

Like A Son | A Slave Is NOT Like A Son | Guide - *Luke 15:25-32*

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To be a servant of Christ is to abide by His teachings and to submit our will to His will. It means that we have nothing but that which He has given to us. Many consider themselves a servant or even a slave of Christ, but an ordinary faith is so much more than a slave-like relationship.

Galatians 4:7 (NLT) Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.

Are you a *slave* or a *son* of the Father? If you are okay with being owned by a Good, Good Father and if you are thrilled that you have been bought with the precious blood of Jesus, then you are ready for the next level.

A Slave At Work

The parable of the Prodigal Son tells of a man and his two sons. The younger son decided to take-off and experience the world in all of its sinful ways. Meanwhile, the older son stayed home to hold down the fort and to take care of his father. When the foolish younger son comes back home destitute and depleted, the father welcomes him back with open arms. The devoted and responsible older brother is entirely dismayed and resentful that his father welcomed his brother back so joyously.

Luke 15:28-30 "The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, 29 but he replied, 'All these years **I've slaved for you** and **never once refused to do a single thing you told me to**. And in all that time **you never gave me** even one young goat for a feast with my friends. 30 Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!'

Consider how the older brother was an effective servant: He fulfilled his duty. He worked diligently. He was obedient to his father's commands. But there were also plenty of ways he could have been better: He did not love what he was doing. He resented his father. He had to be told what to do. AND, He was jealous of his younger brother.

Are You Living An Ordinary Faith As A Slave?

Why is it so difficult to live every day as a slave to Christ? A lot of people really struggle with their faith. Sometimes it's because we are inexperienced; we need to practice and we need patience. Sometimes it's because we are *double-minded*, immersing in the temporal world while also trying to pursue a relationship with God.

James 1:7-8 (NLT) Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

Are you jealous of others? It's the whining of a slave to be jealous of the success of others. Instead, be grateful for gifts from God (no matter who they are given to) and be willing to serve when called.

James 1:17 (NLT) Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.

Do you feel resentment toward the Father? Sometimes we get upset because He doesn't meet our expectations or answer our prayers. God loves us deeply and has big dreams for each of his children. Often we can't see the intricacies of His plan, but we can't let that grow into resentment.

James 1:18 (NLT) He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession.

Do you love what you get to do for the Father? In short, if you don't love what you do for Papa, for Jesus, then maybe you're thinking like a slave (like an older brother). Don't get stuck on how bothersome the chore is, think about the possibilities that can come from it.

How Would You Like To Join the Party?

The Gospel Is So Much More Than You Think! The gospel is for every "lost" situation. Jesus is Lord right here, right now, over every struggle and every situation!

Romans 10:9-10 (NLT) If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. 11 As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced."

Stop listening to the OLD you. Only the OLD you struggles with the Father's Commands. You have to lay down your old life. Surrendering to Christ will forever be the means to peace, freedom, and power.

Galatians 5:17 (NLT) The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants...

Start Chasing the NEW you! Replace a negative with a positive. It's one thing to learn what is yours in Christ; it's another to learn to walk in it. Owning a beautiful instrument and playing an instrument beautifully are completely different things.

Philippians 3:12 (NASB) Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

Enter the Party. There is so much more than you know. What are you missing by giving all awareness to the empty things of this life?

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 (NLT) That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him." 10 **But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit.**

It's not okay to live in resentment towards the Father. Recognize the "slave" spirit, release it, and join the party! Learn to enjoy the Father's goodness. Learn to taste and see that He is Good. Learn to wait upon the Lord. Learn to enjoy His goodness, His love, and compassion and His joy.

Talk About It

- Review **Luke 15:25-32**. What encouragement do you find in this story? What are your first thoughts about today's topic?
- Compare **Galatians 4:7** with **Philippians 1:1**. How do you resolve the seeming contradiction?
- Think about the older brother Jesus describes. Discuss him as a group. Is there anything to like or dislike about him? What about his relationship with the Father?
- Discuss **James 1:7-8**. What problems does "divided loyalty" to Christ cause us? How could we be more single-minded about our faith?
- Review **Romans 10:9-10**. What does it mean to declare "Jesus is Lord"? Do you have a situation that is "lost" in some way that you could declare "Jesus is Lord"?
- Read **Philippians 3:12**. How could we better lay hold of the things Christ has laid hold of for us?
- Read **1 Corinthians 2:9-10**. Discuss the wonderful things that God has for us?
- What would you like to share from today's topic with someone else?