

10. How did both sons dishonor their father?

11. All three stories in Luke 15 end in a specific way? What is it and how would it affect our churches if we embraced this outcome?

11. How does this story help us to understand what it must be like to be God?

12. Are there any other comments or lessons from the message you want to discuss?

Response – Making it Practical

1. Have you ever made a decision that needlessly put a wedge between you and the people you love?

2. How can you begin to live a life of more grace-to yourself and to others?

You can access more messages on our sermon page at
www.villagegreen church.com.

We're also on Facebook and iTunes.
You can also check out the Pastor's Corner on our website.

Life Group Study Notes

Study based on Luke 15:11-32 - January 8, 2017

We've all made bad decisions that hurt those we love and later fill us with regret. Is there a way back or are we forever to be marked as damaged goods because of mistakes in our past?



In this message we look at one of Jesus' best known parables. A story filled with contrasts and tensions, it nevertheless holds one of the greatest lessons concerning God.

When we embrace the truth of this parable, it has the power to heal our past and give us hope for the future. Especially when we feel like damaged goods.

Study – Discovering What the Bible Says?

Read Luke 15:1-32 (Message based on 11-32 but read entire chapter for context)

1. What is more difficult, to forgive others or forgive yourself?
2. How does understanding the context (or audience) of this parable help in determining its meaning?
3. Who do we tend to identify with most in the parable? The younger son or the older?

4. What are the cultural implications of the younger sons request? What did it likely mean for the father?
5. What detail of the father's response hints to the extent of the grace he is willing to give?
6. The younger son squanders his inheritance in the worst possible way for a Jew. The text says that he finally came to his senses. How do we know that his repentance is genuine?
7. Put yourself into the story. How easy would it be to either:
 - a. Believe the son's repentance?
 - b. Forgive the son?
8. What does the father's response to the son's return teach us about the character and nature of God? Why is this the least likely picture of God that most accept?
9. How does this story serve as a warning against an attitude of "getting what I want?" Is there a way to serve our ambitions without putting relationships at risk? Further, how does this attitude contribute to the potential of feeling like damaged goods?