



LIFEgroup Homework

Week of February 7, 2010

The Comeback – Luke 15:17-24

The story of the Prodigal Son is the ultimate comeback story that gives hope. Jesus is speaking to a group of people that included those who were described as "sinners." Most likely there were women in the crowd who had sold their bodies into prostitution. There were people who were addicted to alcohol that was eating away their health and damaging their relationships. There were gamblers whose risky behavior had cost them dearly. Tax collectors were in attendance, whose well deserved reputation involved corruption, greed and graft. These were the people that caused the Pharisees to become angry at Jesus just for hanging with them.

Jesus makes it clear that he loves those for whom others have given up hope. He is the champion of the underdog who has been forgotten by others. He is the one who offers hope to people of objectionable background; people like you and me.

No matter how far down someone has fallen and no matter what hurt, habit or hang-up has reared its ugly head in a life, Jesus is saying there is hope for a turn-around. That is why Jesus came.

Sharing Question:

What is a memorable comeback story you have witnessed?

Getting Started Question:

When have you had to make a 180 degree turn because you were going the wrong direction?

Homework: Read Luke 15:17-24

Pastor Stan spoke of the five steps of repentance for the Prodigal Son, and for anyone making a "come-back" to God.

1. He came to his senses
2. His will was engaged
3. His pride was defeated
4. He humbled himself
5. He took action

Which of the five steps do you think was the hardest for the Prodigal to take and why?

When God shows you He wants you to make a change in your life, which of the five steps is hardest for you to take?

Can you give a recent example of a turn-around in your life?

Read Luke 15:7, 10

What causes celebration in heaven?

What does it mean to "repent?"

How do you know if you have really repented? What is the fruit?

When a Christian is caught in sin, there are signs of true repentance (the fruit of repentance). How do you know if the person is truly repentant or just remorseful for being caught? Look over the following list and under each one, write down what the Prodigal did that shows his true repentance.

Marks of Un-Repentance:

1. Denial, justification, or minimization of sin.
2. Incomplete confession of sin relating to both people and God.
3. Unwilling to abide by the discipline-restoration conditions established by Godly leadership.
4. Criticism of the discipline-restoration process and/or people involved.
5. An attitude of entitlement to be restored back to ministry, rather than an attitude of being undeserving of restoration to the former position and status.

Look up the following verses and write down what they teach about true repentance:

Mark 10:17-22

Luke 18:9-14

Luke 19:1-10

Matthew 18:1-4

Take the time to get alone with God and ask Him to open your eyes to see areas of your life where you need to "come to your senses" and turn around (repent) from the direction you have been travelling. As God brings these things to your mind, write them down and then compose a prayer reflecting your desire and heart to change as God empowers you through His Holy Spirit.



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