

The Kiss That Blows The Mind

Luke 15

#16 in Stories Jesus Told Series

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November 15, 2015

Prayer

Father, we thank you for your Word, and that your Word became flesh and that He told stories. And so Lord, God, we're looking again at one of the stories Jesus told. We pray that you would help us to believe, in Jesus' name we ask it, Amen.

Message

Luke 15 1-2

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

It appears that Jesus actually hosted "dinners for sinners." . . . and so of course, the religious leaders grumble. They grumble and Jesus tells three stories:

1. About a lost sheep that the shepherd finds and everyone rejoices.
2. About a lost coin that a woman finds and everyone rejoices.

Jesus says, *"This is what it's like when a sinner repents . . . all of heaven rejoices."*

Repentance is the Greek word, *metanoia*. It literally means "changed mind" or "new mind." A sheep doesn't find its shepherd, and a coin doesn't find its owner. And you don't find your new mind – your new mind finds you.

Jesus tells three stories – we looked at the first two last week. He tells three stories:

1. A lost sheep is found, and everyone rejoices.
2. A lost coin is found, and everyone rejoices.
3. A lost boy is found, and everyone rejoices, except his brother.

So the obvious question is: "What's wrong with this brother?" He must be lost and needs to be found. He needs to repent.

Luke 15: 11 -24

And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish

here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate."

That's how the Father finds His lost boy. And everyone parties. Everyone enjoys "dinners for sinners," except for one, who, like the Pharisees, grumbles and refuses to party.

Luke 15: 25-32

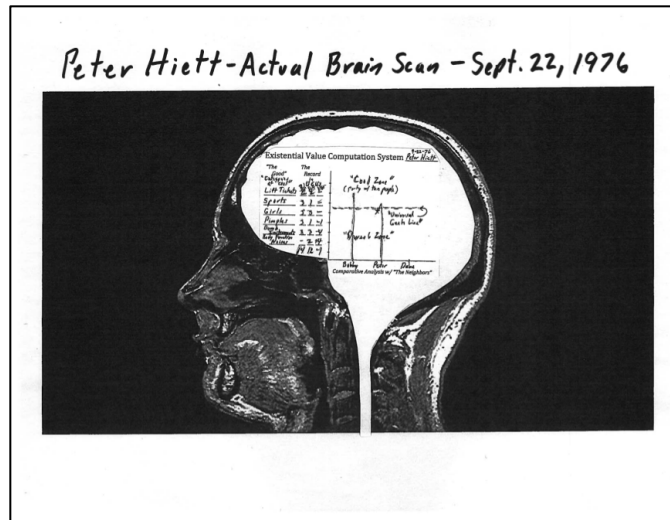
"Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

The Father says, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours." What a statement! And what a party!!! But this boy is intent on weeping and gnashing his teeth in outer darkness. WHY?

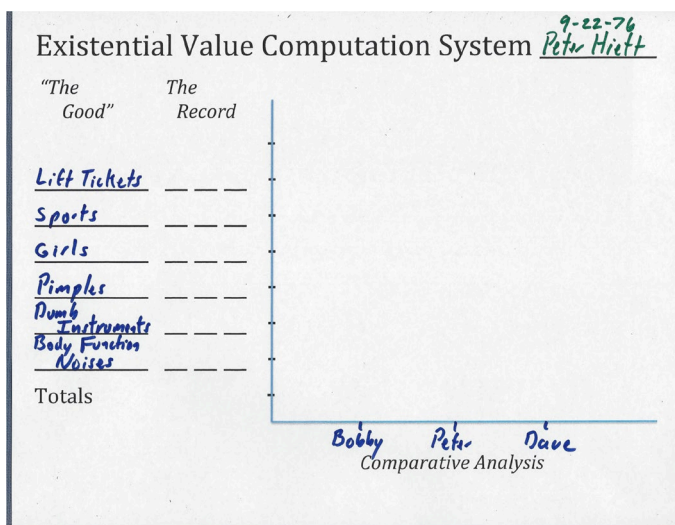
Well, to answer that question, I think I need to share with you, something that I've already shared with some of you before – a painful episode from my past.

It's rather embarrassing . . . but when I was a sophomore in High School in 1976, I had mental problems . . . The doctors performed a brain scan and this is what they found:

This is an actual brain scan of my head from 1976.



You can tell it's real, - because it says "Peter Hiatt – Actual Brain Scan – September 22, 1976." This is what they found: an "Existential Value Computation System." I'd like to zoom in on it and explain it to you.



This is how it works:

1. On the left is listed my "knowledge of the Good," or, as I would've said it then, "Categories of Cool."
2. Next to it, is the record of Good deeds measured in UGU's (Universal Goodness Units.)

[Peter begins writing on the above chart as he tallies scores. See below.]

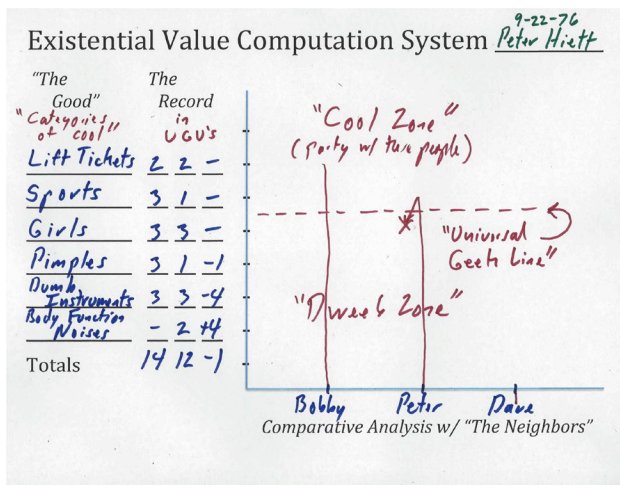
In 1976, ski lift tickets on your jacket were really cool.

Lift Tickets: Bobby had them, +2; I had them, +2; Dave didn't have any, +0.

Sports: Bobby, +3; I was on the soccer team, +2;
 Dave didn't do sports, +0.
Girls: All the girls liked Bobby, +3; a cheerleader talked to me, +3
 Dave, - 0
Pimples: Bobby never had pimples, +3; I had quite a few, +1
 Dave came to school with Clearasil on his face, -1
Dumb Instruments: Bobby didn't play any, +3; I didn't play any, +3
 Dave – State Champion Cello Player, -4.
Bodily Function Noises: Bobby didn't really have any – 0
 I did pretty well in that department, +2
 Dave could burp the entire alphabet, +4.

Now, this is profoundly complex, involving far more people, and almost infinite number of calculations tabulated over time. But, for you, - I've simplified things to just three people and one moment in time so you can understand. This is how it works.

1. You tally the score – Bobby – 14, Peter 13, Dave -1.
2. Then you plot the scores on a graph.



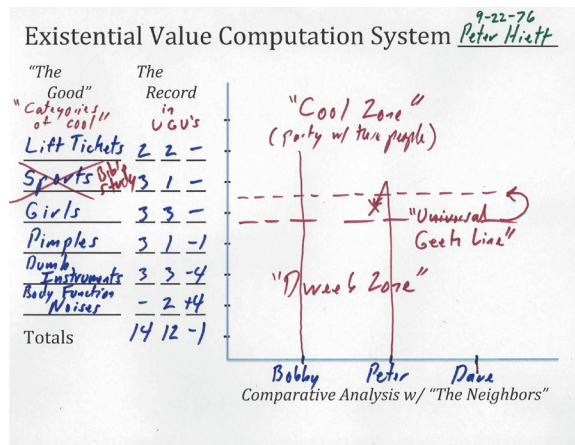
3. Immediately under your score, you draw a line. The "Universal Geek line."
- Above it is the "cool zone."
 - Below it is the "dweeb zone."
 - You party with the folks in the "cool zone," but not the folks in the "dweeb zone."

I was ruled by the Existential Value Computation System

- It determined who I sat with at lunch.
- It was the reason I quit piano lessons and did sports I hated.
- It determined my moods; if Bobby got a zit it made me happy because I was that much closer to my idol. And when I was sad, I could watch Dave carry his cello across the football field; I could judge him, "last and least" and feel better about myself.

But, that year, I got cut from the soccer team. I literally sat in a hole and wept, not because I missed soccer but because I dropped into the "dweeb zone." I literally thought, "How will I explain this to my grandchildren?"

It was almost unbearable, but after a few weeks of moping, I just changed a few categories and lowered the Universal Geek line.



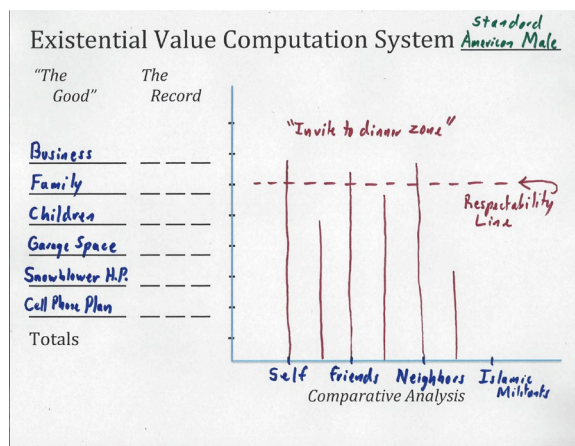
That's the beauty of it!

Yet, it was an immense amount of work. I was always calculating, and I was always afraid:

- What if my judgments were inaccurate?
- What if Dave's calculations were different than mine?
- And what if I was Bobby's dweeb – his "last and least" to feel better about himself?

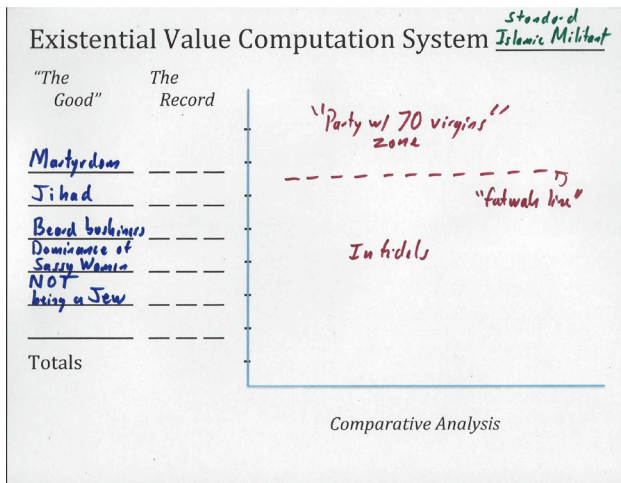
It was constant work and fear, so even if I got to the party, I couldn't party. I was trapped in me.

Well, that was the logic in my mind, sophomore year, 1976. Now, if you're thinking, "Tenth grade boys are so immature," let me show you an actual brain scan of a standard American adult male.



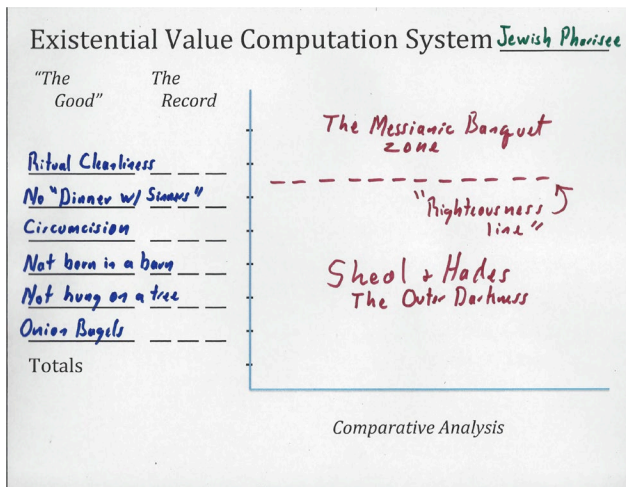
It's just the same layout and same dynamics, only the "Categories of Cool" have changed. Instead of ski tags, sports, and pimples, it's business success, family, kids, garage space, and snow-blower horsepower. The Geek line is now the "respectability line." You measure against friends, neighbors, and Islamic militants because those guys

will always make you feel better about yourself and most of them don't even own a snow blower!



Here's an EVCS brain scan for an Islamic militant. Same layout – same logic, just the “Categories of Cool” are changed. Dying for God, fighting in jihad, beard bushiness, dominance of sexy women, not being a Jew.

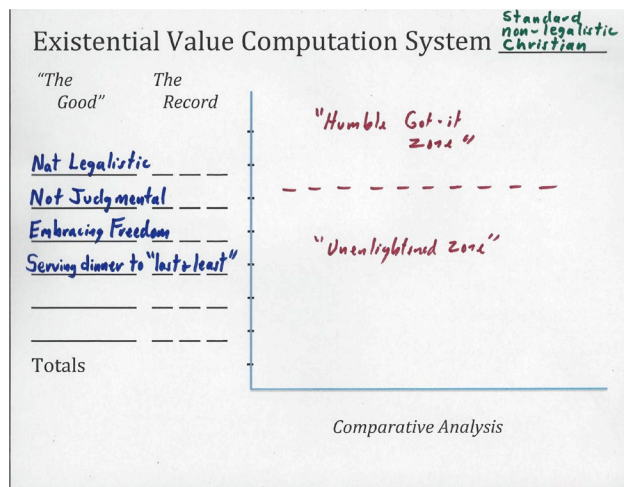
Here's an EVCS brain scan for a Jewish Pharisee in Jesus' day.



The layout is exactly the same, the logic is the same logic. The operating system is still pride, envy, and fear. It's just the “Categories of Cool” have changed to stuff like circumcision, ritual cleanliness, not dining with sinners, not being born in a barn, not being hung on a tree. The Geek line is “the Righteous line.” Above it is the Great Messianic Banquet – the party. Below it is the outer darkness – *Sheol*, or in Greek, *Hades*.

Now, you're probably thinking: “Yes, I'm so glad that I'm not a Muslim, or a Jew, but a Christian. And I get your point, Peter, I'm not a legalistic Christian.”

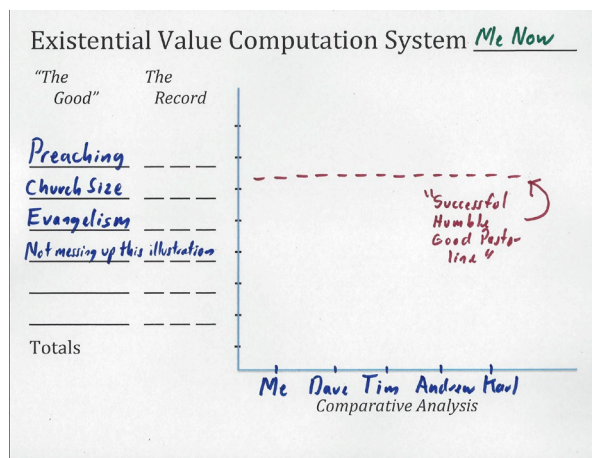
This is an EVCS brain scan for the standard non-legalistic Christian.



Same layout, logic, and operating system. Only the "Categories of Cool" have changed; they are: not being legalistic, not being judgmental, embracing freedom in Christ, serving dinner to the last and least.

But, just by making these computations, we end up making laws against legalism—judging folks on their judgmentalism—enslaved to acting free in Christ, and using the last and least to score points for ourselves. And Jesus said, "Whatever you do the last and least of these, my brothers, you do to me." That means we use Jesus to exalt ourselves and that's twisted!

This is my EVCS right now:



It's the same layout, same logic, same operating system, pride, envy, and fear. Just the "Categories of Cool" have changed to things like preaching well, church attendance, evangelism, and not screwing up this illustration. The "Universal Geek line" is the "Successful, Humble, Good Pastor line." I measure myself against neighbors, that is other pastors, guys like: Dave, Tim, Andrew Trawick, and Karl Wheeler.

This is the same Dave I knew in 1976. He's an amazing guy and became one of my best friends, actually the Best Man in my wedding. We did youth ministry together in Southern California, but when more kids wanted to ride in my van than his, it made me happy. His sadness made me happy.

