

The Great Paradox:

Independence Or In-Dependence

Rev. Dr. Joe Scruggs, Senior Pastor

July 8, 2012

Luke 15:11-24

Independence and Entitlement – Luke 15:11-13

- Not only do I want _____, but I want you to make it possible.
- One of the subtle _____ of our culture is that we begin to think we have a right to those things that God has given us.
- All of us have some “_____” in us.
- Romans 3:23 - “For there is no difference, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Life in the Distant Land - Luke 15:13-16

“A deceptive start . . . ”

But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. This is what the wicked are like—always free of care, they go on amassing wealth. Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. Psalms 73:2-5, 12-13

“ . . .with a bad finish.”

“But see here, you who live in your own light and warm yourself from your own fires and not from God’s, you will live among sorrows.” Isaiah 50:10-11 (Living Bible)

The Core Problem: “You can’t get there from here.”

Coming to His Senses – Luke 15:17-19

- A Good Start - Faced the reality that “_____” wasn’t working.
Sometimes we need the “_____”.
- True Repentance - “no more _____”
- A Safe Risk - “So he got up and went to the father.”
How will the father react? How will God react?

Luke 15:20 *“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”*

His father was delighted to see him and welcomed him with open arms. That’s how God will greet us.

Conclusion In our culture, dependence is not always a good thing. However, in God’s culture, it is where we find life, hope, a wonderful eternal future and a sense of rightness. This is the way we were intended to live

When it comes to our relationship with God, we can live _____ and become enslaved to our sin and lower nature. We can’t not sin.

OR

When can live “in dependence” and experience the _____ and reach the _____ that God has for us.

Talk It Over . . . with your friends, family, or Growth Group

Talking through the ideas presented in Sunday's message helps us apply God's word to our individual lives. These questions and thoughts are designed to help you put His words into action in your life this week.

What is your main "take-away" from this week? How do you plan to live that out?

In what ways have you declared "independence" from God? What keeps you from declaring dependence?

Does entitlement play a role in your life? If so, what role does it play? If not, what has helped you avoid it? Do you believe we are "entitled" to blessings from God?

Can you identify with what Asaph (the Psalmist) said in Psalms 73? What helped him through this difficult time? What helps you through such moments?

Do you believe and trust that God would welcome you with open arms if you declared your dependence? Is that hard for you to believe? If so, why?

Why do you think God wants us to be dependent on Him?

Read over the various scriptures presented in this week's sermon and think about what God might be teaching you. (Note: these might be different than what was presented in the sermon.)

