



Rising out of Parenting Pain

The Problem: Our kids hurt us.

- Bonus question: Have you ever done a careful, searching, systematic inventory of the ways you have hurt your parents? Do you need to apologize?

The prime example of rising out of parenting pain: “The Compassionate Father.” (Luke 15:11-32.)

Three Background Issues:

- The parable is mis-labeled “The Prodigal Son.” It is not about him. It is about the father.
- Jesus told this story to answer this question: “How does God the Father feel about sinners? See Luke 15:1, 2.
- Children hurt their parents: “Dad, I value your money more than you.” v 12

The compassionate father suffered personal affront with humility and grace. (v 12)

- “Drop dead dad.” (v 12)
- Personal affront vs. abusive behavior:
- Humility and grace is:
- Humility and grace is not:

The compassionate father took a stance of unwavering hope toward his son. (v 20)

- “Watching the horizon and feeling compassion.” (v 20)
- Unwavering hope is:
- Unwavering hope is not:
- The Painful Question: What if my prodigal child never comes back?”
 - What does Proverbs 22:6 mean?
 - If he/she never comes back:

Core Issue: God empowers us to take His very stance toward prodigals...a stance of compassionate expecting.

Application #1. Take a stance of compassionate expectation toward your children.

Application #2: Remember the stance of God toward us—compassionate expecting. He is only asking of us what He gave to us.

Walking Papers

Practical helps for walking with Christ and pursuing God through obedience, reflective living, and community.

Core Truth: God empowers us to take His very stance toward prodigals...a stance of compassionate expecting.

Please take some time each day this week for "spiritual recalibration" by thinking through the following ideas and questions related to having "eternity in our hearts:"

- **Today:** How have your children hurt you? How have your parents hurt you? How have your friends hurt you? How have you hurt them?
- **Monday:** Please take some time to reflect carefully and honestly on this question: "Is some portion of my hurt, large or small, a result of my personal insecurities, my personal immaturities, and my self-absorption rather than a result of another person's sin and insensitivity?"
- **Tuesday:** On the "compassion to retaliation" continuum, where do you fall in relation to the people who have hurt you? Are you a forgiver or a grudge holder? Have you "taken up an offense" against a family member or friend?
- **Wednesday:** On the "'good riddance' to 'I know you will return'" continuum, where do you fall in relation to the people who have hurt you?
- **Thursday:** How do you think God wants you to change your stance and feelings and actions toward the people who have hurt you?
- **Friday:** What will you do in relation to the people who have hurt you in order to bring healing to the relationship? What will you do in relation to the people whom you have hurt in order to bring healing to the relationship?
- **Saturday:** On the "compassion to retaliation" continuum, where does God stand toward you? On the "'good riddance' to 'I know you will return'" continuum, where does God stand toward you?