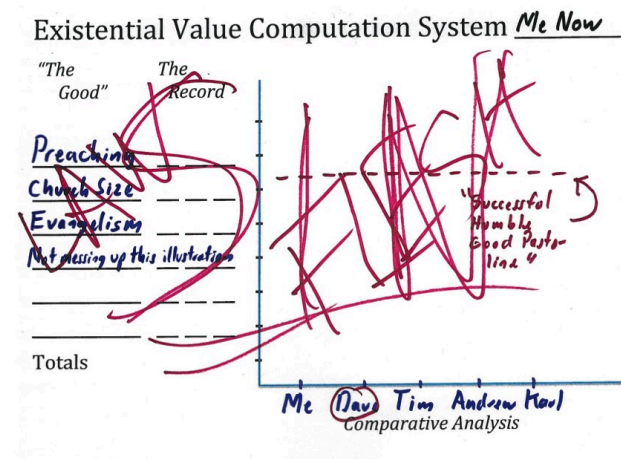
Tim Brewer was my new "Bobby," my idol. He was an incredible preacher and pastored a big church. When I heard the news that he had taken his own life, asphyxiating himself in his garage, something in me had this thought: "Peter, you're better than Tim. Be Happy."

Andrew is the closest thing to a brother that I've ever had. He'll come back from evangelism trips having preached the gospel to thousands, and I'll be jealous. What am I doing? Wishing thousands into outer darkness?

I'll never forget the night my best friend, Dave, literally fell apart in my arms. His whole body was trembling as he cried, "Peter, she wants a divorce!" And something in me thought, "Peter, you won, you're better than Dave." Then I thought, "NO, you've utterly lost." "You can't even love your best friend." Trying to be good, I make myself bad, and wish everyone to Hell and myself as well, for now I am utterly alone.

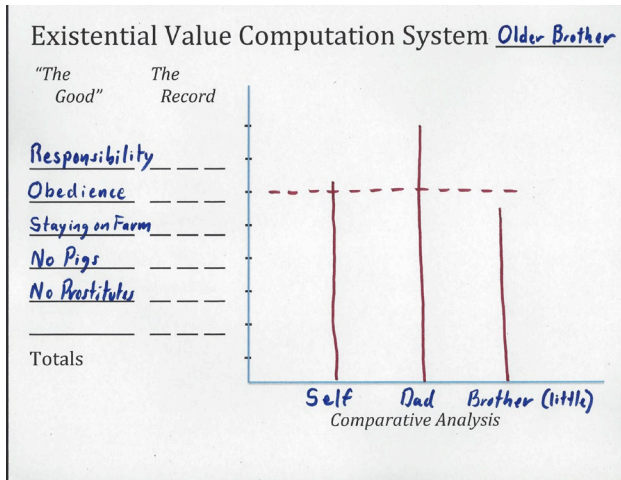
Do you understand?

The Human Existential Value Computation System is evil. I can't shut it off. The "Categories of Cool" my "knowledge of good and evil" is called the LAW. And the Operating System is called the Flesh. The Logic is SIN.



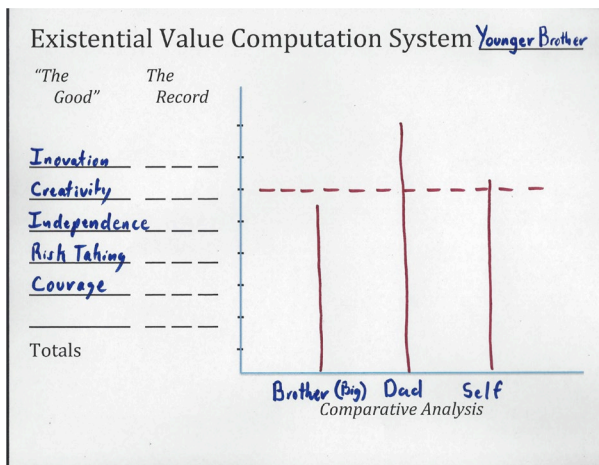
So why does the older brother in Jesus' story choose to stand in outer darkness and refuse to party?

Well, I bet his brain scan looks something like this:



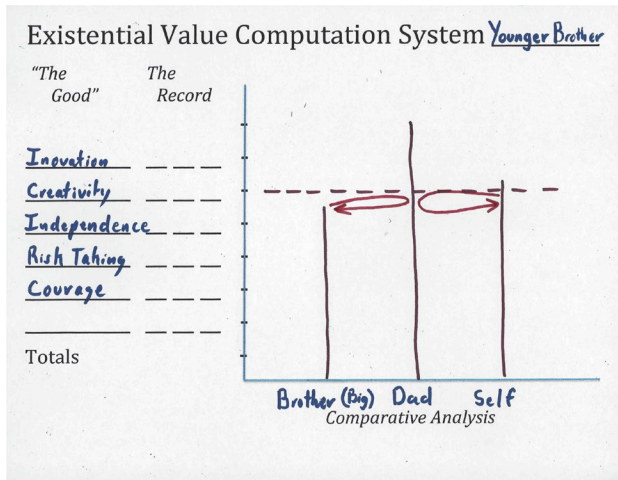
Same exact layout, same logic and operating system, just the "Categories of Cool" have changed: responsibility, obedience, staying on the farm, no pigs, not sleeping with prostitutes though you want to. He measures himself against his dad. He wants to be like his dad, but that's different than loving his dad. He measures himself against his dad and his brother—"the last and least of these." Above the line is "a party" and below is "outer darkness and the far country."

Now, the little brother can't win at that game because he's the little brother. Big brother will always be two steps ahead. So what does he do? He changes the "Categories of Cool."



