**Homesick**

**Home Sick…- Week #2**

**Small Group Notes**

**September 19 and 22**

**Main Point:** There are times that giving grace can be frustrating for us as believers while we recognize that amazing gift of grace we have been invited to partake of.

**Introduction:** Last week we looked at how the younger brother gives us a picture of rebellion that can happen in our lives. Yet there was the powerful invitation to see the love of our Father that desires to show us His grace and mercy.

What is your favorite crime show? Why? When you hear and see the stories of the victims on these shows and the crimes that occur, what do you want to see happen to the criminals? For most of us, we look at criminals and we see often want to be the ones that bring down the gavel and call for justice.

For our study today, as we look at the older brother character in this study, we are going to see how he wanted to be the one to bring down the gavel and think that he was being fair in his actions towards his younger brother that squandered his wealth. Yet we are going to see how much we relate to the older brother in this balance of forgiving and forgetting.

**Discuss:**

**1. Read Luke 15:22-24 (NIV)**

How would you characterize the love that the father showed in this story? In what ways was the father demonstrating restoration to the younger brother? What elements in this story give pictures of salvation?

**2. Read Luke 15:25-27 (NIV)**

Has there been a time in your life when you were not invited to a party that you thought you should be? What was the point the father was making to his older son? (Anyone that crosses from death to life is to be celebrated!) Read Matthew 20:1-16. What elements of this story have similarities to the relationship of the younger and older brother?

**3. Read Luke 15:28-30 (NIV)**

How does the older brother’s reaction show his need for grace just as much as the younger brother? Why can it be easy for people that have been “around church” think they deserve grace more than others?

**4. Read Luke 15:31-32 (NIV)**

Share about the most overwhelming invitation you have ever experienced (engagement, invitation to prom, etc). Has there been a time when you thought the invitation was to be earned? How does this story help you to see that the grace and invitation to the older brother relates to where we have been in our lives? How does this impact the way that you share the gospel?

**Dig Deeper:**

Key Points from this week’s sermon.

Luke 15:22-24

*22But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; 23and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate.*

* **He would rather look through a window and judge his younger brother than to look in a mirror and see his heart.**

**After hearing both stories of the younger and older brother, which one do you relate to more? How have there been times when you related to one more than the other? Have you ever had a moment when the grace, love, and forgiveness of God overwhelmed you?**

Luke 15: 25-27

***25****“Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.****26****And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be.****27****And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.’*

* **The older brother was close in proximity to the Father, but his heart was distant.**
* **The older brother was “home sick.”**

**How does this story challenge the belief that “going to church means someone is saved”? How can we sometimes think that we have false intimacy (thinking we are close to someone when in reality we aren’t)?**

**Luke 15:28-30**

***28****But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’*

* **The older brother believed the lie that the Father’s love must be earned.**

**Why is the older brother so angry? Does his anger surprise you? What does his interaction with his father reveal about how he sees himself? How does an attitude of self-righteousness affect our relationship with God?**

**Luke 15:31-32 (NIV)**

*“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”*

* **The most beautiful thing about grace is that it is not fair.**

* **You can choose to stay outside or come in and enjoy the feast.**

**How would you describe the father’s response? How can his response be confusing to someone not saved? How does it encourage you to see the father’s response to both brothers?**

**Do:**

Key points of application

**How might God want to change us in light of His amazing love for the lost as seen in this parable?**

**How are we doing as a church to welcome both the younger and older brothers into a relationship with the Lord?**

**What may be some ways in your group that you can encourage both to take a step towards an invitation to a relationship with Jesus Christ?**