“The Parable of the Perfect Son”
by
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**What**
When his brother leaves, the Perfect Son becomes self-righteously sure that he is the only one who deserves his Father’s love. The Prodigal’s return reveals the Perfect Son’s imperfect heart. **Themes:** Prodigal, Grace, God’s Love, Mercy, Forgiveness

**Who**
Narrator
Perfect Son
Dad
Prodigal Son

**When**
Present

**Wear (Props)**
The characters wear overalls, or if it’s a beauty shop, smocks.

**Why**
Luke 15:11-32

**How**
Dad is serene and patient. Perfect son is self-righteous and increasingly angry. Although this is the Parable of the Perfect Son, it could easily be modified to be the parable of the perfect daughter. Think Beauty Salon Empire instead of a farm.

**Time**
Approximately 5 minutes
Narrator enters and addresses the audience.

Narrator: This is the story of the perfect son. The one left behind when his brother, that rascally Prodigal, took off with his inheritance. The perfect son stayed behind because...he was the responsible one.

Perfect Son: (enters) I was the responsible one. (yells) Dad! Dad!

Dad: (enters) I'm right here. Stop yelling.

Perfect Son: Sorry. I just wanted you to know that I'm done. I milked the cows, fed the sheep, loaded the hay, cleaned out the barn and raked the barnyard.

Dad: That's great, thanks, but you didn't have to do it all today.

Perfect Son: (self-righteously) Well, I know that my brother leaving and taking all of his inheritance has made it hard for you. I'm just trying to help.

Dad: Thanks.

Narrator: Day after day, the perfect son worked hard to fill the gap left by his brother. Day after day, he reminded his Dad of how perfect he was.

Perfect Son: So, Dad, did you notice how I whitewashed the barn, and mended the fence and gathered the sheep. I haven’t even had breakfast, yet. Just wanted you to know. You can count on me!

Dad: I really appreciate that.

Narrator: The Perfect Son worked year after year, and year after year, he reminded his Dad that he had stayed behind to help when his brother ran off.

Perfect Son: You know, I stayed behind just because you needed me.

Dad: Yes, I know

Perfect Son: Aren’t you glad you have me to do all this for you?

Dad: Very glad.

Perfect Son: I really work hard for you.

Dad: You sure do.

Narrator: Then one day, off in the distance, the Dad spied a cloud of dust.
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Dad: (pointing) That cloud of dust. It looks different. It looks…like my missing son. My rascally Prodigal. (runs to find Perfect Son and points again) Look, over there. Doesn’t that look like your rascally brother. I think he’s coming home to us. (beaming)

Perfect Son: Nah, it looks like a dust devil to me.

Dad: It’s getting closer. It’s definitely someone and that dusty shape has a family resemblance.

Perfect Son: (a bit panicked) No, really, I think it’s maybe mom’s fourth cousin twice removed coming to visit.

Dad: Now, look. It is! It really is. It’s your brother. (Runs toward Prodigal as he enters the stage and flings himself upon him)

Perfect Son: Great! Just great.

Dad: (to Prodigal son) It’s really you. I’ve been so worried about you.

Prodigal: (pushing his Dad away) Dad, stop. I don’t deserve this. I have really screwed up. I have nothing left. I just came to see if maybe…(hesitates and asks shyly) Maybe you might let me live here if I work for you, for free. I’ll do anything…carry trash, rake stalls, clean pig pens. I’m not proud, just hungry.

Perfect Son: (to his Dad) Dad, free labor. Now, that would be great. Say yes.

Dad: No.

Perfect Son: (puzzled) No?

Prodigal: (hangs head) I get it. I took everything. I won’t bother you anymore (turns to leave).

Perfect Son: But Dad, he did offer to work for free.

Dad: (walks over to Prodigal and touches his arm) No, you won’t work for free. I’ll pay you. And not just a laborer’s wages. You are my son. Half of all I have will be yours one day.

Perfect Son: Half of all you have will be his? ARE YOU NUTS? He’s already taken his half. He wasted it. Why would you give him more? I stayed here. I worked for you. I gave up everything for you.

Dad: (patiently) You could have left anytime. I didn’t tell you that you had to stay. I’d have done the same for you as I’ve done for your brother.
Perfect Son: Left? I could have left? Who would have helped you with this place? We’ve tripled it in size since I’ve been here and the thanks I get is that you’re going to let my no-good brother have half of what I’VE worked for? *(By now he is yelling)* HOW IS THAT FAIR?

Dad: It’s not fair. It’s love.

Prodigal: Dad, that’s the most wonderful thing, to offer me half of all this, when I already took my half. I don’t deserve it.

Dad: It’s not about deserving. It’s about love.

Perfect Son: *(At a full shout)* Well, I’ll tell you one thing. I’m not staying around for this. I’m not going to watch all my hard work be given away for nothing. I QUIT! I’m out of here. Gone. And, I want my half, now!

Dad: *(patiently)* If you feel that way, then we’ll go to the bank tomorrow. Half of what I have is yours. But first, why don’t you join us in the party for your brother.

Perfect Son: No way. I am not celebrating this. He doesn’t deserve it and I won’t be a part of it.

Dad: You’re right, he doesn’t deserve it, but love is not about getting what you deserve. It’s about recognizing that you don’t deserve anything and then accepting the love offer anyway. Your brother has learned that. And because he has learned it, I know that he will be worthy of it. I can trust him to love others in this same way. It’s all I want for both of you. The farm means nothing without the love.

Perfect Son: That’s just a pile of Ox Poo! I’ll see you tomorrow. Maybe by then you’ll recognize your mistake *(he storms off).*

Dad: Goodbye, son. I love you. I’ll see you tomorrow. *(Turns to Prodigal)* Now, let’s go set up the barbecue pit. I want the world to see what a fine young man you’ve become.

Prodigal: I’ll try to be worthy of all this love, Dad. *(Looks offstage)* But what about him? Before we go eat, I want to try to talk him out of leaving. I can tell him from experience that it won’t be pleasant. He will miss you and the family.

Dad: You can try. But, if he doesn’t listen, let him go. I trust that he will be back. *(leaves stage with his son, but then returns without him)* And when he does return, what a party we’ll have… *(leaves again)*
Narrator: The Perfect Son was gone for a very long time. Learning to forgive takes longer than learning to love. By the time he returned, his father was gone. But, (Narrator folds up papers and turns to leave) his brother saw him coming, and when the Perfect Son got home, the party was already in progress.

Lights fade.