Instead of responsibility, it's innovation. Instead of obedience, it's creativity. Instead of staying on the farm, it's independence, taking risks, and courage.

And do you see? All those things are good, but the logic is evil. Above the line, for both boys is the father's approval, his righteousness, his identity, his freedom. They both want to be their dad, but neither really loves their dad. They both want to take his life as their own life, to make themselves in his image.



According to Sigmund Freud, in Totem and Taboo, that's how human religion got started, the sons wanting to be the Father, took the life of the Father and turned His murder into religion.

Ironically, that's what happens in Genesis 3. God is Good and mankind takes the Good to make himself in the image of God.

Amazingly, that's what happened at the cross! Jesus said, "*If you've seen me, you've seen the Father.*"

So, humanity took the life of the Father in a garden on a tree called the cross. We took the life of the Father trying to *be* the Father. Scripture says the religious folks took Christ's life out of envy. And that's exactly what happens at the start of this story—the very start:

Luke 15: 11 – 12

And Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property (ousias – the substance.) that is coming to me' And he divided his [bion – life] between them.

According to Kenneth Baily, who's researched this extensively, this request is basically unheard of in ancient near Eastern culture, and would be considered a *horrendous evil*.

- The son was saying, "Father, I wish you were dead, and I want your stuff."
- And this is what this father does:
He divides his *substance* between them and gives them his *bion*, his *life*.
- They both receive their portion, but the younger son sells his portion of the family farm, takes the money and moves to a far country.

Luke 15: 13 – 17

. . . "and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the

pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself“

(When he came to his “psyche,” his existential value computation system . . .)

He realized that he had lost and he came up with a scheme to save himself, “*when he came to himself.*” According to Jesus, salvation is not coming to your self. It’s not finding your self. It’s losing your self, your “psyche,” in Greek.

Luke 15: 17- 19

“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish (literally, “I’m Lost”) here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father and I will say to him:

#1 Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.

#2 I am no longer worthy to be called you son.

#3 Treat [make] me as one of your hired servants.”

HIRED SERVANT:

He doesn’t want to be a son, he wants to be an employee.

He doesn’t want his Father, he wants his Father’s stuff.

He doesn’t Love his Father, he plans to use his Father.

That’s why he writes his little speech.

Luke 15: 20 *And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him.*

That means his father was waiting, and watching, and hoping this entire time. His father saw him and felt compassion, and ran. Most likely, he would’ve come down from his tower and run through a crowd gathered in the village – a crowd waiting to revile, and perhaps even stone, his youngest son.

- In that culture, noblemen did not run. It was humiliating. He ran.
- He ran to his son before anyone else could get to his son.
- And before his boy could say anything, do anything, promise anything, he grabbed him, held him tight and kissed him.
- He ran and embraced him and kissed him.

The Greek implies that the kiss was passionate and repeated over, and over, and over again.

Luke 15: 21

“And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

And he stops.

He leaves out the last line of his prepared speech, wherein he asks to be an employee.

He doesn’t want to be an employee; he wants to be a son.

He doesn’t want his father’s stuff; he wants his father.

He wants what the father always wanted. The father wants his son to want him.

Luke 15:22

“The father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’”

And they (father, son, and soon the whole village – you only slaughter a calf if you expect the whole village to party) began to celebrate. They began to party.

This son celebrates with his dad. That's the proof that he has a new mind. His father had found him and repented him with a kiss.

Tim Bayly rebelled against his Father, Joe, and broke Joe's heart. He left home and joined a commune. Joe tried everything and couldn't get through to Tim. One night, around eleven p.m., he got a call: “This is the police. Your son was arrested for a DUI. We have him here in the town jail.” Joe got out of bed and drove a half hour in the bitter cold to that town. But when he got there, they told him, “We don't have a Tim Bayly here.” Joe thought perhaps he had heard wrong, so he drove to the next town, and then the next, and the next, and the next. Finally, around 4 a.m., he decided to drive to that old house in downtown Chicago, where Tim had been sleeping. The door wasn't locked. He stepped over bodies looking for his boy. There, in the faint light of the darkened room, he saw him asleep in a sleeping bag, strewn across an old mattress.

Quietly, he walked over to the mattress and stood over his boy. Then, moved with compassion, he bent down, quietly kissed him on the cheek, turned around, and went home. In the months that followed, Tim started visiting his parents. Then he started hanging out at home, one day he re-committed his life to the Lord, and he seemed happy.

Years later, on a walk, Joe turned to Tim and asked, “Tim, what brought you back?” Tim looked at his dad and said, “Don't you know? Dad, remember that night years ago when you got a call that I was in jail? Dad, that was my friend. It was a prank. When you came to the house, I only acted asleep. Dad, I was wide- awake. I knew you'd driven all night in the cold and wondered what you would do to me, and all you did was bend down and kiss me gently on the cheek. Dad, it was the kiss that brought me back.

In his book, *Mortal Lessons*, Doctor Richard Selzer writes,

I stand by the bed where a young woman lies, her face post-operative, her mouth twisted in palsy, clownish. A tiny twig of the facial nerve, the one to the muscles of her mouth, has been severed. She will be thus from now on. The surgeon had followed with religious fervor the curve of her flesh; I promise you that. Nevertheless, to remove the tumor in her cheek, I had to cut the little nerve.

Her young husband is in the room. He stands on the opposite side of the bed and together they seem to dwell in the evening lamplight, isolated from me, private. Who are they, I ask myself, and this wry mouth I have made, who gaze and touch each other so generously, greedily? The young woman speaks.

