

Sermon Text: Luke 15:25-32

Sermon Title: Be Glad: Rejecting Self Righteousness and Embracing Grace

Main Idea:

In this message we are going to see the importance of finding joy in God's grace and the salvation of sinners through Jesus, while warning against the dangers of self-righteousness, which blinds people to their own sin and hinders their relationship with God.

Important Concepts:

1. **Joy as a measure of spiritual health:** One important way to evaluate how you are doing spiritually is by examining how much joy you are finding in the gospel.
2. **The reason for a lack of joy in the gospel:** Jesus exposes the surprising cause of the Pharisees' lack of joy at the repentance of sinners, highlighting how self-righteousness can blind us to God's love and grace.
3. **The dangers of self-righteousness:** Self-righteousness is a deadly sin. But it is very tempting. We will look at the different stories in this chapter and see several ways Jesus reveals how big a sin it really is, concluding by looking at what it is doing to the older brother.
4. **Reflection and repentance:** Jesus is reaching out to a group of sinners in Luke 15 who don't realize they are sinners. He is calling the self-righteous to repent. As believers, we want to respond by remembering how good the gospel is and examining ourselves in order to repent from any self-righteous attitudes that may block our joy in the salvation God has provided through Jesus. Embracing grace, rather than striving for self-justification, allows true joy and fellowship with God.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think "finding joy in the gospel" means?
- How important do you think finding joy in the gospel is?
- Why might regularly celebrating the way God saves sinners be an important sign of spiritual health?
- What was the surprising reason the Pharisees weren't finding joy in the way God was saving sinners through Jesus?
- What is meant by the "wrong kind of righteousness?"
- What are some examples of the problems the Pharisees' righteousness created throughout the gospel of Luke?
- What are some characteristics of the wrong kind of righteousness? How would you identify it in yourself?

- Read Philippians 3:1-11. What can you learn here about the two kinds of righteousnesses?
- Can self-righteousness be a problem for a believer? What might be some signs a person is struggling with self-righteousness?
- What are some of the dangers of self-righteousness according to Luke 15?
- How might the "wrong kind of righteousness" impact our attitude towards others?
- Our sources of joy reveal much about our spiritual condition. How would you assess your current sources of joy, and what do they reveal about your walk with God? What would it look like for you to find your joy in the gospel the way you should? What would be different about your life, do you think?
- If you need to find your joy in the gospel and self-righteousness is a cause of a lack of joy in the gospel, what attitude should you have toward self-righteousness?
- What practical steps can we take to recognize and repent of self-righteousness? How can we help each other as a church stay focused on God's grace and joy?
- How can a church pursue righteousness while not becoming self-righteous?

Sermon Notes: This is a place you can record your own notes and thoughts as you listen to the message today so that you can think about them later.