

Father Of The Prodigal - Luke 15:11-32

While Mother's Day is one of the largest attendance days in churches, Father's Day, unfortunately, is one of the least attended. That is sad, because while mothers should and need to be honored, because they put up with so much with love for the children, so do Father. But what I want to look at with you on this Father's Day is our heavenly Father, and our honor of Him, which honestly needs to be every day of the week, and especially every time with gather together in church.

The Bible says about our heavenly Father.

***“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!”*** (1 John 3:1 NKJV)

The type of love that God the Father bestows upon us is unconditional. God in His unconditional love has made us children of His.

He knows everything that is going on in our lives, even down to the number of hairs that are still left on our heads. Nothing escapes His notice, and there isn't anything we're going through that He doesn't care about.

The story is found in Luke 15:11-32, tells us various attributes of our Heavenly Father

1. Giving

Now, consider the hurt and the pain this must have caused the father. He knew that his youngest son wanted to leave home, perhaps forever. It surely would have broken his heart, because he knew, just as all parents know and fear.

But still he did as the son requested. The father knew that he didn't have to do it. With a broken heart, the father gave to his son his inheritance.

Often time out of His love for us, and knowing of our need to learn a valuable life lesson, God will give us what we are whining for. He does it so that we can learn that being a child of God is far greater than anything the world can offer.

In our story, the father of the prodigal gives the son his inheritance, which leads me to this conclusion, that God gives to us, those who are a part of His family, our inheritance, not only heaven when this life is over, but our inheritance of an abundant life right now.

How does God, our heavenly Father, provide this? By giving to us the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus promised.

And so the first aspect we see from the father of the prodigal that reveals one of the

attributes of our good and gracious Heavenly Father is that of giving.

## 2. Accepting

The father accepted his son just the way he was, and with no conditions, lovingly welcoming him back into the family.

Do you realize just how dirty and smelly this young man was? He worked in a pig farm, wishing he could eat what the pigs were eating.

A couple of thoughts about this,

First, there were no showers, perfumes, or deodorant for the son to get himself clean prior to his return. He smelled bad, and yet the father hugged on him and even kissed his dirty smelly cheek.

Second, the son worked in a pig farm, an animal the Bible calls unclean. But the father didn't care about religious rules; instead he loved and accepted his son unconditionally. Our heavenly Father is just waiting for our return. He puts no conditions on our having to clean ourselves up. Romans 5:8 says, ***“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”***

The story of the prodigal son goes on to say that the father waited for the son's return.

God the Father never takes His eyes off of us and always sees. But, our heavenly Father doesn't sit up in heaven waiting, but actively searches us out, and delivers.

Therefore, the second aspect of the prodigal's father, one that reveals another of our heavenly Father's attributes, is that of accepting and delivering, which leads to the next attributes.

## 3. Cleanses and Clothes

Here the father has his son's dirty filthy clothes removed, and clothes his son in his very best robe, and placed upon his finger a ring.

We see these new garments given to us by our heavenly Father.

God says through the Prophet Zechariah, ‘See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.’” (3:4 NKJV) And so the re-clothing process is also a cleansing. But this only happens when like the prodigal, we confess our sins and our unworthiness.

And so, it is at this point, that is, when we are cleansed and forgiven, that the old person we once were is taken off, like an old set of clothes, and we're clothed in God's robe of righteousness, and we become a brand new person in Christ.

#### 4. Feeds

After the father gives, accepts, cleanses and clothes his son, he now prepares a feast in his honor.

In much the same way God prepares a feast before us, both now and in the future. What does God give to us now to feast upon; nothing less than the best spiritual food available, and that is, His word!

It is God's word that gives us the strength to continue when everything else falls by the wayside.

The food God gives at His table makes us secure, that is, secure from the sword at our backs, from the arrow aimed at our hearts, and the hammer that is poised to pound on our heads.

And God gives us this food freely and without reservation. But, there is even greater food and a feast waiting for us and that is in heaven at the wedding supper of the Lamb.

#### Conclusion

And so, what can we learn from the father of the prodigal son and our own heavenly Father?

First is that our heavenly father gives to us the best, gives to us our eternal inheritance of heaven, and an abundant life right here and now through the giving of the Holy Spirit to all those who believe.

Second, our heavenly Father accepts us just as we are. But doesn't leave us in that condition, but cleanses us when we come back to Him and confess, and then clothes us in His robes of righteousness as our forever wardrobe in heaven.

And finally, He feeds us only the best, and I am sure that when we're up in heaven at the wedding feast, the food there will taste a million times better than what we have here on earth. But, while we are down here on earth, our heavenly Father seats us at His table, and we are secure knowing that He will keep us until the end.