“Will my mouth always be like this?” She asks.

"Yes," I say, "It will. It is because the nerve was cut."

She nods and is silent. But the young man smiles.

"I like it," he says, "It's kind of cute."

All at once, I know who he is. I understand and I lower my gaze. One is not bold in an encounter with a god. Unmindful, he bends to kiss her crooked mouth and I am so close I can see how he twists his own lips to accommodate to hers, to show her that their kiss still works.

Jesus is the Great Bridegroom and Jesus is the Kiss of the Father out on the dusty road. But Jesus is not *bent* and *broken* by chance.

"*Jesus Christ and Him crucified*" is the plan of God, from the foundation of the world.

So what Jesus did on the cross, was not an accident, or some sort of strange new anomaly in the mind of the Creator. Just like the love of this father for his boy was not new, but the revelation of what had always been.

The Father had been giving his life for the boy all along, - since the beginning.
Sacrificial Love wasn't new, even if it seemed new to this prodigal boy.

What I'm trying to say is:

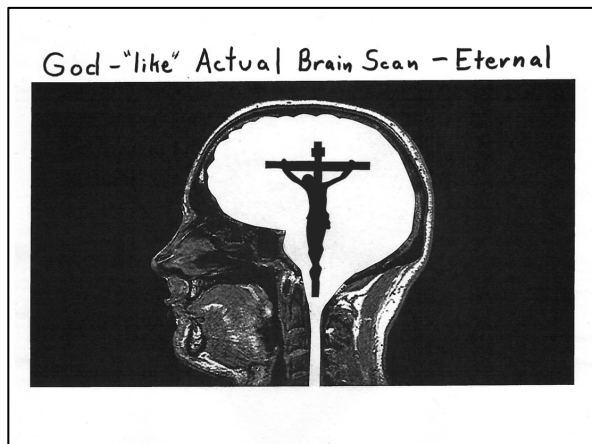
Jesus is the Logos of God, the Word of God, The Logic of God.

And on the cross, at the right time, that Logic was revealed.

When we did our absolute worst, God revealed His absolute Best.

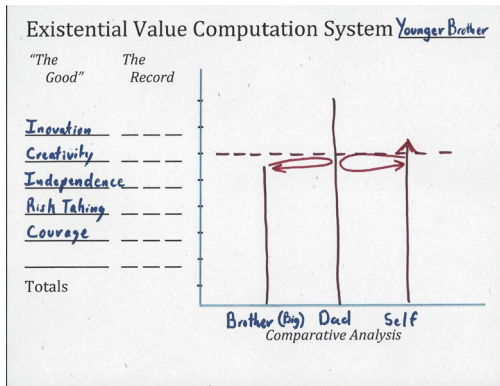
That was, and forever will be, His Logic.

What I'm trying to say is that this is like an actual brain scan of God, OUR FATHER:

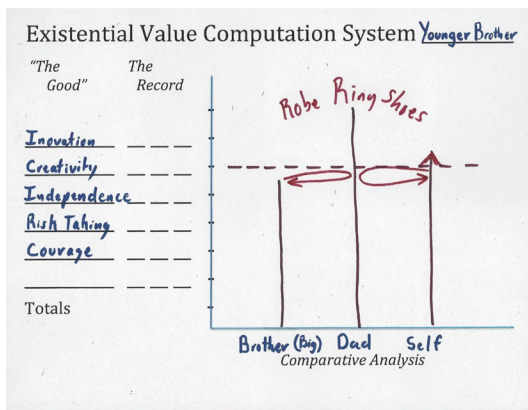


When you get a GOOD look at this, it will blow your mind.

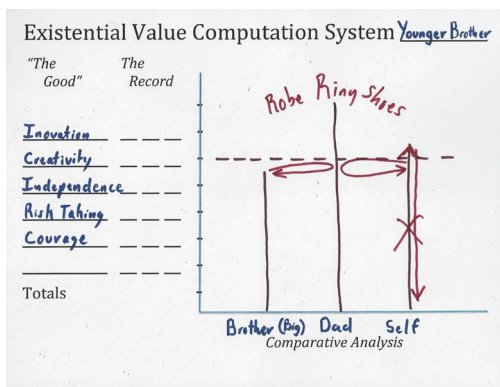
What did the sacrificial love of the father out on the road do to the EVCS of the younger brother?



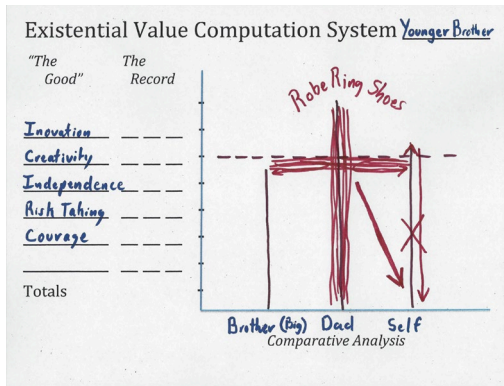
1. All of his life, he had tried to earn his father's honor, position, and freedom. To put it in first century terms, he tried to earn his father's robe (it symbolized righteousness); his father's things (probably a signet ring, it was his identity); and his father's shoes; they meant freedom to move as he wished, free will.



2. But by taking his father's life, he lost his own life. He'd become nothing. He was humbled.



3. Then, out on the road, when he was at his absolute worst, his father revealed his absolute best. When the son knew he couldn't earn the kiss; the Father gave the kiss, and the robe, the ring, and the shoes.



