

Series: Gospel Of Luke

Sunday, February 22. Read our daily sermon reflections on GCC's app (under Devotionals) or at gardiner.church/devotions

1. L **HOME: Far Country & Near Field**

(Luke 15:11-16, 25-30; see also Leviticus 11:7-8)

- The younger son demands his inheritance (wishing his father dead) and squanders it with prostitutes (v30). He ends up feeding pigs, and is so desperate that he even envies their food. The older son never leaves physically, but his heart reveals his lostness: 'All these years I've been slaving for you' (v29). He serves out of obligation and resentment, not love, unable to come home to the father's heart. Do I serve God with love and joy, or with obligation and scorekeeping?

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2. C **HOME: The Father Goes Out Twice**

(Luke 15:17-24, 28-32; see also Ephesians 2:1-5; Romans 5:20, 6:1-2)

- When the younger son is still far off, the father runs to him. In that culture, elderly men never ran (it required hiking up robes, exposing legs, utterly shameful). The father absorbs shame to reach his son before the village can reject or harm him. When the older son refuses to enter, the father leaves his own party to plead with him. The father pursues both sons, bearing disgrace for both.
- God pursued you at the cross. Jesus bore ultimate shame so you could be clothed in righteousness and welcomed home. Note that the Father refuses to accept the son as a servant—he wants his son home. Do I truly understand that God pursued me, not because I earned it, but because of His love? How does understanding this grace change how I live?

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Turn page over for #3

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3. C..... AT HOME: Who's Inside?

(Luke 15:23-32)

- The father throws a party with music, dancing, and the fattened calf. The younger son is inside, home at last. The father is outside pleading with the older son. Jesus leaves the ending unfinished—we don't know if the older brother comes home.
- **To the obvious rebel:** The Father wants you home. Come home. Let him clothe you in righteousness and celebrate your return from death to life.
- **To the religious but lost:** Stop trying to work for what Jesus has already done. Come home. You've been invited to belong, not to perform.
- **To the joyless faithful:** You've been serving faithfully, but where's your joy? When did serving God become drudgery? Come home to His heart. It's not duty; it's delight in a Father who loves you.
- Do either of these brothers relate to my condition? Which one? Will I come home?

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Application For This Week: Reflect on your relationship with God. Are you experiencing the joy of being His beloved child? Where do you need to “come to your senses” and come Home to God? Where do you need to seek the Lord, instead of religion itself? Where do you need to be refilled with God’s joy, instead of resentment?

Prayer: “Heavenly Father, thank You for pursuing us and bearing shame at the cross so we could be welcomed home as Your children. Search our hearts. If we’ve run far from You, give us courage to come home. If we’ve been near but never known Your heart, open our eyes. If we’ve lost our joy, restore it. Thank You that where sin increased, grace increased all the more. Help us live transformed lives. Give us grace to come home and stay home, living as Your beloved children. In Jesus' Name, Amen.”

Verses To Meditate On This Week:

“Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate.
— Luke 15:23b-24

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