

HOW GOD FEELS ABOUT THOSE WHO MESS UP

Luke 15:1-2, 11-32

October 5, 2008, Sunday P.M.

INTRODUCTION

- A. People who have messed up their lives often feel they can never come back.
- B. Jesus told three parables to illustrate that you may not be able make things right with society or your family, but you can with God.
 - 1. The parable of the Lost Son (15:11-32) has three main characters: The father, the younger son, and the older son. Both sons messed up their lives.
 - 2. This parable shows us how God responds to people who have messed up their lives. Notice....

I. SIN MESSED UP THE YOUNGER SON'S LIFE.

His story provides us with a pattern of how to come back after messing our lives up with sin. What steps did he take? What did he do?

- A. He faced himself or admitted his guilt--15:17.
"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!
 - 1. He didn't blame his father for letting him go.
 - 2. He accepted responsibility for his actions--Psalm 51:4.
Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.
- B. He made the first move--15:18-20.
¹⁸ **I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.**
¹⁹ **I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'**
²⁰ **So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.**
 - 1. He didn't wait for his father to come to him.
 - 2. We must not wait for God or the church to find us.
--James 4:2. **You do not have, because you do not ask God.**

II. SELF-PITY MESSED UP THE OLDER SON'S LIFE.

He indulged in self-pity because his younger brother was treated better than he was. What kind of damage can self-pity do?

- A. Self-pity destroys our happiness--15:28.
"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.
- B. Self-pity destroys our oneness or fellowship with God and other believers--15:31a.
"My son,' the father said, 'you are always with"
- C. Self-pity destroys our vision or perspective of God's goodness--15:31b.
"..... and everything I have is yours."

III. HOW DOES GOD RESPOND TO US IF WE MESS UP OUR LIVES WITH SIN OR SELF-PITY?

- A. The father in this parable loved, waited and welcomed the son who came back. He will do the same for us--15:20-24.
²⁰ **So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.**
²¹ **"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'**

²² **"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.**

²³ **Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.**

²⁴ **For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.**

- B. He would have done the same for the older brother but there is no record that he took responsibility for his actions and came back. Don't refuse to come back to your Father.

CONCLUSION

- A. Have you messed up your life with sin or self-pity?
- B. God will gladly forgive us if we will just make the first move toward Him (John 6:37).