



Daily Reflections

March 31, 2019

Scripture

Luke 15: 1-3, 11-31

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying,

“This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So to them Jesus addressed this parable:

“A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’

So the father divided the property between them.

After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country

where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.

When he had freely spent everything,

a severe famine struck that country,

and he found himself in dire need.

So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine.

And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses he thought,

‘How many of my father’s hired workers

have more than enough food to eat,

but here am I, dying from hunger.

I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him,

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.
I no longer deserve to be called your son;
treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."

So he got up and went back to his father.

While he was still a long way off,
his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion.

He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.

His son said to him,

'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you;
I no longer deserve to be called your son.'

But his father ordered his servants,

'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him;
put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Take the fattened calf and slaughter it.

Then let us celebrate with a feast,

because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again;
he was lost, and has been found.'

Then the celebration began.

Now the older son had been out in the field
and, on his way back, as he neared the house,
he heard the sound of music and dancing.

He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean.

The servant said to him,

'Your brother has returned
and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf
because he has him back safe and sound.'

He became angry,

and when he refused to enter the house,
his father came out and pleaded with him.

He said to his father in reply,

'Look, all these years I served you
and not once did I disobey your orders;
yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends.

But when your son returns
who swallowed up your property with prostitutes,
for him you slaughter the fattened calf.'

He said to him,

'My son, you are here with me always;

everything I have is yours.

But now we must celebrate and rejoice,
because your brother was dead and has come to life again;
he was lost and has been found.”

Our Scripture Reflection

One of the amazing things about Jesus’ parables is that while many have tried to interpret them throughout history, people to this very day find new and undiscovered meaning in them. I have read pages of commentary and heard numerous talks about today’s most familiar parable but there is one detail that has so touched my heart that it has brought me to tears: “He ran to his son....” Middle eastern men never ran in Jesus’ day. Women and children did the running. Men, especially the elders, walked about in a stately manner with their heads erect. This is the case today in traditional areas. But the Father in the parable RAN towards His sinful son. What motivated Him to break the rules by running? Do you get the picture? How desperate was the Father to touch, embrace, accept his sinful son, you know, the one who totally separated himself from his Father? Could it be that Our Heavenly Father was so desperate to get we who rejected Him back that He sent His only begotten Son to rescue us?

Food for your Journey

On the subject of failures, poor choices and the disasters we sometimes make out of our lives, J. Ellsworth Kalas makes a heartening observation in his book *Life From the UpSide*. He writes: “The Bible seems never to gloss over the failings of its characters, nor to explain them. It gives us the unadorned facts, and it leaves the rest to us. And I marvel still more that God so often takes the rather messy stuff of our lives and manages to bring good from it. This doesn’t excuse our messiness (read that sin), but it does remind us that God is not undone by our weakness, our stupidity or our wickedness. Rather, God has a remarkable penchant for mixing grace with our basest ingredients until the will of heaven comes to pass.”

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, Rescue me, especially when I fall down as the result of thinking I am totally in control of everything. Make me humble as the result of my failures and help me to realize that my heart belongs to You alone. Amen