**“Hope in Lostness”**

**Going deeper in Luke 15:11-32**

**INTRODUCTION** – In Luke 15 Jesus has been questioned by the Pharisees about why he fellowships with sinners. These “sinners” have been experiencing real life transformation and healing through the power and ministry of Jesus. In response Jesus tells three parables about being lost and God’s view of those who have lost their way. This is the final parable of the three.

**READ** – *Read (passage) aloud. Read it several times. Listen for what the Spirit of God is saying, don’t just think about it.* 11 Jesus said, “There once was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger son said to his father, ‘Father I want my share of the inheritance right now.’ “So, the father divided between them, all he had. 13 Not long after that the younger son packed up and left for a country far from home. 14 He ravenously spent everything. After going broke there was a devasting famine all through that country and he began to really feel it. 15 So he went and signed on with a citizen of that country who assigned him to feeding pigs in his fields. 16 He was so hungry that he would have eaten the corn cobs that the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. 17 “All this brought him to his senses. He said to himself, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare and I am here starving to death.’ 18 I will go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I don’t deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a hired hand.’ 20 He got right up and went home to his father.“When he was still a long way off his father saw him. Filled with compassion his father ran to him and nearly knocked him as he embraced him and kissed him. 21 The son said to him ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ 22 “But the father wasn’t listening. He was calling to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring out a new set of clothes and put them on him and put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Then get the prize-winning calf and roast it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate! 24 My son is here. It was as though he was dead and is alive again; he was lost and has been found. 25 During all of this the older son was out in the field. When he got close to home, he heard the music and dancing. 26 He called to one of the servants and asked what was going on. 27 He told him, ‘Your brother has come home. Your father has ordered a feast. We are barbequing the prize-winning calf because he has come home safe and sound!’ 28 “The older brother was enraged and refused to go in. His father went out to him begged him to come in, but he won’t listen. 29 The son said, ‘Look at how many years I have been serving you and I have never disobeyed you and I have never been given a party for me and my friends. 30 Then this son of yours who devoured your generosity with whores comes back and you have a feast with the prize-winning calf for him.’ 31 His father said, ‘Son, you are always with me and everything that is mine is yours, 32 but this is a time for rejoicing and being happy because your brother was dead and is alive again. He was lost and he’s found!’”

**ENGAGE** – *Questions for going deeper. God is speaking… to you.*

1. Can you remember a time when you left or cut ties with your family? What happened and what was it like for you?

2. What do you think the younger son was thinking and feeling as he makes this request for his share of the inheritance? How about the father?

3. Why does the father grant this shameful and insulting request?

4. How is the older brother’s refusal to go into the house similar to what the younger brother did?

5. How are the younger and older brothers similar? How are they different?

6. What does the younger son hope for? The father? The older brother? What does God hope for?

7. Where are you right now in your spiritual pilgrimage?

**PRAY** – *God has spoken. So, reply.*

\*Give thanks to the Lord for welcoming you into life with Him. Tell Him some of the things that you are grateful for in your life with Him.

\*Praise Him for the fact that the hope you have been given is extended to all. Ask him for forgiveness for any ways that you may have hindered this hope being offered to others around you in word or deed.

\*Pray for the people in your life who have not accepted the hope & life that the Lord Jesus has for them.

**LIVE** – *This is where the rubber hits the road.*

The two brothers in this parable are in different places. One needs to return home. Do you need to return home to the Lord? Why not do it today? The older brother has decided that the gift of hope and life is his possession rather than a gift to be shared. How will you prayerfully share this gift and with whom this week?