

# Caring for Your Soul - Part 2

2 November 2017



## **A Tale of Two Sons**

The parable of the prodigal son is a story of a man who is undeserving and unworthy but who gets promoted to the privilege usually associated with a firstborn (Luke 15:17-22). He characterises an insatiable desire to be reconciled with the Father. He comes with humility and absolutely no sense of entitlement. He came face-to-face with his brokenness and was sober regarding the state of his heart. In this humble state, the father restored him completely into the responsibilities and privileges of a firstborn son.

He received from his father:

The best **robe** – signifying the restoration of his **identity**.

A pair of **sandals** – signifying purpose and vision; his **destiny** being restored.

A **ring** – which signifies his **authority** as a son being restored. He could now act and speak on behalf of the father.

When we apply this to our lives in Christ we realise that the entry point to receiving our role as firstborn sons and daughters is through the gate of absolute humility and a sober realisation of our desperate state. The challenge is that it is extremely difficult to stay humble in the kingdom, especially when we are working so hard for our Father! Subtly, entitlement creeps in and we don't even see it.

## **The Trap of Entitlement**

We could easily be trapped in becoming like the elder son. He got upset that his father would show so much favour to an undeserving brother. He afforded himself rights in the spirit of entitlement, but these could only be his in the spirit of humility and sobriety with regards to the privileges he enjoyed.

Please ask the Lord to show you where you have felt indignant most recently because of a brother

or sister's God-ordained promotion in the body of Christ. You may have felt that it should have been given to you, or maybe that they did not deserve the honour.

Share it with your accountability partner and ask the Lord to heal your heart and forgive your error in judgement.

## **Common Misperceptions of the Father**

So let us come to our Father of love, embracing and believing who he really is, not who the world and Satan has tried to make him out to be. A false perception of the Father frequently keeps us from approaching Him and finding urgently-needed grace.

As you go through the following common misperceptions of the Father, discern which lies may have taken root in your heart and choose to reject them. Then choose to accept the truth about who God really is.

### **I Reject:**

That the Father is not interested and distant.

### **I Accept:**

That He is interested, intimate and involved. (Psalm 139)

### **I Reject:**

That He is insensitive and uncaring.

### **I Accept:**

That He is very kind and full of compassion. (Psalm 103:8-14)

### **I Reject:**

That He is unsympathetic, disapproving and demanding.

### **I Accept:**

He embraces me and rejoices over me with love, gladness and singing. (Zephaniah 3:17)

### **I Reject:**

That He is not present and too busy for me.

### **I Accept:**

He is always with me and wants to be with me. (Hebrews 13:5; John 14:17-18)

### **I Reject:**

That He is impatient and angry and never satisfied with what I do.

**I Accept:**

That He completely knows where I am at and is patient and slow to anger. (Psalm 103:14, 8-9)

**I Reject:**

That He is harsh, mean and manipulative.

**I Accept:**

That He is gracious, gentle, merciful and full of loving kindness. He is my protector. (Psalm 145:8-9; 18:2)

**I Reject:**

That He wants to take the fun out of life.

**I Accept:**

That He wants me to live a full life of abundance. He wants me to step into His perfect, pleasing and acceptable will for the breath He has given me. (John 10:10, Romans 12:2)

**I Reject:**

That He does not allow me to make mistakes and has no understanding of my challenges and weaknesses.

**I Accept:**

His grace is sufficient for me and He has enough grace and understanding when I fail. (Luke 15:11-16 prodigal son, Hebrews 4:15-16)

**I Reject:**

The idea of a finicky, perfectionistic and nit-picky Father.

**I Accept:**

That the Father is patient in my growth and excited. He is proud of every step I take in my growth as His child. (Hebrews 12:5-11; Romans 8:28-29)

Remember that all of the behaviour that God encourages us to excel in towards others He already excels in towards us. (Romans 12:9-21; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8) Christ is the firstborn in the Kingdom of God in the New Covenant; without sin and completely holy. Being the firstborn, He completely satisfied God's prerequisites and satisfied God's indignation and anger with sin and unholiness. We literally ride into the Kingdom of God on Christ's back, like a parent carrying His child. In and through Christ we are also the firstborn in the Kingdom of God. All of this is established by Jesus Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection.

We thank God for the life we now have in his Son!

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