



The Pouting Prodigal

MAIN THING

Learn how to pout like a biblical pro with these three easy steps

SCRIPTURE

Luke 15:25-32, Ephesians 4:26, Philippians 2:14, Matthew 20:13-15

ICEBREAKER

Compliment the person to your left

OPENING THOUGHT

Biblical commentators have named this story, “The Prodigal Son.” However, it is probably more appropriate to call it “The Prodigal SONS.” The older brother in this story is just as lost as the younger brother, although his lostness is much more subtle. “The Pouting Prodigal” is present in many families and churches today- people who have the wrong relationship with God and who are infected with a misunderstanding of grace and a spirit of complaining. Understand that the father had to deal with BOTH of his sons, not just the one who ran away.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the one thing that you heard this past Sunday that stuck out to you? Why did it resonate with you like it did?
2. The sermon identified three ways to pout like a Biblical pro- 1) Nurse an angry spirit of grumbling, 2) Have an exaggerated sense of your own goodness, and 3) Have a misunderstanding of grace. How do these things go unnoticed in churches and in Christians, and how do they affect our walk with Christ?
3. In the Matthew 20:13-15 passage, Jesus makes the point that most of us identify with the ones hired first rather than the ones who were hired last. He calls out the assumption of the people hired first. Do you see any resentment growing in you of people “hired last” or who seem to be “getting off scot free” when you have labored and stayed faithful for life?

LIFE APPLICATION

Spiritual pouting can infect a church and/or a Christian and cause lots of destruction. People who grow resentful of the grace God gives others, people who have an exaggerated sense of their own goodness, and people who nurse an angry spirit of grumbling can easily maintain a facade of Christianity, but they are just as lost as the son who ran away. Although the pouting prodigals may appear faithful and consistent, their spiritual condition is no different than that of the outright rebels. Therefore, it is extremely important that we don’t grow cold and resentful the longer we serve in God’s kingdom.

The opposite of pouting is rejoicing. Celebration. Christians need to constantly check their spirit to see if complaining and pouting has replaced celebration and rejoicing. How can we as a group increase our celebration and rejoicing as the father in this parable tells his son to do?

CHALLENGE

The apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8, “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” It is very easy for us to disregard those things in favor of things we would like to complain about. This week, ask the Holy Spirit within you to shift your mind to Philippians 4:8 and away from news, gossip, and other things that would encourage a spirit of complaining and grumbling within you.