

# THE PRODIGAL SON

## Int.

1. Aim: To show how God loves us even when we sin, and that He is willing to accept us if we will come back to Him.
2. Luke 15:11-24 - Prodigal = Wasteful, Extravagant
  - a. This has been called "the pearl of all parables"
  - b. This parable has also been classified as the "greatest short story in the world."
  - c. Another person said it is the most beautiful story ever told - it is beautiful because of the wonderful reception the father extended to the boy on his return.
3. There are 3 parables in this chapter
  - a. Parable of the lost sheep - Parable of the lost coin - parable of lost son
  - b. In the Sheep it was 1 to 99 percentage, in the coin it was 1 to 9, but in the sons it was 1 to 2.
  - c. 1/100th or 1/10th might be bearable; but half is tragic !
4. This parable of the Prodigal son
  - a. Two boys, each was precious in the father's eyes
  - b. One was just as valuable as the other
5. Notice the words which begin with the letter **R** which describe his actions

## Discussion

### **I. REBELLED**

- A. He willfully went away from home
  1. He was determined to run his own course of life
  2. He wanted his independence - he wanted no more control of his life by his father.  
He could do it all by himself. So he rebelled - protested

B. That's what a person does when he sins !

1. 1 John 3:4 - transgressing the law
2. When we sin we separate our self from God - I sa. 59:1-2 **"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."**
3. We rebel and want to go our own way
4. Prov. 14:12 **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."**

## **II. REQUESTED** - his part

A. **"Father give me the portion of goods that falleth to me."** Lk. 15:12

1. This young man thought that the answer to all his problems was money and freedom
2. He wanted to take things into his own hands and run his own business
3. He would have inherited 1/3 if he had waited, but he would not wait !
  - a. Some might argue that "he had a legal right to this money".
  - b. There is a difference between what may be legally right and that which is morally or spiritually right.

B. Many people want to rule their own life and request everything for themselves

1. Jer. 10:23 **"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."**
2. They are determined to run their own life the way they want and forget about God and what He desires us to do.

- C. This young man just wanted his material things and get away from home
1. He could not see into the future and see that he would need his father's help
  2. He could not see the pigpen in his future
  3. He could not see his pitiful condition in the very near future

### **III. RELEASED** - his father let him go

- A. "...**and he divided unto them his living.**" Lk. 15:12
1. The father let him go his own way - even though he knew this was not the best
  2. But he knew that he could not force him to stay
- B. The same is true with us when we desire to go off into sin
1. God knows it is not best for us and that is not what we really need
  2. But God will not force us to serve Him.
  3. We have to do it out of love - John 14:15
  4. God allows us to make foolish decisions, but he calls us to account for our choices
  5. In Romans Paul talks about God giving them up:
    - a. **Rom. 1:24, 26, 28 = to surrender, yield up, deliver up, give over**  
**"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:"** v.24
    - b. When people reject God He allows them to go deeper into sin
  6. God does not make us serve Him ! If we are determined to serve the devil, He will let us.

#### **IV. REMOVED** - from home to a far country

- A. Lk. 15:13 **"And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, ..."**
1. He wanted to get away from his home and his family
  2. He had already left home in his heart and mind
  3. The things he had planned to do could not be done at home
- B. This far county represents the sin we commit and how it separates us from God
1. A man who wants to sin must get God out of his thoughts so he leaves God behind
  2. The far country is only a step away. It is when we decide to serve the devil and leave the Lord that we are removed from Him.
- C. In this far country he was away from his father's house and the law of his own people. Thus he lived a life of sin. Luke called it:

#### **V. RIOTOUS LIVING**

- A. Lk. 15:13 **"...and there wasted his substance with riotous living."**
1. Riotous = disorderly behavior, sowing his wild oats
  2. Wasted that which his Father had given him - the father had worked hard for this which he was now wasting.
  3. The elder brother said that he wasted it with Harlots -
  4. It was a very lowly type of life
- B. After he had spent all he had a famine came and he began to be in want
1. Lk. 15:14 **"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."**

2. He was beginning to reap what he had sowed - Gal. 6:7-8
3. He was all alone without anything and in a pitiful situation.

