

ESCAPE ENTITLEMENT

OCTOBER 3, 2021

WORSHIP

Your Grace is Enough,
In Christ Alone, More
Than Silver

WELCOME

How would you react
if someone at your
favorite restaurant
ordered after you, but
received their order
before you did?

WORD

LUKE 15:11-17

¹¹ And He said, "A man had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that is coming to me.' And so he divided his wealth between them. ¹³ And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey to a distant country, and there he squandered his estate in wild living. ¹⁴ Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began doing without. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ And he longed to have his fill of the carob pods that the pigs were eating, and no one was giving him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired laborers have more than enough bread, but I am dying here from hunger!

(READ LUKE 15:11-32 AHEAD OF TIME)

The sin of entitlement can be likened to a deadly virus; you can't see it, but it can kill you. Entitlement is rooted in pride and the "me first" or "on demand culture" and has infected so many of us. It is when we feel that we deserve and are entitled to do whatever we want, whenever we want, with whomever we want, and how we want—losing our sense of accountability and responsibility. Simply put, entitlement is when a person believes that privileges are their right.

If you think you don't struggle with entitlement, you may be "asymptomatic". You see it in others, but you fail to see it in yourself! Today, we will look at three principles to defeat this toxic behavior of entitlement.

1. SET BIBLICAL EXPECTATIONS (LUKE 15:11-19)

Oftentimes, the sin of entitlement manifests itself when we put ourselves first and demand to be treated in an exceptional way because we believe that we are special. Just like the younger son in the parable of the prodigal son, he lived for himself and demanded his share of the estate to spend it on his pleasures while his father was still living (**vv.11-13**)! The Bible doesn't directly mention entitlement, but it talks about sowing and reaping, and how as followers of Christ we are to live a sacrificial lifestyle of accountability and responsibility.

Entitlement is a lie that leads to the destruction of our relationships, our personal lives, and even our relationship with God. The younger son did not value the hard work of the father and is an example of someone who lived with no accountability and no responsibility. The reality that the younger son soon faced was that nothing in the world would be enough to satisfy.

He squandered all that he had, and yet ended up empty. He ended up feeding swine and even feeding on the pods that the pigs ate (**vv.14-16**). The wrong expectations of the younger son caused him to feel entitled. In the same way, our wrong expectations can cause us disappointments. The cure for our entitlement is not to lower or raise our expectations, but to base them on what the Bible tells us. What then should we expect in this life? In **John 16:33** we are told that we are to expect trials, but we can take heart because Jesus is with us and has overcome the world.

2. OFFER THANKSGIVING (LUKE 15:20-24)

Another way to battle entitlement is thanksgiving. From the life of the younger son in the parable, we see that when he decided to come home, he made up his mind to give up his status as son and be a servant (**v.21**). However, his father showed him compassion and demonstrated unconditional love by celebrating his return (**vv. 22-24**)! What can we be thankful for today? We can thank God for the glorious inheritance we have in heaven (**1 Peter 1: 3-4**). We can also look at Ephesians 1:3-9, and be thankful of the

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following:

- We are blessed with every spiritual blessing (**Ephesians 1:3**)
- We are chosen by God (**Ephesians 1:4**)
- We are adopted into His family (**Ephesians 1:5**)
- We are redeemed and forgiven of our sins (**Ephesians 1:7**)
- God has revealed to us the mystery of Jesus as our Savior (**Ephesians 1:9**)

We can practice thankfulness by learning to count our blessings and not our burdens. As well as by learning not to compare ourselves with others, as it would only rob us of our joy. Observe those around you, you may have noticed that thankful people are joyful people. The Bible tells us in **1 Thessalonians 5:18** that we are to be thankful for everything. What can you thank God for today?

3. SURRENDER TO GOD (LUKE 15:25-28)

Maybe you may not identify yourself with the younger son, but maybe you can see yourself in the older son. What are signs that you may be like the older son? Do you have a victim mentality? Do you often compare yourself with others? Do you feel that with what you contribute to your family or in your work, you deserve to be treated better? Just like the older son in the story, these thoughts caused him to have resentment and anger towards the father, he had demands from his dad without realizing that he was being self-righteous. Jesus teaches us in **Matthew 16:24-25** that as His followers we are to die to ourselves and deny ourselves. He did not sugarcoat the truth that we are to take up our cross and give up our old life. A surrendered life is that we no longer live, but it's Christ living in us (**Galatians 2:20**).

The older son sulked and threw a tantrum, he kept records of what he believed his father did not do for him (**Luke 15:28-30**):

- Never threw him a party
- Never gave him a goat
- Never let him have a party with his friends

From the example of the older son, we can learn that if we don't live a surrendered life to the Lord, we will be prone to only think about ourselves. The older son did not rejoice at the return of his brother. He was missing out not only on the joy of his brother's return, but all that was his through his father (**Luke 15:31-32**). We are to be careful not to fall into the same trap, just like the pharisees who focused on fulfilling the law of God, rather than falling in love with God. God is always here for us and gives what is best for us. He wants us to clean up the toxic waste dump we carry around inside of us. He calls us to have zero tolerance for things that hurt others (**Colossians 3:8-9**), but instead put on a heart of compassion (**Colossians 3:12-13**). When we surrender to God, we won't have a list of resentment, but being filled with the Spirit we are able to escape entitlement, live in gratitude, and have an endless list of things to thank God for each day (**Galatians 5:16**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Married couples/ parents

As a spouse or a parent, what biblical expectations should you set for you and your family during this time of pandemic? How can you teach your children not to be spoiled and entitled beginning at home?

2. Single adults

How can you deal with favoritism and inequality in your workplace or even in your family?

3. Children

We learned that the cure for entitlement is gratitude. What are five (5) blessings that you received that you can be thankful for today?

4. Everyone

What area of your life do you need to surrender to escape entitlement, and what action will you take to do this?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those who are entrapped into thinking that they always have to be first, or always right, to matter in this world. Pray for them to find contentment and satisfaction in Christ instead. Share the good news that their surrender to Christ is not losing, but finding lasting joy and peace by living for Him

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
A God-centered Philippines
Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

Worship and Training Center
Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

Deeper intimate relationship with God
Righteous living
Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

2 Corinthians 5:15

¹⁵ and He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf.