

Parable of Lost Son Luke 15:11-32

Last week we looked at the stories Jesus told about the lost sheep and coin. Today we will begin looking at the 3rd story about something lost. Jesus takes a different approach with this story.

As we approach this story, let's ponder a question that Jesus was trying to get the Pharisees and scribes to understand. What is my church here to do? Is it a place for me to come and have my needs met? Or is it a place for the lost to come and receive God's unconditional love? What is my attitude toward this matter?

Read vs. 11-32

Let's look at these 2 boys for a moment. Upon the request of the younger son, dad divided his estate between his sons. The younger son left home while the older one remained and help run the business.

I believe both sons were lost. For most of us, the story centers on the younger son, his wild living, lost ness, and coming to his senses, and returning home to be received by dad with great love and celebration.

We can parallel this son with people today who do not love and serve God. This year we have had 5 baptisms showing that people have accepted Christ and came into God's family.

Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life..." "I am the way, the truth, and the life..."

Is this what Northgate Baptist is all about or are we about something else? My question is not what we should be but what are we?

I believe the oldest son was lost also but couldn't see it. Jesus likened him to the religious leaders of that day. Remember, the oldest son had received his share of the inheritance also. He chose to remain home and work with his father.

It was while being with his father that he lost his way. It was slow and un-noticed until the younger son came back home. Then his sin reared its ugly head; the sin of jealousy. The oldest son was living with the father, everything belonged to the oldest son, and yet he had become complacent and did not realize all he had.

How many times we look at our church though the eyes of the oldest son. We have been here so long that we believe everything should be about and for us. When someone new comes in, we have problems allowing them to be part of the family.

We make plans that support our needs while neglecting the needs of those lost in our community. We send money to the cooperative program to support missionaries across the world and place money in our own mission fund, but yet are unwilling to go ourselves to meet some of those needs. Then we complain when someone in need gets more than we do.

Which son describes you?

If you identify with the youngest son, God is waiting and looking for you to come with a humble heart. He wants to hold you in His arms. He wants to restore you into the family. He wants to give you eternal life.

If you identify with the oldest son, God is waiting for you to repent also. He is pleading with you to realize your sin and admit your wrong. He wants to restore the joy in your life. He wants you to celebrate eternal life.