Captain Kirk Talks a Robot to Death

Captain Kirk from *Star Trek* is standing on the bridge of a ship, with two other male characters. A frantic and rapid beeping sound is in the background. One of the male characters (who is actually a robot) has a necklace around his neck flashing with white light. He says, "Illogical! Illogical! Illogical! Tendrils of steam start to come off the top of his head. Three beeps are heard and a red light flashes off his necklace.

He continues, "Please explain! Please explain!" (More steam rises and the beeps increase in rapidity as the necklace flashes faster.) Again he speaks, "You are human. Only humans can explain the behavior!" (He glances stiffly at Captain Kirk, who is watching him carefully.) He continues, "Please explain!" Then, Captain Kirk, smirking and responding in a mocking robotic tone of voice says, "I am not programmed to respond to that area.

Captain Kirk and the other male character continue to watch the robot; their mouths open in surprise. The robot's head smokes, and smoke comes out of his ears. The light on his necklace remains on. All of a sudden, there is a winding down sound and the robot's eyes close, his head flops back and steams. Then it flops to the side and more steam comes out of his head. He is left standing there dead on his feet as the steam slowly rises. Captain Kirk and the other male character watch, then look at each other and grin happily.

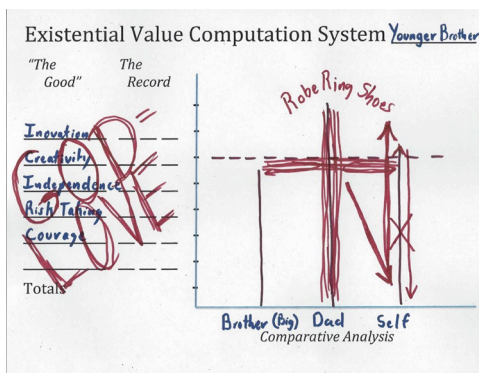
You can't think your way to a new mind.

You must get your mind blown, by the Logic of God, that's repentance.

- Repentance is not getting new "knowledge of the good"—
A better list of laws than Muslims or Jews, or the sinners who live down the street.
- Repentance is NOT trying harder.
- Repentance isn't something you can simply decide to do.
- Repentance is getting your mind blown by the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It's losing your mind and receiving God's mind—God's Logic—God's Logos—Jesus and all things with him.

[Peter draws an arrow on the overhead from the little brother, up into the area that says: "Robe, Ring, Shoes"]



Paul wrote, *“Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.”* The kiss blew the prodigal’s mind, and THEN he began to party with his dad. And that’s what this Father had been aiming for all along.

Luke 15: 26- 29

Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music (symphonia) and dancing. And he called one of the boys (having gathered outside the house) and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, “Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.” But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, “Look, these many years I have slaved for you...”

He didn’t consider himself a “son” but a poorly paid employee.

Luke 15: 29-32

“And I never disobeyed your command...”

Yet with every breath he breaks his father’s heart.

“yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends...”

[He doesn’t want to party with his dad.]

“But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!” And [the Father] said to him, “You are always with me and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.”

The prodigal is found, but the older brother is lost.

He’s always been lost and now he wants to stay lost – utterly alone, in outer darkness where he weeps and gnashes his teeth.

Scripture refers to this place as Hades, which is often translated as Hell. It begins here, and continues in the grave. This boy is in Hades and the Father says, *“All that is mine is yours.”* That’s incredible! He’d already handed over the farm, His very life. *“All that’s mine IS yours.”* Like every day, could be a party if this boy would only let it be a party.

“All that’s mine is yours,” says the Father: my life, by robe, my ring, my shoes, my son – your brother. But the older brother doesn’t want his little brother.

Sometimes I wonder if church has just become the society of older brothers. And by preaching our little brothers into hell we just cast ourselves into outer darkness.

This boy has cast himself into out darkness.

He doesn’t want the party IF it includes his little brother.

He doesn’t want the robe, ring, and shoes IF they’re free.

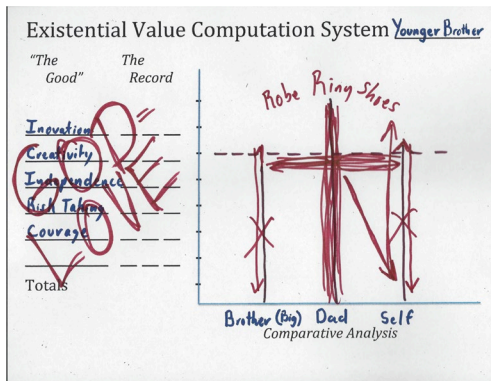
He doesn’t want his Father’s Life IF he can’t earn his Father’s Life.

He doesn't want his Father's presence...because it burns his "psyche."
It fries his "Existential Value Computation System."

See?

The fact that the Father threw a party for his brother when his brother earned nothing reveals that he had actually earned nothing. But, worse than nothing, he'd earned hell!¹

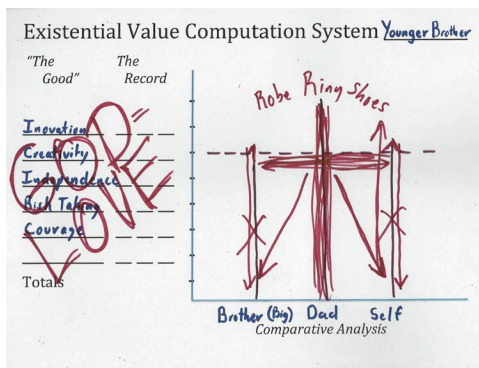
[Peter draws an arrow on the overhead, on the side of the older brother, pointing down, away from the area that says: "Robe, Ring, Shoes".]



