

The Great Stories of Jesus Part 5

*Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables. **Matthew 13:34***

Notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. This made the Pharisees and the teachers of religious law complain that He was associating with such sinful people - even eating with them! ... Jesus told them this story, 'A man had two sons. 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. A few days later the younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About that time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into the fields to feed the pigs. 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.

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! I will go home to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'" 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. 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.'

But his father said to his 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. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now is found.' So the party began.

Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, and he asked one of the servants what was going on. 'Your brother is back,' he was told, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.' The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, 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. Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf.'

*His father said to him, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed with me, and everything I have is yours. 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.' **Luke 15:1, 11-32***

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- We don't want to be like the _____

He moved to a distant land and there wasted all his money in wild living. About that time, his money ran out...

... no one gave him anything to eat ...

True friends

-- _____ no matter what

One who has unreliable friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24

Do not forsake your friend. Proverbs 27:10

-- _____ for your happiness

He called his friends and said, 'Rejoice with me.' Luke 15:6

-- Truly _____

A friend loves at all times. Proverbs 17:17

-- _____ for you

Greater love has no one than this, that he would lay down his life for a friend. John 15:13

We don't want to be like _____

The older brother was angry and wouldn't go into the party.

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Look, dear son, you have always stayed with me, and everything I have is yours. 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.

Followers of Jesus don't cancel others.

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Do not consider his appearance ... the Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7

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