

Sunday School Lesson

Subject: Teaching About Lostness
Lesson Scripture - Luke 15

INTRODUCTION

During the Civil War someone asked Abraham Lincoln how he intended to treat the Confederates after the war and they returned to the Union. Lincoln answered, "I will treat them as if they had never been away."

God's attitude toward us is similar when He reconciles us to Himself through Jesus Christ. He treats us as though we were never separated; as if we had never sinned.

No parable of Jesus made this truth blainer than the one in today's lesson. This parable has been given many different titles - the prodigal son, the elder brother, the loving father and the waiting father. Regardless of how we label it, the parable teaches us that God cares about lost people - and we should also.

LESSON BACKGROUND

It would be a mistake to read this parable without reading verses 1-10 and 25-32 in this chapter.

Jesus told this parable to answer criticism that He was receiving from the Pharisees and scribes. They were accusing Him for receiving sinners and eating with them, (Luke 15:2). How could Jesus justify His actions that were so nontraditional? He told three parables in reply. All three have two things in common: something was lost and something was found.

In the first parable, a sheep was lost and the owner left his 99 sheep that were safe and searched in the wilderness until he found the one that was lost. When he found it, he told his friends and neighbors his good news and they rejoiced with him.

In the second parable, a woman lost one silver coin, a drachma (an Ancient Greek silver coin—\$0.009 in American money). The drachma was equal to one day's pay for a soldier or a day laborer. That would be like losing a \$50 bill or more today. The woman searched diligently for the money. Perhaps she wanted to find it before her husband got home. When she did find it, her friends celebrated with her.

But in the third parable, a person was lost and not everyone was happy when he was found. The elder brother had a tantrum when his younger brother returned home. The elder brother represented the attitude of the Pharisees and scribes, who were complaining because Jesus greeted the sinners so warmly.

In these three parables of grace, Jesus not only set forth the compassionate care and concern and love of God for the lost, but also skillfully rebuked the attitude of the Pharisees.

The younger man in this parable had come to the place where he was tired of his father's restraint, his guidance and his care. He wanted to "get out there" and experience life on his own and find real happiness. To do this, of course, he needed money. And so he requested his portion of the inheritance. Now, he didn't wish to wait until his father's death as was the custom. Once he got the money he could not stand the heat of all that money burning a hole in his pocket. His father's heart must have ached as he watched his son pack and take his inheritance. It seemed apparent that the son did not intend to return. This boy was not just leaving home, he was leaving to be rid of his father's control and the values by which life in his father's home had been guided.

The same type of separation experience happens in the spiritual family. At one time or another, we all "go our own way" and leave our Heavenly Father behind. Some purposely rebel, being enamored by the glitter and promise of the world's pleasures and go into that "far country." This can happen even after a person becomes a Christian. The straying urge does not automatically die in the baptism.

Away from his father's presence and influence the young man proceeded to squander his money. It is possible that the boy squandered his money by gross irresponsibility, making poor purchases and bad investments rather than in immorality. The elder brother tells how he thought the younger brother lived when he said "devoured thy living with harlots," (v. 30) but we cannot be sure.

The same could happen in our families. Our children may experiment with priorities and values different from the Christian values that prevail in the home. One of the marks of growing through the adolescent years is the adolescents' decision concerning what value system he will accept. Although the peer group pulls powerfully, it does not have to steal our children from us. The more friendship and two-way communication that are present in the home, the more likely the child will decide after comparing his parents' values with those of other people that his parents' values are responsible.



King Charles Dupree with
...Queen Adaleen Dupree

Second Ward Alumni Cites

Charles, Adaleen Dupree

The Second Ward High School Alumni, Charlotte Chapter, presented its third annual Red, White and Green Christmas Ball recently at the Park Center on Kings Drive.

The highlight of the program was the annual Coronation. The king and queen of the alumni for 1983, Charles and Adaleen Dupree (brother and sister) were crowned by 1982's king and queen Jimmie McKee and Ida Mobley.

The prince and princess for 1983 were Obie Blackwell and Shirley Milligan.

The honor and dedication of this affair was rendered to Dr. Mildred Baxter Davis, president emeritus of the Second Ward High School Alumni. Dr. Davis was elected supervisor of water and soil conservation for the city of Charlotte in the November election.

A member of the alumni stated, "with the many other community and civic duties that Dr. Baxter is committed to, she still has the love of Second Ward

High School in her heart. By her untiring efforts, she was successful in organizing the Second Ward High School Alumni."

The Red, White and Green committee was made up of Jerod Green, chairman; Mrs. Julia Dobby, co-chairperson; Vermelle Ely, Mrs. Ida Mobley; Price Davis; Annette Cowan; Obie Blackwell; Mrs. Maxine Weathers; Tommy Williams; Rosebud Junious; and Annie Mae Evans.

The officers are Price Davis, president; Jerod Green, vice president; Mrs. Maxine Weathers, recording secretary; Mrs. Barbara Barnette, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Doreatha Leak, financial secretary; Tommy Williams, treasurer; and Rev. Edward Garrison, chaplain.

Music for the gala affair was provided by Onyx. The ball was brought to a close by the 1983 king and queen, the singing of the sweet-heart song, "Tell Me Why," and the alma mater.

SCOPE

A Different Resolution

Editor's Note: The Charlotte Post is proud to announce the addition of Sabrina Johnson to its writing staff. Her articles have appeared in the past as specials to The Post; now she will appear weekly under the title of SCOPE.

By Sabrina Johnson
Post Staff Writer

Three weeks have passed since the changing of the year and many have forgotten most of the resolutions made to better one's personal quality of life. Everyone wants to better his life, but has one seriously examined the matter?

Upon enhancing the personal life, one must work to enhance the community life. Americans need to exchange the "I" philosophy (as a standard of life) for the "we" philosophy as a standard of living. During these recessionary times it is most important that Americans work together

to rebuild the national strength that made this nation so highly admired by its peers.

The I philosophy appears to be one of the elements that led to the recession. How so? By inflated wage demands, the decline and degeneration of American made products, excessive imports and general despar in American productivity. If the community does not soon come together, the ideal of a United States may soon become a fact of the past. The constitutional backbone of this nation has the potential to once again surpass all the rest if the community rallies once again to make the United States and her products the best. And for this to happen the emphasis on I must be rerouted to we; and we can make things better this improving the personal quality of life - making the trickle down theory work.

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