

05 – The Two Sons: The Father **Luke 15: 11-32**

Step 1: Link (back to the why)

We've spent the last two times on the same Bible story. It's the story of a man who had two sons, a "good" son and a "bad" son. Jesus told the story because some people complained about him. Who complained about Jesus - ? (... *the Pharisees*) Why did they complain¹ - ? (... *Jesus was eating with tax collectors² and sinners – Jesus was friendly with them*)

Step 2: Introduction

In the story, which son was like the tax collectors and sinners - ? (... *the younger son*) Last week we focused on the younger son. What did the younger son ask for - ? (... *his share of the property*) A son usually receives his share of the property after his father dies. This son couldn't wait. He wanted the property, but he didn't want his father.

Today we're going to focus on the father.

Step 3: Key Questions

- **Why did the father run?** (*v.20; he couldn't wait to hug and kiss his son*)
- **Which son did the father love?** (*both!*)

Step 4: Read Luke 15: 11-32

Actually read it aloud this week. It's not only good for their English to "master" this story, but they won't remember the details well enough otherwise.

Step 5: Answer the questions

Step 6: Talk about it

This story is about "humility" – being humble. In the beginning of the story, was the younger son humble - ? (... *no*) He wasn't humble. What was he - ? (... *proud, cocky³, rude, disrespectful ...*) The younger son became humble. In the middle of the story, what was the younger son hoping to be - ? (... *a hired man.*) As a hired man, who would he serve? (... *the father and*

¹ A "complaint" is called a "claim" in Japanese. Your students may hear this word instead of "complaint."

² Tax collectors were hated because they cheated people out of money. They collected taxes for the Romans, who occupied Israel at that time, but they collected more money than just the taxes and the people couldn't do anything about it – it was *shi-gata-ga-nai*

³ like a rooster – a "cock" -

the older brother) Think about this. Is it easy to serve - ? (... no) Would it be easy to serve the older brother - ? (... opinion; probably not) How did the younger son become humble - ? (... being poor, dirty, starving)

The father is also humble. He is humble because of his great love. Let's look at two examples.

First: When the younger son asked for his share of the property, what did the father do - ? (... he divided up his property) What do you think the father was feeling - ? (... opinion; hurt, sad, rejected)

In the time of Jesus it was hard to divide property. Today, a father could just go to the bank. He could get money out of the bank. No one would know. But in Jesus' time, the property was property! It was animals and land, not money. The father would have to sell some animals and some land to get money. It would take time. All the neighbors would know. What do you think the neighbors were thinking - ? (... he's crazy, his son is bad, why would he do this? ...) What was the father feeling - ? (... shame, sadness) But, he let his younger son go.

Second: Where was the son when the father saw him again? (... a long way off) The father ran to him. Can you imagine this? A very rich man running to a very poor boy? (...) Isn't it more natural for the boy to run to the man? The poor to come to the rich?

Why did the father run to his son - ? (... his love) The son became humble because he was dirty and hungry. The father was humble because of his great love.

The son wanted to be a hired man. What did the father do - ? (... took him back as a son)

What do you think a typical Japanese father would do in this case - ? (... opinion) What would your father have done - ? (...)

Do you have any questions or comments?