching in?
2. Who did the four men bring to Jesus?
3. How did they get their friend in to Jesus?
4. What did Jesus say when he saw the man?
5. What did the religious leaders think when they heard Jesus say this?
6. What was the second thing Jesus said to the paralyzed man?
7. Why did Jesus say this?
8. What did the man do after Jesus spoke to him?
9. How did the people feel when they saw this happen?

10. Where did Jesus go after this?
11. Who did he see as he walked along?
12. What did Jesus say to him? What did the man do?
13. Who did Jesus then have a meal with? Who was with him?
14. What did the religious leaders say about this?
15. Who did Jesus say that he came to call? Who needs a doctor?

Discussion Questions

1. What kind of friends were the men who carried the paralyzed man to Jesus? Describe them.
2. What do you think the people in the house thought when they heard this noise coming from the roof? How do you think the owner of the house felt?
3. Who had faith that Jesus could help?
4. What was the first thing Jesus said to the man? Why do you think Jesus said this? What did this have to do with the man's physical condition?
5. Why were the religious leaders upset? What was Jesus saying about himself by speaking to the man this way?
6. Why did Jesus then heal the paralyzed man?
7. Which of the two things that Jesus said to the man was easier?
8. What kind of man was Levi? Was he a respectable man?
9. Why do you think Jesus told Levi to follow him?
10. What did the religious leaders think about Jesus when they saw who he ate with?
11. What was the meaning of Jesus' answer? Didn't Jesus care about respectable people?

Thoughts for Later

1. What kind of friend are we? Do we have a friend who really needs our help like the paralyzed man?
2. How are we like the paralyzed man? Is there anything in our lives that is paralyzing us and destroying our lives? Fear? Worry? Anger? Unforgiveness? Self-pity? Hating others? Hating ourselves? Pride?
3. Can Jesus help us with these things so that we can be whole? What would he say to us?
4. If we were living in Israel at the time of this story, would we be eating with Jesus in Levi's home or standing outside with the religious leaders?

The Religious Leader and the Tax Collector

Luke 18:9-14

Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15-17

Terms

To despise - look down on someone or something as worthless or no good

Temple - place of worship; for the Jews, the most important place in Israel

Tax collector - person who takes money from people for the government

Apart - a little distance from; away from

Greedy - to always want more than what you already have

Adulterer - a person who sleeps with someone not their husband or wife

Fast - to go without eating, usually to pray

One tenth - ten percent

Chest - part of the body where your heart is

Pity - to feel sorry or sad for someone else's suffering or unhappiness

Sinner - someone who breaks God's law and does what God says is wrong

To humble - to make yourself lower than another; not prideful

Disciple - a student who follows a great teacher and learns from him or her

To scold - to correct; tell someone they are doing something wrong

Kingdom of God - rule of God over those who follow him and over all of human history

Comprehension Questions

1. How many people went to the temple to pray?
2. Who were they?
3. Where did the religious leader stand and pray?
4. What did he thank God for?

5. How was he like or not like the tax collector?
6. Where did the tax collector stand and pray?
7. What did he pray?
8. Whose prayers did Jesus say that God heard and answered?
9. Who did Jesus tell this story to?
10. Why did the people bring their children to Jesus?
11. What was the disciples' response? How did they feel? What did they do?
12. What was Jesus' response to the disciples? Did he agree with them?
13. What did Jesus say about the children?

Discussion Questions

1. How do we define greatness? What makes someone a great person?
2. Describe the difference between the religious leader and the tax collector. What were they like? How do you think society would view the religious leader? How would society view the tax collector?
3. Why was the tax collector right with God when he went home and not the religious leader? Why did God accept the prayers of one and not the other?
4. Why did Jesus tell this story? What was his meaning?
5. What was the disciples' attitude toward the parents with their children?
6. What was Jesus' attitude? How did Jesus view and treat children?
7. What did Jesus mean by saying that the Kingdom of God belongs to the children? What did he mean by saying that we must become like children?
8. What is the relationship between these two stories? What do they have in common?
9. How does Jesus define greatness?
10. According to these two stories, what is necessary to have a relationship with God?

11. How are these two stories similar to the story of the two sons?

Thoughts for Later

The Bible says, "People look at the outside, but God looks at the heart."

1. How is the outside of our lives different from the inside (from our hearts)?
2. Who are we more like in our hearts - the religious leader or the tax collector?
3. Do we want God's blessing on our lives?
4. Are we willing to become like a child in order to enter into God's Kingdom and become one of God's children?

What is Most Important?