So, it turns out that the better he was at exalting himself, the more evil he became. And the better he was at winning the game, the more he trapped himself in outer darkness – alone. Just playing the game made him wish his brother to hell and his father there with him, for whatever he did to the *"least of his brothers"* he did to his dad. And now he stands alone in outer darkness weeping and gnashing his teeth.

Except... Someone has left the party and chosen to be there with him.

[Peter draws an arrow on the overhead from the cross to the big brother.]



Listen closely to these words: *"You are always with me and all that is mine is yours."*

¹ The Good is not beating your neighbor, it's loving your neighbor.
The Good is not something the boy can take and possess.
The Good is not his Father's possessions.
The Good is his Father's Heart.

If you cast yourself into outer darkness, you cast God the Father into outer darkness with you, for He will *"not leave you nor forsake you."* On the cross, Jesus descended into hell and your darkness. But we do not always enjoy His Presence. Sometimes it burns. In his novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Fyodor Dostoyevsky tells a story about Jesus returning to earth in Seville, Spain, during the Spanish Inquisition. The Grand Inquisitor imprisons Jesus, and in that dungeon he rails at Him for hours – furious over His Extravagant and Free Love given to all. The story ends when Jesus stands up, walks over and kisses the Pharisee on his old bloodless lips. That is His "only answer". That is His judgment. Dostoyevsky writes, "He sticks to the old idea" - his logic, but "the kiss glows in his heart" - it burns and it's eternal.

See? The love of the Father burns the pride of his son as he stands in outer darkness. Why won't he go into the party? Well, he thinks it would kill him, and it would. It would kill the prideful, arrogant, and lonely old him and set him free!

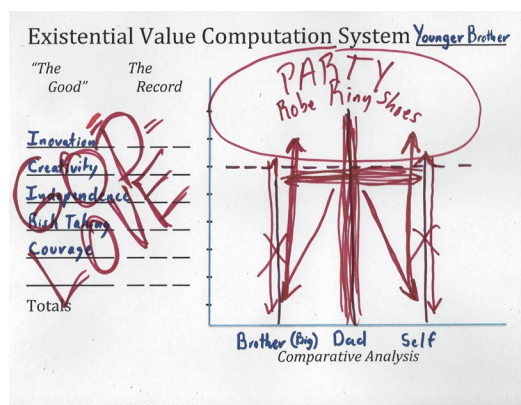
The boy won't party. So the Father brings the party to the boy.
He is the party and His Word is the Kiss.
He kisses us, when and where we're least deserving.

With that Kiss, God is asking: "Is it okay with you, if I love all my children and each of my children with all that I am? For none of my children deserve me; if they did, they wouldn't be my children. Is it okay with you, if I AM Love? If it is, you can begin to party right now. If it isn't you're still trapped in outer darkness and my kisses will burn."

Once the Lord told me in a very miraculous way, "I am always kissing you. Sometimes my kisses are sweet and sometimes they burn, but you must believe this – I am always kissing you."

See?
I think part of me is like the little brother already enjoying the party.
Part of me is the older brother still trapped in outer darkness.

Well, I can't repent myself with myself.
I can't think myself to a new mind.
I can't lose myself by trying.
I can't "should" myself out of the outer darkness.
I must let God judge the darkness out of me.
I must let God judge the hell out of me, and Heaven into me.



He does that with a Kiss!

Communion

On the night He was betrayed by the Pharisees, on the night He was betrayed by each of us, when and where each of us was least deserving, He took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body (my substance—my *ousias*—my body) given to you. Take and eat." And in the same way, He took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood (my blood —my life) given to you. Take and drink."

So He calls you to this table.

What makes you unworthy of this table is thinking you could make yourself worthy of this table. Come as you are; don't practice a speech. Don't intend anything. Don't you dare promise anything. But come tear off a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, and then touch it to your lips (His body to your body, God's Word in flesh, like a kiss.)

He's giving you His Robe – it's righteousness.
He's giving you His Ring – it is your identity—His identity.
And He's giving you shoes – a new will—a free will.

Now, close your eyes and listen. He says: "You are always with me and all that is mine is yours." When you believe that, you will change, you will begin to celebrate and never stop.

The Kingdom of Heaven is a party and Salvation is wanting to go.

Pray with me if you like:

Father, I confess my sin, my Existential Value Computation System.

God I confess my broken logic, and I receive your Grace—your Logic—your Logos, your Word—Your Word of Grace—Jesus—My Lord.

In His name, Amen.

Benediction

Father, thank you for *how* you love us. His name is Jesus. Amen.

You know, the premier older brother in the Bible was a guy, named Paul. I mean no body got worse than Paul. He was converted on a road – in Syria – for persecuting Christians. Jesus was not unfamiliar with the world in which we live. And he wrote most of the Bible. He was like the older brother that was so broken, and the Father met him with a kiss on the road to Damascus.

In Romans, he wrote this, "He's given us his own son, Jesus. Will he not give us all things with Him?" You see, it's not like God was beating up on Jesus to feel better about you. Who was Jesus? This is what Scripture says: "Jesus is the Word of the Father." And what is the Word of the Father? Jesus. And He says, "*I am with you, always,*" and "*all that is Mine is yours.*" You see, when you believe that, you can begin to party, even out on this road, even the road to Damascus and Syria. So, in Jesus' name, what I'm saying is, believe the gospel.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.