

IN FAVOR OF GRACE

Galatians
Session 3

Prayer of John Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered in his name, you will be in the midst of them.

Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

—*Greek, 5th century*

JESUS and PAUL

Notes on **Matthew 18:23-27**:

- A talent was worth 15 years' wages for a laborer. Do the math!
 - A king, master, father, or lord in Jesus' parables almost always represented God.
 - A servant, a slave, or a son is almost always us.
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What does this parable say about the ability of an individual to “make things right” with God on his/her own?

How is the servant released from the crushing debt?

How does this story speak to Paul's concern about our ability to save ourselves through keeping the law?



Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

Notes on **Luke 15:25-30**:

- In this second half of the Prodigal Son, the older brother representing the obedient son reacts to the father's receiving of the younger, prodigal son.
- The father in Jesus' parables always represents God.
- Whenever someone speaks in Jesus' parables it is significant.
- Middle-Eastern biblical scholars interpret the older son's use of "me" and "my" in verse 29 as his renunciation of his family, including the Father.
- A banquet or a party or feast in Jesus' parables always represents the Kingdom of God.

Luke 15:25-30

The older son is not happy with his brother's salvation—his entrance into the party. The older son obviously thinks that his brother's works do not begin to compare with his own. Simply put, the younger brother does not deserve to be in the kingdom.

Read verses 28-30. Pick out words and phrases that:

- show the older son's alienation from his brother and the father
- show the older son's feeling of superiority
- show any hint of love

Luke 15:25-30

If the father is God and the older son is the obedient person, how could we put the older son's remark "I never disobeyed your command" into the words that Paul is using in Galatians?

How does that lifetime of obedience serve him in entering the kingdom—coming into a relationship with God?

Luke 15:25-30

Look at verses 28, 31 and 32. What words would you use to describe the father's reaction to this older son? What words of Paul's?

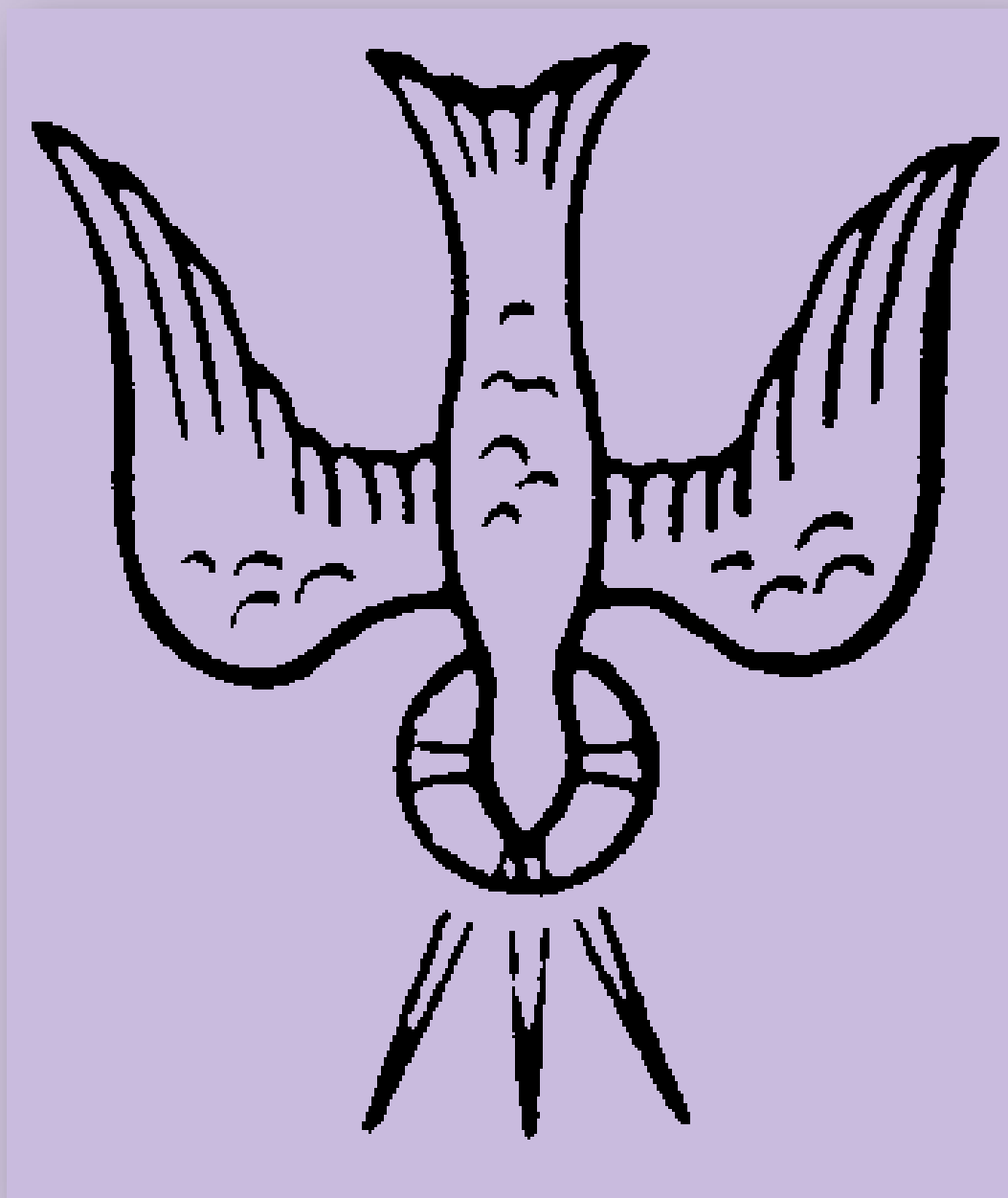
What must the older son do in order to come to the party?

