

What God is Really Like

Week 3: The Older Son

We all have a tendency to judge others based on what we think they deserve. Maybe you've tried to do things the right way, but those who had no regard for the right way seemed to be rewarded. The truth is, when we overestimate our own righteousness and underestimate the grace we've been given, we can't help but judge others. In order to discover true peace, we need to shift our focus from others to ourselves and rest in the relationship we have with the Father.

Discussion Questions

1. Growing up, did you experience sibling rivalries with a brother or sister? If so, share a story of what happened and why.
2. Why do we tend to get upset when we see others being rewarded—particularly when we've attempted to do things “the right way” and they haven't?
3. Have you ever been frustrated or upset with God when this happens? Why?
4. Read Luke 15:26–31.
 - Can you relate to the older brother in this story? Why do you think he was so frustrated? Do you think his frustration was justified? Why?
 - Does God owe you? What happens when you relate to the Father as if he owes you?
 - Clay said, “Without a proper view of the Father, we can be at home and still miss the heart of the Father.” Do you believe this statement is true? How can we “be at home” with God and still miss his heart?
5. Would you say you are currently moving away from God or toward him?
6. What can you do this week to focus on your relationship with your heavenly Father instead of on the lives of others?

Changing Your Mind

When we focus on other people's relationship with God rather than on our own, we miss out on the joy of being his children. We miss out on the simple fact that he wants an intimate relationship with us. This week, make time to focus on the following:

1. Respond with repentance.
2. Receive the gift.
3. Recognize the relationship.

