

Living with the Assurance That God Enjoys Us (Lk. 15)

I. JESUS REVEALED THE FATHER (LK. 15)

- A. In Luke 15, Jesus taught three parables that have profound implications for our lives today. This chapter gives us one of the most significant revelations of God in the Scriptures. In these parables, Jesus revealed how God pursues, enjoys, shows mercy to, and feels affection for His people. The truth that Jesus emphasized here is that God delights in forgiving and restoring His people (Mic. 7:18; Lk. 15: 4-7, 9-10, 23, 32). He enjoys relationship with His people, even in their weakness.
¹⁸***“Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity [sin]...because He delights in mercy.” (Mic. 7:18)***
- B. The way we view God’s heart toward us in our sin and weakness affects how we approach God. It determines whether we run *to* God or *from* God when we stumble in sin and weakness.
Spiritual principal: If we feel dirty, then we will live dirty. If we feel clean, then we will live clean.
- C. The greatest emotional need for all humans is *the assurance that they are enjoyed by God*, even in their weakness. We were all created with a longing to know that God delights in us and enjoys us.
- D. By the blood of Jesus, we can draw near to God with the full assurance that He receives us with joy.
¹⁹***Therefore...having boldness to enter the Holiest [God’s presence] by the blood of Jesus...***
²²***let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance [confidence] of faith... (Heb. 10:19-22)***
- E. There is no condemnation before God for a believer, yet Satan accuses us continually before God.
¹***There is...now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus... (Rom. 8:1)***
¹⁰***...for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night... (Rev. 12:10)***
- F. The view of many is that *God is mostly mad or mostly sad when He relates to us*. One of the most important questions of our spiritual journey is: how does God feel when He looks at me?
- G. Jesus walked in the anointing of gladness more than any man in history (Heb. 1:9). Gladness and joy are at the center of Jesus’ personality. David described God’s heart as full of joy and pleasures (Ps. 16:11). Jesus’ heart posture and leadership style flow from His joy and gladness.
⁹***God has anointed You [Jesus] with the oil of gladness more than Your companions. (Heb. 1:9)***
¹¹***In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forever. (Ps. 16:11)***
- H. The Lord delights in and rejoices over His people (Deut. 30:9; Isa. 62:4; Jer. 32:41; Zeph. 3:17).
⁴***...But you shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you...⁵as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. (Isa. 62:4-5)***
¹⁷***“...He will rejoice over you with gladness...He will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zeph. 3:17)***

II. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SON (LK. 15:11-32): THE PRODIGAL SON

A. This parable shows us how the Father responds to a son who rebels against Him.

¹¹Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me’...¹³...the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. ¹⁴But when he had spent all...¹⁵Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.” (Lk. 15:11-16)

B. The son repented (as expressed in v. 18, 21), but had a wrong view of himself before his father.

¹⁷“But when he came to himself [repentance], he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”’” (Lk. 15:17-19)

C. Jesus was describing how His Father responds when His people repent. This parable is not first about a son who lost his inheritance, but about a father who lost his son and then restored him.

²⁰“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.” (Lk. 15:20)

1. **Saw:** The father was earnestly watching for the return of his son.
2. **Compassion:** The father had tender feelings, not anger, toward the prodigal son.
3. **Ran:** The father had enthusiasm; it was unusual for a father to run to a rebellious son.
4. **Fell on his neck:** The father embraced him instead of being disgusted and angry.
5. **Kissed:** The father’s kiss signified the restoration of favor.

D. The son only mentioned two of the three statements that he had originally planned to say (v. 19).

²¹“And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’” (Lk. 15:21)

E. The father interrupted his son’s confession and gave him the best robes, the family ring, and new shoes, along with killing a fatted calf to host a feast to celebrate the return of his son (v. 22-24).

²²“But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴...my son was dead and is alive again...’ And they began to be merry.” (Lk. 15:22-24)

1. **Best robe:** God provides us with the garments of salvation (Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:4).
2. **Ring:** Authority was entrusted to him to represent the family business.
3. **Sandals:** Slaves did not have sandals; only family members received family privileges.
4. **Fatted calf:** A calf was killed for special occasions to show honor to important guests.
5. **Be merry:** The father rejoiced and enjoyed the prodigal on the day that he repented, even though he still had many areas in his life that needed to be changed.

F. **Summary:** God feels gladness over His returning “prodigals,” and restores them to His favor. We see this in the way the father gave his son the best robe and family ring *on the very day he returned*.