The Stories of the Bible

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

The Characters in the Story

- (v 11) Previously, Jesus was criticized for receiving sinners (v 2), and so he told parables to illustrate God's love for sinners. All three parables in Luke 15 are related because they speak of things that were lost and then are _____. (v 32)
- 2. With the third parable, Jesus introduced three new characters, and who they represent is important to understanding the story.
 - (a) The father represents _____ who receives is sinners.
 - (b) The oldest son represents the _____, who resented Jesus' receiving sinners.
 - (c) The youngest son represents ______ who repent and come to God for forgiveness.

"I once was lost..."

- 3. (vv 12-13) The youngest son demanded his inheritance from his father an insulting request that insinuated that the son was essentially ______ his own father.
- 4. (vv 14-16) With his portion of his inheritance, the youngest son went into a far-off country and wasted his substance on ______ living.
- 5. When a famine struck the land, he found himself homeless and penniless he became so hungry he was willing even to eat the husks normally fed to ______. In this condition, the son of a wealthy landowner became lower than the most despised animal.

"...but now am found."

- 6. (vv 17-19) When his sorry condition jarred him back to reality, the prodigal realized that his father's lowest servants were better off than he was. He was determined to make things right with his father, even if he was only afforded the position of _____.
- 7. (vv 20-21) The father saw the prodigal "afar off," which shows that he was waiting and for the return of his son; and the father "ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him," showing that he gladly received him back.

→ To us, this element of the story is endearing, but to the Pharisees, it would have been ______. In their eyes, no man in his right mind would receive a wayward son with such readiness and emotion; rather, the son would've been forced to stay outside on the doorstep where he would plead for mercy for hours – perhaps even days.

TFXT. Luke 15.11-32

- 8. (vv 22-24) The father, overjoyed to have his repentant son home, not only receives the prodigal as his son but ______ his return.
- 9. (v 25-30) The eldest son, who was working in the field, resented the celebration party given in honor of his profligate sibling. He rightly represents the Pharisees because:
 - (a) They felt God ______ them something for their righteous works.
 - (b) They really had no love for God, only a formal sense of ______.
 - (c) They had no _____ for repentant sinners.
- 10. (vv 31-32) The father, representing God, defended the appropriateness of celebrating the return of a repentant sinner. The criticism "this man receiveth sinners" (v 2) really ought to be a ______.

Application

- 11. This parable is different than the previous ones in that it was the lost son that took the initiative to return, whereas the coin and the sheep were sought out. This shows the paradox of salvation: there is both human ______ and divine sovereignty.
- 12.All three parables show the value of lost things to God even the lost things that ______ against him.

Answer Key

key word(s): "lost" | 1. found | 2. a) God; b) Pharisees; c) sinners | 3. disowning | 4. riotous (sinful) | 5. pigs | 6. servant | 7. watching | \rightarrow scandalous | 8. celebrated | 9. a) owed; b) duty; c) love | 10. compliment | 11. responsibility | 12. sin