

When Being Right is Actually Wrong | Week 3

The younger son repented of his badness, but the older brother needed to repent of trusting in his goodness. Self-righteousness closes the door on love, increases pride, causes bitterness, and keeps us outside the party of grace.

Conversation Starters (10 minutes)

- Think of a time you felt fully welcomed by a group of people. What made you feel that way?
- When did you have a chance this past week to serve, invite, or give? What happened?

Sermon Notes Review (15 minutes)

What caught your attention, stood out to you, or challenged you from this weekend's teaching?

Watch the Video (10 minutes)

- Prepare to watch the video by opening your Bible to [Luke 15](#).

Group Discussion (45 minutes)

Starter Question from the Video:

1. What is something you get self-righteous about?

Scripture Observation and Interpretation:

Read [Luke 15:28-32](#).

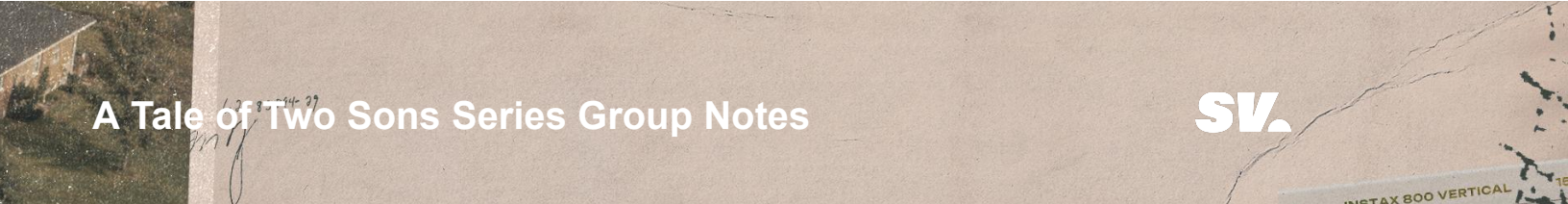
2. Look at the older brother's words in verses 29-30. What stands out to you most? Why did it catch your attention?
3. The older brother did everything "right," yet he stayed outside the party. Why is it so easy for people who do the right things to end up with hard hearts?
4. The father went out to plead with his older son (v. 28), just as he ran to the younger. What does this tell us about how God responds to self-righteous hearts?

Personal Application:

5. The older brother was close to his father's house but far from his father's heart. In what ways can you be near the things of God and still stand outside the joy?
6. Where are you tempted to quietly keep score, whether of what you have done for God or of who does not deserve grace?
7. Who is a "younger brother" you have been slow to welcome? What is one way you could celebrate with them this week instead of standing outside?

Prayer (5 minutes)

Close your time in prayer. You can use your own words or these words:



A Tale of Two Sons Series Group Notes

Father, thank You for going out to meet both the runaway and the one who stayed home. Search my heart for self-righteousness, and give me joy in welcoming sinners the way You welcome me. Amen.

For Further Exploration

- Learn more about Jesus's teachings on religious practices in this [7-minute Bible Project video](#).

WEEK 3

When Being Right Is Actually Wrong

SYNOPSIS

The younger son repented of his badness, but the older brother needed to repent of trusting in his goodness.

Self-righteousness closes the door on love and keeps us outside the party of grace.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

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1. Closes the door on love.
2. Increases pride.
3. Causes bitterness toward God and others.
4. Keeps you outside the party of amazing grace.

GETTING STARTED (10 MINUTES)

- Think of a time you felt fully welcomed by a group of people. What made you feel that way?
- “We are never more like Jesus than when we give, serve, and invite.” Looking back on this past week, when did you have a chance to do one of these, and what did you do with it?

DIGGING IN

Read Luke 15:1-2

¹Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ²But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” — **Luke 15:1-2 (NIV)**

1. What do you notice about who is drawing near to Jesus, and how the religious leaders respond?

Read Luke 15:28-32

²⁸“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹“My son,” the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’” — **Luke 15:28-32 (NIV)**

2. In your Bible, circle the word or phrase in the older brother’s words (vv. 29-30) that stands out to you most. Why did it catch your attention?
3. The older brother did everything “right,” yet he stayed outside the party. Why is it so easy for people who do the right things to end up with hard hearts?
4. The father went out to plead with his older son (v. 28), just as he ran to the younger. What does this tell us about how God responds to self-righteous hearts?

MAKING IT PERSONAL

The younger brother repented of his badness; the older brother needed to repent of trusting in his goodness.

5. Is there an attitude to change? Where are you tempted to quietly keep score, whether of what you have done for God or of who does not deserve grace?
6. Who is a “younger brother” you have been slow to welcome? What is one way you could celebrate with them this week instead of standing outside?

DIVING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. — **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)**

7. How do these verses speak to both the younger brother and the older brother?

PRAYER



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SV.

Father, thank You for going out to meet both the runaway and the one who stayed home. Search my heart for self-righteousness, and give me joy in welcoming sinners the way You welcome me. Amen.