

***The Problem with Being Good***  
***Luke 15:25-32***

**“Dig Deeper” Questions:** Choose a few questions to enhance your group’s discussion on the sermon message.

The final message in this series probably speaks most directly to us as *Older Brothers*. Most people (and ourselves) would regard us as good people, since our sins are neither obvious nor blatant. This message reveals that both the *socially unacceptable* sins of the younger brother and our *acceptable sins* both separate us from a full love and relationship with God our Father. The destructive sin of *Pride* and the importance of having a proper view of God are key points in this powerful and practical message.

1. Pastor Dave’s first point is *The Poison of Pride*. Did the Parable and message reveal any **acceptable**, but hidden sins to you? Why do you think we can be comfortable in admitting them, but yet, continue to internalize or practice them? Of which of the three: *Self-righteousness, Self-pity, and Resentment* do you identify the most with? How will you repent or resolve them? Please share and discuss with your group.
2. In some Christian schools, students are required to create *Spiritual Resumes*. Do we as *Older Brothers* subconsciously compare ourselves to others based on our resumes, worldly or spiritual? Are both resumes prideful or self-righteous? How does Pastor Dave relate *1 Corinthians 13* to this concept? What personal examples can you add to Pastor Dave’s?
3. Few of us older brothers can honestly say we have not experienced *Self-pity*, which Pastor Dave describes as a prelude to a *martyrdom complex*. This can involve serious events such as tragedies, illnesses, or job loss. However, we probably most often feel self-pity since we have a sense of entitlement, based on **our** achievements and lack of recognition. Can you share some examples of how you might have handled situations differently based on the message? How did **self-pity** work out long-term for you or others?
4. *Resentment* is when you see someone who’s lazier or less responsible or less spiritual than you are, and yet they seem to be getting blessed more than you – and it bothers you. The example of the applause for the recovered heroin addict and the congregant who resented it may conversely be viewed as him being the only one honest enough to express his true feelings. How often do we display **Grace** at church events and internalize or express our resentment in private? Share some examples. Is there a *legitimate resentment* which does not separate us from God’s loving and forgiving heart?
5. Pastor Dave ended the message with a comparison of **two ways we can view God**. Many of us were raised by a stern, authoritative, rules-based father or in a works-based religion. Which perspective do you identify the most with: God, as a supreme ruler or *cosmic traffic cop*; or **God as a loving, forgiving Father**? Is it possible to understand the Parable and message fully without the latter perspective?

**APPLICATION:**

In our society and especially advertisements, we are constantly bombarded with what we *deserve*. How would you **contrast deserve with Grace**? Based on both first century and 2021 cultures what would the younger son and older son actually have deserved? How can you use this message to explain **Grace** and the proper image of our Loving Father to a culture that will have trouble accepting and understanding these truths?