Time to Celebrate

Scripture Reading — Luke 15:25-32

“We had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again …” —Luke 15:32 —

This parable is often wrongly named. In the second part of the story the prodigal recedes into the background, and we meet his elder brother. The father actually has more trouble with this son than with the younger one. In the end we are not sure if the elder brother will even join the feast. But how would we behave in a similar situation?

Both the prodigal and the older brother are self-centered. The younger son’s main concern is to rid himself of the restrictions of home and family life and be freed to do as he pleases in the attractive outside world. The older son grumbles about the sacrifices he has made and the luxuries he has missed while working and being responsible. He cannot acknowledge his father’s joy; it makes no sense to him. In the end, the older brother excludes himself from fellowship with his father just as the younger son did earlier.

We can understand the older brother’s position; he was just following the normal cultural patterns, and he wanted to see evidence of a changed life before he would celebrate his brother’s return.

Longtime Christians often place similar demands on others to shape up and get it together when really it is time to celebrate. The Father has welcomed home the forgiven sinner, and we must be ready to join the party.

Prayer

Lord, we often act like the older brother. By your grace remove the blindfolds from our eyes so that we can see others as you see them. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

Devotion topics: Christianity, Doctrine, Forgiveness, Discipleship, Grace, Life, Family & Relationships

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