

“The Elder Brother”
Luke 15:25-32
Pastor John Miller

I. Introduction

- A. We now get to the application of the parable of the prodigal son.
 - 1. The respectable older brother and the rejoicing father (v.v. 25-32)
 - 2. We see the two kinds of sinners
 - a) The younger was a scandalous sinner
 - b) The elder was a sanctimonious sinner
 - 3. There are sins of the flesh and sins of the spirit
 - a) Action sins and attitude sins
 - b) The prodigal pictures the tax collectors and sinners
 - c) The elder brother pictures the self-righteous Pharisees
 - d) The father pictures God the Father
 - 1) The rejoicing father (v.24)
 - 2) But not everyone was rejoicing

II. The Angry Older Brother (Luke 15:25-28a)

- A. Picture to scene
 - 1. Everybody was joyful and having a wonderful time
 - a) Everyone except the elder brother
 - 2. “He was angry and would not go in” (v.28)
 - a) Contrast the two sons
 - b) Outside, now inside; Inside, now outside
 - c) He was angry and not getting his way (selfishness)
 - 1) Stubbornness and self-righteousness
 - d) “Anger” is literally “boiling with anger”
 - 1) He would not forgive his brother
 - 2) He was saying, “It’s not fair, I kept the rules”
 - 3) He did not have the father’s heart
 - 4) He is showing contempt for his brother and his father
 - 3. His angry, stubborn heart is keeping him from the party

III. The Pleading, Seeking Father (Titus 3:10-11)

- A. The father could not have sent out a servant to order his son to come inside.
 - 1. The father who humbled himself to run to the returning prodigal son, now graciously and lovingly goes out to plead or to compel his elder son to come in
 - 2. The father’s great love for the elder son
 - a) The father was not angry with his son

IV. The Complaint of the Older Brother (Luke 15:29-30)

- A. His anger (v.28)
 - 1. Toward the father

2. His contempt
- B. He now opens his mouth (v.v. 29-30)
 1. Self-righteous (v.29)
 2. Ungrateful (v.29)
 - a) Unthankful
 - b) “This is not fair, I kept the rules”
 - c) He did the right thing with the wrong attitude
 3. Unloving (v.30)
 - a) “Not my brother, but my son”
 4. Unforgiving (v.30)
 - a) He wants justice, not grace and mercy
 - b) Anger, pride, self-righteousness, and un-forgiveness all make us miss the party
 - c) He needs to repent and be saved

V. The Choice of the Older Brother (Luke 15:31-32)

- A. The father had grace even after the elder son’s angry outburst.
 1. The son had said “you never gave me...” (v.31)
 2. “This thy son...” (v.32)

VI. Conclusion

- A. It’s a window to see God the Father’s heart
- B. It’s a mirror to see yourself
 1. Are you the younger son?
 2. Are you the older brother?
 3. Jesus receives sinners (v.2)
- C. We were once dead and lost, but now we are alive and found