

P.M. OUTLINE
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ELDER SON: THE SON WHO STAYED HOME

(Luke 15:25-32)

INTRODUCTION

The father represents our heavenly Father, God. Younger son represents the "waste" that we may do in the sight of all in the "far country." Elder son represents Christians at home, congregation.

Christians may stray from the Father in one of these two ways:

- Like the prodigal - leave home, the church, and go into hog-pen living.
- Like the elder son - stay home, work and pray, and never anticipate a jealous wrath.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THE ELDER SON?

1. (v28) "And he was angry" - (Ephesians 4:26 and Romans 12:15)
2. (v28) "and would not go in" - he was stubborn.
"therefore his father came out and pleaded with him" - God calls hard-hearted sons, too.
3. (v29) "Lo, these many years do I serve thee" - notice the "I" and "me" in his speech.
4. (v29) "neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment" - he felt superior to his brother.
(Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8; Luke 18:11)
5. (v29) "and yet you never gave me a kid" - he was jealous.
6. (v30) "But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf" - he judges his brother.

CLOSE: (v31) the father correctly informs and teaches the elder son.

MELODY IN F (author unknown)

Feeling footloose and frisky, a feather-brained fellow forced his fond father to fork over the farthings, and flew far to foreign fields, and frittered his fortune feasting fabulously with faithless friends. Fleeced by his fellows in folly, and facing famine, he found himself a feed-flinger in a filthy farmyard. Fairly famishing, he fain would have filled his frame with foraged food from fodder fragments. "Phooey, my father's flunkies fare far finer," the frazzled fugitive forlornly fumbled, frankly facing facts. Frustrated by failure, and filled with foreboding, he fled forthwith to his family. Falling at his father's feet, he forlornly fumbled, "Father, I've flunked, and fruitlessly forfeited family fellowship favor." The far-sighted father, forestalling further flinching, frantically flagged the flunkies to fetch a fatling from the flock and fix a feast. The fugitive's fault-finding brother frowned on fickle forgiveness of former folderol. But the faithful father figured, "Filial fidelity is fine, but the fugitive is found! What forbids festivity? Let flags be unfurled! Let fanfares flare!"
Father's forgiveness formed the foundation for the former fugitive's future fortitude!