

“The Story of the Estranged Son”

The parable of the **Prodigal Son** is probably the best known parable in the New Testament. It is a **redemption** story.

First – the story of a shepherd who loses a sheep, which represents 1% of his flock. He goes looking for the sheep and finds it.

Second – the story of a woman who loses a coin in her house. The coin represents 10% of her wealth. She looks for it and finds it.

Everyone rejoices when they **find** something that had been **lost**.

A son who was estranged from his father and then “**came to his senses**” (Luke 15:12) and humbly asked his father if he could come home, even if it was to be just a servant in his **father’s household**.

Context is always a central issue in understanding the Bible.

“Now the tax collectors and ‘sinners’ were all gathering around to hear him (Jesus). But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’”

Luke 15:1-2

Jesus told the three parables to get a point across to the **Pharisees** and **teachers of the law**.

“I tell you there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”

Luke 15:7

“I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Luke 15:10

Luke 15:25-31

The waiting father represents God.

The prodigal son represents the tax collectors and sinners.

The older brother represented the Pharisees and teachers of the law. They refused to rejoice when tax collectors and sinners repented and came to the Father.

When the father asked the older son to rejoice at his brother's return home, the older son refused.

At the end of the parable, which son was estranged from the father? Which son failed to **share the father's heart**?

God not only valued sinners, He loved them and rejoiced when they sought to know Him and love Him.

The parable is really about the son who had been in the father's house the whole time but somehow failed to realize who His father really was.

The parable is about the son who **failed to share the Father's heart**.

Do we share the Father's heart?

Do we share the heart of the Father?

Matthew 21:28-32

Which son pleased the father?

The one who does the will of God is far more pleasing to the Father than one who promises to do the will of God, but then fails to do what the Father wants.

“When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself.”
John 12:32

“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

“Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20

We don't have to go to the ends of the earth to find lost people.
They're here!

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come”.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Will we rejoice when the lost envision the cross and are drawn to the One who died there for them?

Will we be witnesses anywhere we go so that people might realize the love of God, the truth of the Gospel, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

The **church** exists for the sake of those **not yet in it**.

Are we a “**younger son**” church?
Or are we an “**older son**” church?

Do we have the **Father’s heart**?