



# THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

## PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

### “The Horribleness of Stubbornness” (Part 1)

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Stubbornness in the Bible means planting our feet on the ground, clenching our fist, and saying “I am right, and I do not care what anybody else says.” The Israelites were stubborn, and God was having difficulty in leading them (Hos 4:16). Likewise, God wants to train us like His children; we are not to be treated like domesticated animals (Ps. 32:8-9). Being stubborn against God’s will stunts our spiritual growth. As His children, we must obey His will and commandments to experience true happiness.

The **Parable of the Prodigal Son** (Lk. 15:11-32) shows the attitude of the older son:

- 1. The older brother was angry upon the return of his younger brother.** Upon learning from their servant that his brother (the prodigal son) came home and their father prepared a feast for him, the older brother was disappointed and refused to go inside their home. From this scenario, we learn that sometimes our stubbornness leads to an unwelcoming heart to our repentant brothers. The heart of every Christian must rejoice with the return of our lost brothers/sisters.
- 2. The older brother accused his brother of wasting his money on women.** When their father begged him to go inside their home, the older brother reminded his father of the magnitude of his younger son’s sins. He refused to accept the repentance of his younger brother. Similarly, like the older brother, we imprison ourselves with our unforgiveness to our brothers in Christ.
- 3. The older brother severed his relationship with his younger brother.** While the older brother was talking to their father, he was using the

word “your son” instead of “my brother.” He distanced himself from his blood brother because of his anger; he dismissed the fact that both of them were loved by their father. His stubbornness broke their relationship. As Christians, we must remember that God loves all of us as His children.

- 4. The older brother forgot all the blessings that their father gave to him.** His stubbornness blinded him to the fact that all the father’s properties will soon be his. Moreover, he also felt that his work at the farm was a slave’s work, not befitting his father’s son. We must remember that our good deeds come from God’s love in us and we should share God’s gospel out of love.
- 5. The older brother was unforgiving towards his brother.** Though his father explained the celebration was for his younger brother’s return, the older brother did not share the father’s joy. Likewise, if we continue to be stubborn against the will of the Father, we will end up being unloving and unforgiving to our fellowmen.

#### **Conclusion:**

Our stubbornness against God’s will eventually breaks our relationship with Him and our neighbors. We can take Solomon’s advice in Eccl. 12:13, “Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” Through our obedience, we will grow in spiritual maturity and be deserving children of God. Otherwise, we will end up bitter, and experience God’s judgment (Rom. 2:15).

#### **Reflection:**

1. What makes you easily angry with your brothers?
2. How can you remove your stubbornness against God’s plan for you?

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