C. So he went and joined himself to a man and began to work

1. Lk. 15:15
2. This was a lowly job for a Jewish boy. They could not eat swine, and didn't keep them. This was the most distasteful job he could have had.
3. The husks were those of the carob bean. It was a bean that had a sweet taste and is liable to make one really sick.
4. He literally came to the pig-pen - a fitting description of the depth and depravity of sin.

D. When we live our life in sin, we are really wasting our all and living a riotous life.

1. Before long we come to a famine = we realize that the pleasures of sin are only for a season - Heb. 11:24-27
2. "Sin takes one farther than one intends to go, keeps one longer than one intended to stay, costs one more than one intended to pay."
3. We become hungry for the good life again - Pro. 13:15 **"The way of transgressors is hard."**

E. In this situation, he eventually woke up to a fact that he should have known long before:

**VI. REFLECTED** - thought of old home

A. Lk. 15:17 **"And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!"**

1. He remembered his old home and thought that it was not so bad after all.
  - a. Everyone had all they needed. Even the servants had plenty
  - b. It was not really so bad
2. But here he was without anything

B. When we come to our self after we have sinned we do the same thing

1. Living a godly life is the best way to live.
2. God provides for us and watches over us. We are truly happy.
3. But in sin we really have nothing.
4. Matt. 16:26 **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

**VII. REALIZED** - His condition was bad

A. He compared his former condition to now. He learned several things about sin:

1. It was worse than he thought it was going to be - It always is !
2. He could not get away from his sin. It would not leave him alone
3. There is no way to undo our sins by ourselves

B. When a person wakes up to the fact he has sinned, then he can be helped !

1. Until we know we have sinned we cannot be helped.
2. How wonderful it is for sin-sick souls to be big enough to be little enough to say "I have sinned."
3. A person will never turn to Christ until he sees the need for him.

4. When we come to our self as did this prodigal we will see that we need God.

### **VIII. REPENTED** - Decided to Go Home

A. Lk. 15:18-19 **"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."**

1. This is true repentance
2. He left on his own accord - He decided on his own accord that he should return

B. When we sin we must realize it and repent of our sins and decide to go back home to God.

### **IX. RETURNED**

A. Lk. 15:20-21

B. The prodigal son returned to the father

1. Leaving his father was the cause of all his woe
2. A return would correct his misery.

C. The father represents God and the son represents a child who strayed

1. Those who are in sin will suffer until they make up their minds to return to their Father
2. They cannot hope to enjoy the blessings of God in that far away land of sin.
3. But going back to the father would make it necessary to confess his waywardness.

**X. RECEIVED** in peace

- A. Lk. 15:22-24
- B. When he returned his father received him in peace - no accident that the father was there when the son came into view - he had been watching and waiting.
- C. When we return to God he will receive us - he is ever there to welcome us home.
- D. God's love is shown in the gift of His Son on the cross and his willingness for forgive the sinner.

**Conclusion**

- 1. God's forgiveness is so great
  - a. No sin is beyond his grace - 1 John 1:7-8
  - b. No matter how far away we stray, his grace is there, but we must accept it by faith and obedience
  - c. Come back today.
  - d. The main message of the prodigal son is that God cares for the lost ones !
- 2. My son was dead, and is alive again
  - a. One may be both dead and alive at the same time - dead to one but alive to another
  - b. While we are dead to sin we are alive to God
  - c. But when we are alive to sin we are dead to God.
  - d. The same boy who was dead is also said to be lost - when he was found he was alive.
  - e. Some have the idea that when we are dead in sin we are not able to do anything to be saved.
  - f. But the lost can seek, can determine to go back and can be repent enough to confess his wrongs.

3. The prodigal Son "came to himself"
  - a. This is commonly applied to a person who has been "Deranged"
  - b. When he recovers we say he has "come to himself"
  - c. When a person is in sin they are like a person who is deranged
    - i. They are estranged from God
    - ii. They are not in their right mind
    - iii. They go contrary to a sound mind
  - d. When they have repented they have come back to themselves
4. Many prodigals do not return
  - a. Some die in the far country
  - b. Some never come to themselves - they never want to return
5. What is your condition? Is there something in your life that you dare not take with you to eternity? Then you need to make correction.
6. We serve a God who is loving and forgiving and He will forgive us as we obey Him !
  - a. Are you a prodigal? Then if you die in this condition you will be lost in hell !
  - b. You need to repent and confess your sins and ask forgiveness
  - c. If you have never become a Christian this is the day that you should obey !

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### Sources

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