

RELATIONAL THEOLOGY SERIES TWO
THE FATHER WITH THE OUTSTRETCHED ARMS
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Luke 15:11-32; Genesis 2-3

Aloneness reaches deep into the inner recesses of the human heart. No one likes to be alone.

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve fell into sin and God ministered to their fallenness: “I will send a Savior to die in your place in payment for your sins.”

However, note carefully in Genesis 2 that before God ministered to Adam’s fallenness, He first ministered to his aloneness. Adam was alone in the Garden when God arrived to declare: “It is not good for man to be alone.”

We struggle with aloneness all our lives. It is the first human crisis. This is a big deal.

Let me tell you how we tend to respond when we realize we are alone. Here are the three natural human response to loneliness:

Self-reliance

Self-condemnation

Selfishness

Self-reliance, self-condemnation, and selfishness are also the characteristics of fallenness. They are the manifestations of total depravity. This demonstrates why sin is so terrible. It isolates us from God and from others.

The story of the Prodigal Son, the Elder Brother and their Dad is a story of isolation and separation among people who should have been enjoying intimacy, support and companionship. This is the story of how God sets us free from our self-reliance, selfishness, and self-condemnation.

Watch the progression of selfishness, self-reliance, and self-condemnation in the life of the Prodigal Son.

Allow the Lord to identify these three fallen traits in your own life.

Contemplating on the compassion, forgiveness, and welcome the prodigal experienced from his father is one of the keys to setting us free from our aloneness and fallenness.

Meanwhile, all is not well at home. Glenn will deal with the Elder Brother next week. Nevertheless, notice the same three characteristics of fallenness and the struggle with aloneness in the life of the Elder Brother. He wanted a relationship with his dad and could have had it at any time—the Father’s response was, “But you had me.” But, unfortunately, he never experienced it—so blinded was he by self-reliance, self-condemnation and selfishness.

Reflect on the hurting heart of God. He has one son who won’t come home and one son who won’t rejoice with the Father. Now, his son has come home; it is time for rejoicing—and the Father has to rejoice alone. It is time to minister to his long-lost, son—and He has to minister alone.

Contemplate that eventually we all are to be the Father.