

Coming Home: Breaking the Power of Selfishness

Scripture used: [Luke 15:11-12 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Today Pastor Hurmon continued the series “Coming Home” with the sermon “Breaking the Power of Selfishness”. In [Luke 15:1-2 \(NLT\)](#), the religious leaders including the Pharisees approach Jesus because they are angry that he associates with sinners. Jesus uses a series of parables including the Prodigal Son parable to illustrate that these religious leaders claimed to be children of the Father, but they didn’t have His heart. God’s family often can be radically dysfunctional, and while He abhors sin, He affirms our value. In their selfish desires, the religious leaders were missing their responsibility to demonstrate God’s heart for others. The Prodigal Son also shows his selfishness in [Luke 15:12](#) when he says to his father, “I want my share...now” without regard for how this demand will affect his family. So too, the elder brother also demonstrates his selfishness in rejecting the younger brother when he returns. Pastor Hurmon asked us to consider the question: *is there some selfishness in us?*

KEY POINTS

- 1) **Insightful Characteristics of Selfish People** The definition of selfishness is being concerned excessively or exclusively for oneself or one’s own advantage, pleasure, or welfare, regardless of others. Many characteristics illustrate that definition: being self-absorbed, viewing others as only a means to having our own needs met, a false sense of entitlement (always asking and never giving), an excessive focus on valuing material acquisitions, self-promotion, a greater potential to end up alone, destruction of families and relationships, difficulty accepting constructive criticism, a tendency to be unkind, and manipulating things to get one’s own way.
- 2) **Selfishness is the opposite of Jesus’ love.** [Matthew 22:37-39 \(NLT\)](#) explains that God’s purpose for us is to promote Jesus’ love in relationships with others. Jesus commands that we are to love God first and then out of our great love for God, we are to love others.
- 3) **Power-Breaking Questions:** Desire is a gift from God because it makes us aware of what we need that is good for us. Desire can be dangerous too. Desire becomes obsessed with the target and narrows our thinking. It can cause us to forget we have free will to choose our actions. Pastor Hurmon provided us with questions to ask ourselves:
 - a) What do I want? What is my greatest desire?
 - i) Does what I want align with “what’s good”? Does my desire fit into God’s plan for me?
 - ii) Is what I want consistent with God’s love? We need to distinguish our desires from love.
 - iii) Who am I becoming? Does my desire help me to be the person God wants me to be?
- 4) **Question our Desires:** In [Luke 15:17 \(NLT\)](#) the son comes to his senses and returns home. He finally understands that he had left behind what he needed for what he wanted, which had almost killed him. We can come to our senses too by being suspicious of our desires. We can ask the Holy Spirit to help us break the power of selfishness.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Are you in touch with your desires? What do you want in this season of your life? Which desires are “healthy” and which ones are “unhealthy”? Have you noticed some desires can vary between “healthy” and “unhealthy” based on our motivations and perspective?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider the motivations of the elder brother and younger brother in the parable of the prodigal son, and how they relate to their desires. What do we learn about the role of desires in our own lives? Reflect on the power-breaking questions that Pastor Hurmon provided for us. Listen as God begins to reveal to you what that desire might be. Now, reflect on the other questions about your greatest desire and journal your answers. Is your desire good? Is it loving? Is it helping you to become the person God wants you to be?
- 3) **DO** - Next, take all these things into consideration and ask yourself how you might adjust your great desire to be in alignment with God’s plan for you? Is there an action that you might take this week to move towards that goal? Is there selfish behavior that is in the way of having good, loving desires? Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you so you can overcome that behavior. Please join us next week, April 9, for our Easter Celebration, and invite your loved ones!