

The Parable of The Running Father

Joh 1:18 NIV No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known....

In this parable Jesus reveals something of the Father to us...We typically call this **The Prodigal Son**, I read recently that in the Middle Eastern Church the story goes by another name: "**The Story of the Running Father**" - let's look at it from that perspective.

The context - religious leaders complaining that He receives sinners

- Luk 15:1-24 ESV Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. 2 And the **Pharisees and the scribes grumbled**, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." 3 **So he told them this parable:**

Jesus responds

(1) **he makes it personal - they can all understand the loss of a missing sheep or coin**

(2) **he gives us a glimpse into heaven and what moves the heart of God - this is what they missed**

- 4 **"What man of you, having a hundred sheep**, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' 7 ***Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents*** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.
- 8 **"Or what woman, having ten silver coins**, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' 10 ***Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.***"

The Son's state of mind

(1) **You see the son's state of mind that led to reckless living, lost everything and was alone**

(2) **Recognized his sin, and believed he was no longer worthy to be called YOUR SON**

11 And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. 17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' 20 And he arose and came to his father...

The Father

...But while he was still **a long way off**, his father **saw him** and **felt compassion**, and **ran** and **embraced** him and **kissed** him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 **But the father said** to his servants, 'Bring quickly the **best robe**, and

put it on him, and put **a ring on his hand**, and **shoes on his feet**. 23 And bring **the fattened calf** and kill it, and **let us eat and celebrate**. 24 For this **my son was dead**, and **is alive again**; he was **lost**, and is **found**.
And they began to celebrate.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him

- You're never so far away from God that he can't see you
- The Father was looking

He felt compassion, he ran and embraced him and kissed him

- He was moved with COMPASSION - he had pity - He is a God of emotion
- The Father RAN to him - he did not know why the boy was coming back (more money? to blast him?)
- He embraced him and kissed him - even tho he came from the pigs -- he was filthy
- He was not concerned about public ridicule or embarrassment about what his son had done

'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

- It is as if the Father turned a deaf ear to this
- The Father did not seem to care about what the son lost (the money) or that he lived recklessly
- The Father never mentioned the past - it's as if it is forgotten

Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.

- He moved QUICKLY to restore
- He gave the BEST robe
- It was complete restoration not probation
- When we repent and he is already moved to mercy
- He restored the son, gave his best and covered his shame the BEST robe, the ring and shoes
 - Genesis 27:15 when Rebekah took the choice clothes of Esau and put them on Jacob
 - Pharaoh put a ring on Joseph's when setting him into office in Egypt (Genesis 41:42)
 - In ancient biblical times only servants and slaves went barefoot...he is to be treated as a son

This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found

- He called him MY SON (not to his wife YOUR son, or to his other son YOUR brother) - even though the boy didn't feel worthy to be called a son - once again the Father turned a deaf ear to this comment - there was no sarcasm, no finger pointing, no condemnation
- He insisted on "son" putting himself into position as FATHER rather than MASTER
- He was dead, now he is alive

And they began to celebrate

- The Father celebrates, he includes others in the celebration and he anticipates it (a fatted calf was ready)
- The Father spared no expense to rejoice over this

<https://youtu.be/qdMe6bD3teg>