

THE ELDER SON THAT STAYED HOME

Luke 15: 11 - 32

INTRODUCTION:

1. The story of the prodigal son is incomplete without the older son.
2. The sins of the older son are sins of disposition (the frame of mind; character; personality).
3. His character was brought to light when his brother returned.

I. THEIR CHARACTER IN CONTRAST

1. THE PRODIGAL:

- (1) Disobedient, v. 12
- (2) Wasteful -- "*spent all*", v. 14
- (3) Immoral -- "*harlots*", v. 30
- (4) Showed no strength of character until the last.

2. THE ELDER SON:

- (1) Obedient --v. 29 "*Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment*"
- (2) Moral
- (3) Not wasteful; a hard worker -- v. 25
- (4) Showed no weakness of character until at last.

3. The lesson we all need to learn is the sins of disposition are just as sinful as sins of a moral nature.

II. THE SINS OF THE ELDER SON:

1. The sin of ANGER -- Luke 15: 28 -- he lacked self-control; deep anger

- (1) Anger caused Cain to kill Abel -- Gen. 4: 3 - 8; I John 3: 11 -15; Hate -- Titus 3:3
- (2) Anger caused Esau to purpose to kill Jacob -- Gen. 27: 41 - 42; Joseph's brethren -- Gen. 37:4
- (3) Anger caused Jews that heard Stephen to take his life -- Acts 7: 54 - 60
- (4) Anger will divide homes and churches
- (5) What the Bible teaches about controlling anger -- Eph. 4:26; Prov. 16:32; 15:1; James 1:19; Tit. 1:7; Prov. 19:11; 25:28

2. SULKINESS (resentful) -- Lk. 15: 28

- (1) "*Would not go in*"
- (2) Like many church members when they do not get their way.
- (3) This is the way children act.
- (4) Christians are to act like men -- I Cor. 16:13

3. SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS -- Lk. 15: 29

- (1) Never transgressed -- "*I served thee*"

(2) Jesus spoke a parable on self-righteousness -- Lk. 18: 9 - 14

(3) A self-righteous attitude will keep us from seeing our sins -- Matt. 7: 1 - 5

4. He was filled with ENVY and JEALOUSY -- Lk. 15: 29 -- Envy is discontent at the excellence of another.

(1) What James says about envy -- James 3:16

(2) Joseph's brethren envied him -- Acts 7:9

(3) Brethren, many times, are jealous and envious of one another -- I Cor. 13:4

5. SELF-PITY -- Lk. 15:29 (born of self-concern & self esteem) -- Lk. 9:23; Matt. 16:24

(1) "*Thou never gavest me a kid*"

(2) This like saying "You gave him the fatted calf, I never so much as got a kid"

6. CONTEMPT

(1) "*This is thy son*" -- v. 30

(2) Would not call him "my brother"

(3) He could confess all the sins of his brother, but not his own.

7. MALICE (vicious disposition)

(1) He had an unforgiving heart -- Matt. 6: 14 - 15; Col. 3:13

(2) Eph. 4:31; I Pet. 2: 1

8. He was SELFISH

9. He DID NOT REJOICE to see a sinner repent -- 15: 7, 10

III. THOSE WHO SUFFERED FROM HIS SINS:

1. His brother, the prodigal son

(1) The elder son should have loved him and welcomed him home-- II Cor. 2: 7 - 8

(2) Instead, he made him unhappy (treated him inhuman).

(3) Brother love would have saved him from suffering -- I Pet. 3:8; 4:8

(4) The attitude of the church toward an erring brother who comes back -- II Cor. 2: 7 - 8; John 13: 34 - 35; Heb. 13:1; Rom. 13: 8 - 10

2. His Father

(1) His Father's rejoicing was interrupted and his love wounded.

(2) Festive joy cannot survive in the presence of an evil disposition.

3. Himself

(1) His disposition cut him off from the fellowship, the joy, and the love of the home.

(2) The Christian who has an evil disposition will be cut off from the fellowship of God -- Matt. 6: 14 - 15; 18: 15 - 17

IV. THE FATHER'S ENTREATY -- Luke 15: 28

1. The elder son accused his father of favoritism -- Lk. 15: 29 - 30

2. The elder son had no just ground of complaint

3. His brother had done wrong, but it was against his Father and God.
4. The elder son was not deprived of anything that was due him.
5. The favors being shown the returned son did not deprive the elder son of one single possession --Lk. 15: 31
6. The father said it was meet, or fitting, for the father and his household to be glad -- Lk. 15:32
7. They were glad, not on the ground of the worthiness of the younger son, for he had no just claim to the favors being accorded him.
8. The reason assigned by the father was that the son that was lost had been found -- Lk. 15:32
 - (1) He went to the son's heart and spoke in tenderness
 1. What he called him: SON -- Lk. 15:31 -- Not servant or slave
 2. What he promised him:
 - (1) Perpetual fellowship -- "*Thou art ever with me*" --15:31
 - (2) His possessions -- "*All that I have is thine*" --15:31
 - (3) His appeal to reason -- v. 32 -- "*This thy brother*"
 1. He sought to reunite brother to brother.
9. The Father in heaven is concerned about the lost, and is always ready to receive them as soon as they repent and do His will -- I John 1:9
10. He does not receive us because of our own worthiness, He receives us because of His love and Grace extended through Christ -- Tit. 2: 11 - 12; Eph. 2:8

CONCLUSION:

1. Are your attitudes right?
2. Do you need to make some changes?
3. Are you here and out of Christ?

Donald Townsley

(Judio, KY 1970; Grandview, Tompkinsville, KY 1970; Underwood Hts. Florence, AL 1976; River Bend, Florence, AL 1997)