

The Case of the Bitter Brother

September 23, 2018

Scripture:

Luke 15:25-32 (ESV)

[25] “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. [26] And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. [27] And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ [28] But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, [29] but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. [30] But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ [31] And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. [32] It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

I. _____ weakness

A. The son's personal weakness is evidenced by his smoldering _____ of his situation.

B. Like the son, our personal weaknesses can cause us to act in discontent toward others whom God has _____.

II. _____ weakness

A. The son's relational weakness is evidenced by his unwillingness to _____ his father.

B. Like the son, our relational weaknesses can cause us to dishonor our Heavenly Father and others through attitudes of _____.

III. _____ weakness

A. The son's spiritual weakness is evidenced by unwillingness to _____ his brother.

B. Like the son, our spiritual weaknesses can cause us to replace the joy of the Spirit with a spirit of _____.

Remember:

Shakespeare said that the wise man knows himself to be a fool. The fool thinks he is a wise man.

Reflect:

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

[21] Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” [22] Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. – Matt 18:21-22

Seek:

- 1) Some who have been a part of the body of Christ and squandered their inheritance with selfish actions often bring pain to those who are close to them in the faith. Have you ever found yourself hurting from the actions of a “prodigal” brother or sister in the faith? How did you handle the pain? Record your thoughts for sharing.

Share:

- 1) In much the same manner as our story, some who walk away and squander their inheritance find their way home. Consider the previous scenario under “Seek,” or a similar one in which the “prodigal” returned home. Did you struggle with bitterness regarding the one who returned? Were you able to overcome it with the Lord’s help? Share your thoughts.

Serve:

- 1) As long as Jesus tarries there will always be those who will come and go in the body; many leaving pain and hurt in their wake. Maybe you know someone who is currently suffering like the eldest son. What might you do to help them through this time?

Pray:

This week, in your prayer time ask God how He might use you to restore a lost brother or sister. Be willing to allow Him to use you even if it means seeking to reach one who has caused you pain.