

Patterns of Grace and Gratitude Week 2

Monday, April 19



Best Nest in the Hocking Hills, Ohio

When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate...

The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'" Luke 15:17-23 & 28-32

This scripture is excerpted from the parable of the Prodigal Son. One of the most intriguing phrases in the parable of the Prodigal Son is "when he came to his senses". Some scripture translations say, "when he came to himself." Is it possible, that when we come to "ourselves or our senses" that we are finally recognizing who God created us to be? That up until that point we have been out of sync with who and what God created in us?

In the parable, imagine the Father squinting into the sunset day after day, watching for his son to return home...to claim his identity as the father's son. This father who lavishly welcomes him home is not concerned with the words that his son wants to speak, but with the noticeable change in the son's posture...from arrogant to humble servant. The father knows the heart of the son and welcomes him home. And just as important is the father going to the older son and pleading with him to welcome his brother. It is a plea for relationship. It is a longing for all to be in sync. And that is what grace is all about. The grace-filled life is full of relationship and service. And gratitude for the father's love.