

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: The Ungrateful Brother

SERMON REFERENCE: Luke 15:11-32

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1381

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Each of us need to examine our faith.
 - i) Today's message will share three measurements so that we can learn about our relationship with God and discover our readiness to come to the Lord's table.
- b) The Lord's Supper is a time of celebration, but some are not ready to celebrate.
- c) Luke 15:11-32
 - i) Verse 17 implies that a person away from God is really not in his right mind.
 - ii) This is a story that the Lord Jesus gave to the Pharisees.
 - (1) The Pharisees had complained about the Lord Jesus and criticized Him for keeping company with sinners.
- d) The story of the prodigal son is a story of two sons and two kinds of sinners.
 - i) One son is the prodigal.
 - (1) He was a rebel and a renegade.
 - (2) He ended up penniless, shameless and friendless.
 - (3) His were the sins of the flesh.
 - ii) The other son stayed at home.
 - (1) Outwardly, he was a fine son.
 - (2) He worked hard and kept his father's commandments outwardly.
 - (3) He did nothing wrong that anyone could obviously see.
 - (4) His were not the sins of the flesh but the sins of the spirit.
- e) There are some sins that are outward, and there are some sins that are inward.
 - i) There are some sins that are gross sins, and there are other sins that are more subtle.
- f) People tend to pay more attention to the prodigal son than they do the elder brother because we are so much like the elder brother.
- g) The love of God that melted the heart of one sinner hardened the heart of another sinner.
 - i) The elder brother was outwardly moral, but Jesus made havoc of his list of virtues.
 - ii) Jesus had compassion for the outward sinner, but He had harsh words for those who were self-righteous and would not let go of the sins of the spirit.
- h) Our lives ought to be lived with a pure, sincere and overflowing love for God.
 - i) That love for God should lead to service for our Lord.
 - ii) That service for our Lord ought to lead to wonderful, abounding joy.
 - (1) Love, service and joy ought to mark our lives.

2) WE MAY MEASURE OUR LOVE FOR THE FATHER BY OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR BROTHER

- a) 1 John 4:20

- b) There are people who would like to assume the place of a son without assuming the responsibility of a brother.
 - c) A person is not ready to take the Lord's Supper if there is hate in his heart for a child of God.
 - i) If you have resentment, envy, jealousy, hatred, malice or contempt for your brother or sister, do not partake of the Lord's Supper until you've confessed that sin, for you are not right with God.
 - d) We measure our love for the Father by our love for our brother.
 - i) We can't see God the Father, but we can see our brother.
 - ii) In a very practical way, that which we can see is that which we can measure.
 - (1) We can't see what's on the inside, but we can see what's on the outside.
 - e) One would have thought that the elder brother would have been thankful that his younger brother had come home.
 - i) But he was a poor son because he was such a poor brother.
 - ii) The elder son may have been jealous of the good time he thought the prodigal son had been having.
 - (1) He may have been envious of the people who were doing things that he didn't get a chance to do.
- 3) WE MAY MEASURE OUR SERVICE TO THE FATHER BY OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER (LUKE 15:25-29)
- a) Luke 15:25-29
 - i) The elder son had been working in the field.
 - (1) He had not been wasting his substance with riotous living.
 - ii) The elder son was interested in service.
 - (1) It's obvious that he was a hard worker.
 - (2) But we may measure our service for the Father by our fellowship with the Father.
 - b) There are people who have worked in the church for many years, but they don't have fellowship with God.
 - c) The elder brother was someone we would have considered to be a model worker, yet he did not know the father's heart.
 - i) He did not understand what motivated his father.
 - (1) His father had a broken heart over a son who was away from home.
 - ii) Similarly, God is not primarily concerned about our church buildings or the number in the choir or great orchestras.
 - iii) This elder brother was serving God without ever really knowing the heart of God.
 - (1) It was simply legalistic service.
 - (2) He was serving for a reward.
 - d) 2 Corinthians 9:7
 - i) What is not cheerfully, willingly given, God neither needs nor wants.

- ii) We're to give out of a heart motivated with love.
 - e) If we only serve for reward, then it won't be long before we start complaining that we're not being blessed sufficiently.
 - i) And if someone else is blessed more than we're blessed, then we're really going to be complaining.
 - f) If we serve the Lord out of a love for Him and not for reward, then we will be blessed indeed.
 - g) The elder brother did not know what made his father's heart beat, but he could have known.
 - i) He should have known, but he didn't.
- 4) WE MAY MEASURE OUR JOY WITH THE FATHER BY OUR SHARING OF THE FATHER'S BURDEN (LUKE 15:29-32)
- a) Luke 15:29-32
 - i) The elder brother did not make merry; he wasn't glad.
 - (1) He had no joy because he was wrapped up in himself.
 - (2) He didn't have the father's burden.
 - b) In Luke 15:29, the elder brother said "I", "me" or "my" five times.
 - i) He was full of self-righteousness and self-centeredness.
 - ii) He was full of self-pity.
 - iii) He was miserable.
 - (1) And so will we be if we do not share the Father's burden.
 - c) If we do not share the Father's burden, then we'll never know the Father's joy.
 - i) If we do not love our brother, then we don't love the Father.
 - ii) If we don't have fellowship with the Father, then our service amounts to nothing.
 - iii) The elder brother had it all, yet he had nothing.
 - d) Luke 15:31
 - i) The elder brother had everything but the thing he wanted most, which was joy.
 - ii) He had position because he was a son.
 - iii) He had privilege because he was with the father.
 - iv) He has possession because the father says, "All that I have is yours."
 - (1) In Bible times, the elder son received 2/3 of the inheritance, and the younger son only received 1/3.
 - (2) Almost everything that was left really belonged to the elder son.
 - v) The elder brother had all of this, yet he had no joy.
 - e) Many Christians today don't know why they're not experiencing joy in their faith.
 - i) It's because they don't share the Father's burden.
 - (1) They don't see things from God's point of view.
 - f) This young man needed to understand that in the father's house, there is always a surplus.
 - i) The prodigal son knew that.

- (1) Luke 15:17
- ii) There is enough of God's grace for all of us.
- g) What burdens the Father's heart is a child away from Him.
 - i) What gladdens the Father's heart is a child returning to Him.
 - (1) Luke 15:7
 - (2) Luke 15:10
 - (a) This verse does not say that the angels rejoice, but that there's joy in the presence of the angels.
 - (b) It is the Lord who rejoices when a sinner comes home.
 - ii) It gives the Father joy for sinners to come home, and it will give us joy, too.
 - (1) Psalm 126:6
- h) The elder brother didn't share his father's concern and didn't know how his father felt because he spent no time with his father.
 - i) The reason many people don't have a love for the lost is because they don't have a quiet time with God.
 - ii) It is not primarily a love for lost souls that we need, but it's a love for God that we need.
 - (1) John 21:16-17
- i) The elder brother shut out the concern of his father while pretending to serve his father.
- j) Find out what burdens the Father, and then let that burden you.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) The Christian life is summed up in love for the Father, service to the Father and joy with the Father.
 - i) Your love for the Father is measured by your love for your brother.
 - ii) Your service to the Father is measured by your fellowship with the Father.
 - iii) Your joy with the Father is measured by the degree to which you share the Father's burden.
 - (1) Psalm 126:6
- b) If you've been serving the Lord legalistically and if your service to the Lord has been a substitute for your fellowship with the Lord, then repent and get right with God today.
- c) If you don't know Jesus Christ personally, you can today.
 - i) Pray to Him and ask Him to come into your life.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16