

Luke 15:25 to End. the Envy of the Prodigal's Brother.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

The sermon highlights the envy of the prodigal's brother and the Pharisees, contrasting it with the joy and generosity of true believers in the return of the prodigal.

Scripture: Psalm 23:3, Psalm 51:10, Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 1:18, Luke 15:7, Luke 15:25, Romans 2:4, Ephesians 4:32, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Prodigal Son", "Gods Forgiveness"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches on the parable of the prodigal son, highlighting the father's compassion towards both his wayward younger son and his envious eldest son. The eldest son's pride led to envy, anger, and discontent, revealing the root of many sins. Despite the eldest son's ungrateful attitude, the father patiently reasons with him, emphasizing the rich privileges he already possesses. The Pharisees' self-righteousness mirrors the eldest son's behavior, as they fail to rejoice over repentant sinners, showcasing an ungenerous spirit. True believers, who have experienced God's forgiving love, celebrate the return of every wanderer, recognizing their own need for grace and restoration.

Transcript

Amid the burst of joy at the prodigal's return one complaining voice was heard; among the glad countenances one lowering brow was seen; and that voice and that brow were a brother's. But the father showed as much forbearance towards his envious eldest son, as he had manifested compassion towards his prodigal younger son. He went out, and entreated this unfeeling brother to unite in the festal scene. These entreaties drew forth the pride that reigned in his son's heart. Pride is the root of a whole host of sins, especially of envy, anger, and discontent--all these evil passions gave their coloring to the answers of the eldest son. What a description he gives of his blameless conduct! He reproaches his father with his services, as if he had laid his own parent under obligations--"Lo, these many years have I served you!" He declares those services were perfect, as well as persevering. "Neither transgressed I at any time your commandment."

While he thus boasts of his own goodness, he places his brother's conduct in the worst point of view. The father might have turned away in wrath from his ungenerous son, but he condescended to argue with the proud objector. In a few words he describes the rich privileges of his first-born. "Son, you are ever with me." Surely the continual presence of such a father was happiness in itself. But, knowing the covetous

heart of his son, the father added, "All that I have is yours." There was no argument required to prove that a lost son should be received with joy. The father thought it sufficient to say, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad."

Could the Pharisees avoid perceiving in the envious brother their own likeness? Now that the Savior was receiving penitent publicans, and that angels were rejoicing over them in heaven, the Pharisees were boasting of their own goodness, and reproaching the Lord with partiality. They imagined that they had served God all their lives, and had never transgressed his commandment. The Lord did not show them (as He might have done) how false was this notion--but He proved, that even if they were as good as they supposed, the spirit they evinced towards penitent sinners was ungrateful and ungenerous. Had the Pharisees really been holy men, they would have rejoiced with angels over pardoned penitents. True believers remember the season when they were received into their father's favor, and they rejoice with each wanderer who returns as they did. There is not a son in the house of our heavenly Father who has not had his festival; except the angels who have been ever with Him, and have never transgressed his commandments. Yet there are some of the children of God, who were sanctified at so early a period, that they cannot remember the first feelings of penitence; they have not experienced the bitterness of an unconverted state, and cannot tell by contrast how great is their present happiness. These have enjoyed the best portion, in having been ever with their Father. How many days of childhood have been gilded with more than childish joy through the early knowledge of their Father in heaven! How sweet the remembrance of a youth spent in his service, unpolluted by worldly vanities! Yet even they--even those sanctified in infancy and devoted to God unto old age, have wandered into some forbidden paths, and have committed innumerable transgressions. They have experienced the forgiving love of God, when returning from their backslidings. They can say with David, "He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

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