

# Driftless Reflections with Pastor Dave

## Bible Study

### Living with Integrity...No Holding Back

September 19, 2020 | Luke 15:1-32

#### Opening

Sometimes in life it is easier to give than to receive gifts and other times it is easier to receive gifts than to give. Can you think of examples in your own life when you found it easier to give a gift than to receive a gift? How about a time when it was easier to receive a gift than to give a gift? What was the difference? Why? Sometimes some of the most giving people have trouble receiving and sometimes the most receiving people have difficulty giving. Why do you think we struggle with giving and receiving gifts? What makes us uncomfortable? What brings us joy?

#### Prayer...

Lord, although we feel unworthy of your grace in our lives, we thank you for loving us anyway. We pray that you would shine your light on our lives in those areas that dwell in darkness. Show us how to turn from our sin and repent. Finally, help us to graciously receive your forgiveness. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

#### Into the word

Luke 15:11-32 NLT To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: "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!'"

This story or parable that Jesus told is known as both “The Prodigal Son” and “The Lost Son.”

- *Which of these titles do you think speaks more clearly about this story? Explain.*
- *What are the major themes of this story?*

There are several characters within this story with whom we can relate at different times in our lives:

- *When have you felt like the younger son in your life? What was that experience like?*
- *When have you felt like the older son in your life? What was that like?*
- *When have you felt like the father in your life? What was that like?*
- *With which of these characters can you most relate? Why?*
- *With which of these characters is it most difficult for you to identify? Why?*

The father in this story displays an extravagant kind of love. It is a love that welcomes and receives a sinful child back into his arms.

- *Why is it so difficult for us to believe that our God is this kind of Father?*
- *What barriers stand in our way of walking away from our own junk and running into the arms of our heavenly Father?*
- *Why do we struggle to receive this kind of extravagant love?*

## **Living it Out**

While you may not feel like God wants your junk, Scripture proclaims that God most definitely wants your garbage. The Lord Jesus paid an enormous price on the cross for you. This sacrifice grew out of an extravagant love from your Father.

- *How do you most need to experience God's extravagant love in your life today?*
- *What areas of your life are you needing to confront most directly?*

## **Prayer...**

Father, you are merciful and gracious. You are slow to anger and overwhelm us with your love. Help us to receive your grace, even though we don't feel worthy. Help us to know that we are forgiven. Help

us to feel your loving arms surrounding us. Thank you for new beginnings and new life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen