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MESSAGE NOTES - FEBRUARY 15th, 2026

The Prodigal (pt. 3)

Luke 15:11-32 NLT “A man had two sons. 12 The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now before you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. 13 “A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. 14 About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. 15 He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. 16 The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. 17 “When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will go home to my father and say, “Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, 19 and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.”’

20 “So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. 21 His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’ 22 “But his father said to the servants, ‘Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. 23 And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, 24 for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.’ So the party began.

25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, 26 and he asked one of the servants what was going on. 27 ‘Your brother is back,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.’ 28 “The older brother was angry and wouldn’t go in. His father came out and begged him, 29 but he replied, ‘All these years I’ve slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. 30 Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!’ 31 “His father said to him, ‘Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. 32 We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!’”

HOW MIGHT YOU DESCRIBE THE FATHER’S LOVE TO SONS?

Is. 49:15-16 “Can a woman forget her nursing child, or lack compassion for the child of her womb? Even if these forget, yet I will not forget you. 16 Look, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.”

AT THE HEART OF THIS PARABLE IS OUR CALLING TO BE LIKE THE FATHER

Romans 8:16-17 “16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. 17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory.”

“Indeed, as son and heir I am to become successor. I am destined to step into my Father’s place and offer to others the same compassion that he has offered me. The return to the Father is ultimately the challenge to become the Father... Being in the Father’s house requires that I make the Father’s life my own and become transformed in his image.” **Henri Nouwen**

GRIEF

“...man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.” **Is 53:3**

FORGIVENESS

Ephesians 4:32 “Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.”

GENEROSITY

1 John 3:16 “We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us.”

TO BECOME LIKE THE FATHER, WE MUST LOOK TO JESUS

“Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” **Matthew 5:38**

“Thus, for my sake, Jesus becomes the younger son as well as the elder son in order to show me how to become the Father. Through him I can become a true son again and, as a true son, I finally can grow to become compassionate as our heavenly Father is.” **Henri Nouwen**

Luke 15:7 “...there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who don’t need repentance.”

Luke 15:10 “...there is joy in the presence of God’s angels over one sinner who repents.”

Luke 15:32 “But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”

**OUR LIVES ARE TRANSFORMED FROM:
FORGIVEN TO FORGIVER, AND FROM JUDGER TO BLESSER**