
**Study Questions for the September 19, 2021 Sermon:
“The Joy of Coming Home”
Luke 15:11-32**

1. If you accept the interpretation that the father in the parable represents our Father in heaven, what attributes of God the Father are displayed in the parable?
2. Review Luke 15: 1 – 2.
 - a. Who were the two groups to whom Jesus was preaching?
 - b. What do you believe was the major point, or points, Jesus was making to the first group?
 - c. What do you believe was the major point, or points, Jesus was making to the second group?
3. Let's assume that the younger son was in his 20's. Was it wrong for him to crave more adventure and autonomy than he experienced at home?
4. No doubt, when the younger son was squandering his money, he had “friends”. Yet no one offered to help him when he was starving. In our own time, we can accumulate “friends” on social media. What distinguishes between authentic and inauthentic friends?
5. “Hedonism” is a lifestyle of making pleasure our highest value.
 - a. What might a hedonist learn from this parable?
 - b. The Christian life certainly includes great pleasures. How do we discern between godly and ungodly pleasures?
6. The younger son was essentially requesting, prior to his father's death, his portion of his father's inheritance. The father was not obligated to grant his son's request, and the son was lacking in wisdom and maturity. Yet the father complied. If the father represents God, what does this action teach us about God's nature?

7. In verses 18 and 19, the son made a resolution. In verse 20, he carried out his resolution. Pastor Paul emphasized that resolutions are meaningless until we act. Share a story about a time in your life there was a delay between making a resolution and acting on the resolution. Explain what finally motivated you to act.
8. What words and actions of the younger son indicate that he engaged in authentic repentance?
9. The older son came home from working in the field, heard sounds of celebration, and learned from a servant that there was a party going on, to celebrate his loser-brother's return.
 - a. Discuss whether you can sympathize with his resentment.
 - b. Read the father's response to the son, in verses 31 and 32. Now read the employer's response, in Matthew 20: 13 – 15, to the workers who grumbled about receiving the same pay as those who worked only one hour. State, in no more than two sentences, what Jesus wants us to learn from the father and employer.