Luke 12:13-34

Terms

To crowd - to press close to other people

Primarily - mainly; mostly

Disciple - someone who believes and follows the teaching of another person

To be on guard - to protect from danger by being ready and watchful

Yeast - used to make wine or beer or in baking to make bread rise

Hypocrisy - acting or pretending to feel one way while really feeling another

To reveal - to show or make open something that has been secret or hidden

Broad daylight - full, open, plain daylight

To whisper - to speak very, very quietly

Hell - a place where people who didn't choose to follow God go after they die; a place of suffering because it is separated from God

Sparrow - a small, plain brown bird

To divide - separate into two or more parts

Property - something that belongs to someone

To judge - to form an opinion about someone; make a decision about who is right after listening to multiple sides; to rule

To guard - protect from danger, especially by watching carefully

To be made up of - to consist of, be built of

Crop - harvest; usually used to describe a lot of one kind of food

To tear down - to take apart

Barn - a large building where the crops and farm animals are kept

To store - put away and save, keep for the future

Grain - seeds of certain plants and grasses like rice, wheat, barley, oats

Goods - belongings; things

To take life easy - rest, relax, and not worry; enjoy life

Fool - a person who cannot make good decisions

To conclude - to end, finish, complete

To pile up - save a lot of something for the future

Storeroom - place for keeping goods or supplies

King Solomon - one of the two most famous kings of Israel, known for being wise and rich

Wealth - things that have money value

To clothe - to give or provide clothes to someone; to help someone get dressed

To burn up - to completely burn until nothing is left

All the more - even more; more certainly

To set your heart on - to strongly desire or want

Belongings - things that belong to someone

To wear out - to use until it can't be used anymore

To decrease - to become less and less

Thief - robber, someone who steals from others

Moth - small insect that flies, eats holes in clothing

Treasure - wealth; valuable things kept safe

Comprehension Questions

1. Were there many people who heard Jesus tell these stories? How many?
2. Who was Jesus primarily speaking to?
3. What did Jesus say to be careful of?
4. What will happen to our secrets?
5. Who should we be afraid of? Who shouldn't we be afraid of? Why?
6. Are the sparrows important to God? Who is worth more than them?

7. What did the man in the crowd say to Jesus?
8. Did Jesus agree to do what the man asked?
9. What did Jesus say to guard against? Why?
10. What kind of land did the rich man in Jesus' story have? Was it good? How do you know?
11. What did the man decide to do to his barn? Why?
12. Was he worried about the future? What were his plans for the future?
13. What happened to the man? What happened to his things? Did he get to keep them?
14. What did Jesus tell his disciples their attitude towards the future should be? Why?
15. How do the crows have enough to eat?
16. What does worrying help us to do?
17. How do the flowers grow so beautifully?
18. What did Jesus tell his disciples they shouldn't worry about? Why not?
19. What should we be concerned about? What should we set our hearts on?
20. What will God provide for those who choose to follow him?
21. What should people who follow Jesus do with their money?
22. Are our things safe? Is our money safe? What can happen to them?
23. Where will your heart be?

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Jesus criticize the religious leaders? Is it only religious leaders who are this way?
2. Describe hypocrisy. What is a hypocritical person like? Is there anything wrong with being that way?

3. What did Jesus mean by the yeast of the religious leaders? Why should we be on guard?
4. How did Jesus describe God?
5. What was the second thing Jesus said that we should be on guard against? Why?
6. What was wrong with the attitude of the rich man?
7. Who takes care of even the sparrows? Who takes care of people? What did the rich man think about his wealth and where it came from?
8. What does it mean to be "rich in the eyes of God"?
9. How important are the crows and the wild flowers to people? How important are they to God? Does God care about them? What is even more important to God than them?
10. Can God take care of us? Does he want to?
11. What did Jesus say is most important in life?
12. What should our attitude be toward material possessions and money?
13. What one thing did Jesus say six times? Why did he say this so many times?
14. How will God respond if we do certain things?

Thoughts for Later

1. Is my public behavior (actions and words) very different from my private thoughts and behavior? How is it different? Would I live any differently if I knew that God sees both my public and private life? Would I live any differently if I knew that some day everyone else will also see my private life?
2. How important are material possessions and money to me? Are they my social status, my identity, my security?
3. Where is my heart? What is most important in my life? How secure is that? Can I trust it?

Guests and Hosts

Luke 14:1, 7-24

Terms

Leading - ranking first or most important

Host - one who receives and entertains guests

Honor - good name; good reputation; public respect

In the presence of - in front of

Feast - a large and special meal

Crippled - unable to use all one's hands, arms, feet, or legs

Lame - unable to use one's feet or legs

Blind - unable to see

To pay someone back - to return what someone gave you, return what you owe

To repay - to pay someone back, give back what you owe

To apologize - to say you were wrong and are sorry for what you did or said

Ox - a cow-like animal used to pull carts or plows

Furious - very, very angry

Alley - a narrow street, often in the back of buildings in a city

Lane - narrow path, often between bushes or fences

Comprehension Questions

1. Where did Jesus tell these stories?
2. Why did he tell the first story? What did he notice?
3. Is the first story about being a guest or being a host?
4. What kind of banquet is the first story about?
5. Where did Jesus say you should not sit at a wedding banquet? Where did he say you should sit instead? Why?