How are both sons made able to “come to the party”?

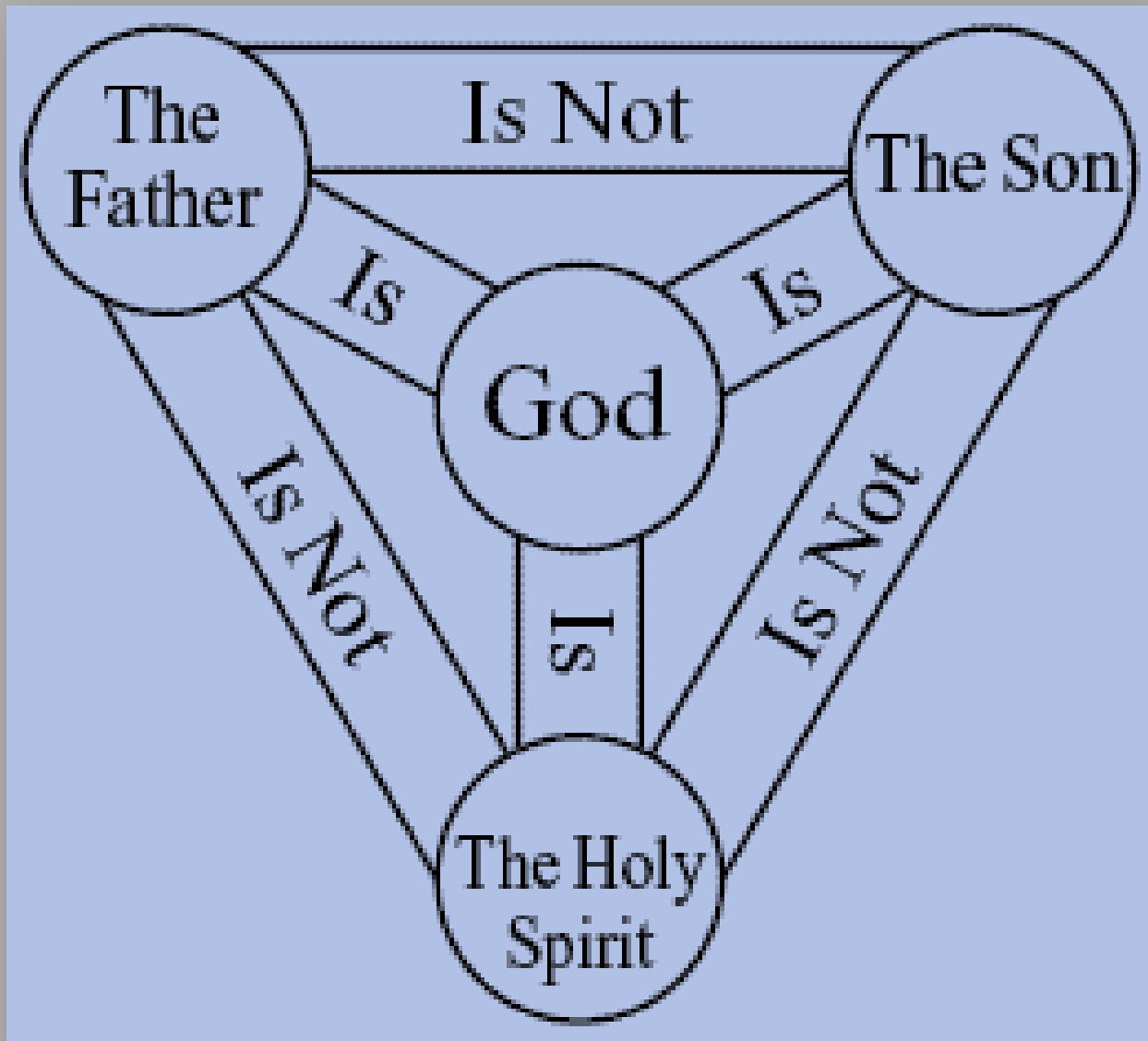


Giovanni Francesco Barbieri "Return of the Prodigal son," 1619









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