

Homesick
Home Sick...- Week #3
Small Group Notes
September 26 and 29

Main Point: We often pursue the very things that God provides in abundance for us as our Heavenly Father.

Introduction: Last week we looked at how the older brother gives us a challenge to understanding the grace of God that we so often try to work for in our lives. And the invitation in this parable is for not only the rebels but also those that seek to earn the grace of God.

What was the last gift that you received that was very unexpected? Where is that gift today? What significance did that gift have for you? Did you feel that the gift was undeserved? Why?

For our study, we are going to look at the Father's response to the returning son. As we have seen, repentance begins when we realize our need for the Lord. We also see how this response of the Father in the older brother's eyes was totally undeserved. And yet, when we put ourselves in the shoes of the returning son, we see the Father's love and we can know this is how the Father welcomes all those that repent and return to Him.

Discuss:

1. Read Luke 15:22 (NIV)

What adjective is used to explain the robe in this story? What does the father do with the robe for his son? How is this a picture of salvation? (The Bible speaks of salvation similar to putting on a robe) In Isaiah, 61:10, what type of robe is this called? Why is it difficult for us to accept the robe that God has for those that trust Him?

2. Read Luke 15:22 again (NIV)

If the ring is a symbol of the Lord's authority being given to believers, what does that mean for us when we face the attacks of the enemy? Why do we struggle with accepting the authority that the Lord has given us? Read Matthew 28:18-20. From these verses how does living under the authority of the Lord impact all that we say and do? Why is Jesus not only our Savior, but also the Lord of our lives?

3. Read Luke 15:22 again (NIV)

As a follower of Christ, what may be an area that you struggle with that it seems like the enemy has a stronghold over you? If the sandals were a picture of full restoration and

identity, how should our walk-in life be impacted by Jesus? What may be an area in your life that you are being a slave to instead of experiencing freedom?

Dig Deeper:

Key Points from this week's sermon.

Luke 15:22-24

²² But 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; ²³ and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

- **God longs to cover us.**
- **The Robe reminds us that our sin is replaced with Christ's righteousness?**
- **The Robe says we are not just forgiven but restored.**
- **Life's most foundational truth and most difficult truth to embrace is that God loves us.**
- **Our desire for healthy human relationships is good; it's just not ultimate.**

When you hear of undeserved love towards a criminal, how do you respond? How can we make loving others something hard to do in the church? How does story point to the son struggling to receive the Father's love? In your life, how does receiving love impact the way that you give love?

Luke 15:22-24

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 ring is a reminder of the Father's authority that is now ours in Christ.**
- **Never confuse power with authority.**

Colossians 2:13-15

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the

cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Along with the ring, what evidence does the Father give towards restoring the authority of the younger brother? What is an area in your life that you are not living in authority over, but rather it has authority over you? Based on the passage in Colossians, how is the amount of authority we experience in our life, related to our perspective of the work of the cross? How is that liberating to you?

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- **The father’s gift of shoes was a gift of freedom.**

Hebrews 4:15-16 (NIV)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

From these two passages, how do you see the Father’s caring love on display? What impact does it make in your life to know that Jesus has walked the same path and had the same temptations and yet overcame them? From the two passages how are grace and confidence intertwined? In your experience, how can not seeing the grace and confidence of the Lord impact you negatively?

Do:

Key points of application

What are some ways that you can help someone struggling with understanding the love of God? How can it be visible in your life this week?

Share with someone in the group a personal area that you struggle with that seems to have authority over you. Hold each other accountable to one way you can help each other to live under God’s authority in that area.

What are some ways that you can help others to experience grace and confidence in their walk?