6. Who did Jesus say you should not invite for a meal? Who should you invite? Why? Will they be able to pay you back? Who will?
7. Who did Jesus tell the second story to?
8. Is the second story about being a guest or being a host?
9. Were there many people invited to the banquet?
10. Who did the man send to tell the guests that the banquet was ready?
11. Were there many people invited to the banquet?
12. What were each of the excuses?
13. What was the master's response to the excuses?
14. Who did the master tell the servant to invite instead? Where would the servant find these people?
15. Did these guests fill the banquet room?
16. Where did the master tell the servant to go to find more people? Why?
17. What happened to the people who were invited the first time, but couldn't come?

Discussion Questions

1. Which is the seat of honor at a dinner in your society?
2. What happens in your society if someone sits in that seat of honor without being invited to?
3. Which is the humblest seat at a dinner in your society?
4. What kind of guest did Jesus say that we should be? Why?
5. Who do you usually invite to your home for a meal? Why? Do they usually pay you back?
6. What kind of host did Jesus say we should be? Why?
7. What does it mean that God will repay you?

8. What did one of the guests say after Jesus said that God will repay you? What does that mean?
9. How do you think the man in the second story felt when his invited guests didn't come? How would you have felt? What would you have done?
10. The second group of people invited probably didn't know the man. How do you think they felt when they were invited?
11. What does this story have in common with what Jesus earlier told the host? The guests?
12. What do these stories have in common with the stories of the two sons, the religious leader and tax collector, and Jesus blessing the children?
13. Why did Jesus tell this story? Who does the man giving the banquet represent? Who do the guests represent?

Thoughts for Later

1. What kind of guests are we? What kind of hosts are we?
2. Who do we know that is poor, lonely, without friends, that we can include in our lives? Who can we invite into our homes just because they need love, even if we don't receive anything in return?
3. What kind of excuses have we made for not accepting God's invitation to the banquet he has prepared for us? Work? Money? Possessions? Family? Time?

The Good Neighbor

Luke 10:25-37

Terms

To trap - to set up a surprise to catch something; to make someone say or do something wrong

Eternal life - to live forever with God after you die

Soul - spirit; the part that lives on after the body and decides how you live your life

To reply - to answer

To justify - to show someone is just, right, reasonable, good

Jerusalem - the capital city of Israel

Jericho - a big famous city in Israel, built before 3400 BC

Robber - thief, someone who steals

To attack - to go at something with strength and power, usually to hurt

To strip - to take someone's clothes off

To beat up - to hit someone or something very badly

Priest - religious leader

Holy - perfect and pure like God

Samaritan - someone from Samaria; Samaritans and Jews were enemies

Pity - feeling of sympathy and sadness for someone else's suffering or problems

Wound - a hurt part of your body

Bandage - cloth you put on a wound

Inn - place for travelers to stay and sleep

Innkeeper - owner and manager of an inn

To conclude - finish what you are saying or writing

Opinion - what you believe or think about something

Comprehension Questions

1. Why did the teacher of the law ask Jesus a question?
2. Did he like Jesus' answer? How do you know?
3. What was the second question he asked Jesus?
4. What did the robbers do to the man in the story?
5. What did the robbers take?
6. How many people came by the man after the robbers left him?
7. Who was the first man? What did he do?
8. Who was the second man? What did he do?
9. Who was the third man? What did he do?
10. Which of these men acted like a neighbor?

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the teacher of the law wanted to trap Jesus?
2. Why did the priest and the holy man walk by? What kind of men were they?
3. How do you think the wounded man felt when they walked by?
4. Why did the Samaritan stop? What kind of man was he?
5. The Samaritans and the Jews were not friends. How do you think the wounded man felt when the man who stopped to help him was a Samaritan?
6. Why did Jesus tell this story to the teacher? What does this story mean?
7. How should we treat our neighbor?
8. Who is our neighbor?
9. What kind of neighbors should we be?
10. What did Jesus say was most important? What was second most important?
11. Why do you think the two commands are in this order?
12. What must we do to have eternal life?

Thoughts for Later

1. Have I ever been hurt or needing help and hoped someone would help me?
2. How did I feel about the responses I got from other people?
3. Is it even possible to love my neighbor as much as I love myself?
4. Is there someone in my life who I have a hard time loving as my neighbor?
5. Is God an idea? A power? A person? Is it possible to love God like this story says?
6. Would loving God really help me to love my neighbor?
7. Is there really "eternal life"? Would I like to have it?