

THE PRODIGAL SON

TEXT:

Luke 15:11-32:

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

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!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:



24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:



30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

INTRODUCTION: THE REBELLION

This story Jesus tells is of a mad lad, a bad lad, a sad lad — and finally a glad lad.

The scene is a beautiful home with heavenly love — the key to every happy home. This boy longs for independence and freedom from restraints. The desire to be independent of God and Christ is inspired by satan. This is the picture of the beginning of a sinful life.

Jesus gives a pointed message to the backslider who sets forth his rebellion against the godly commandments and restraining of our heavenly Father's home.

James 5:19-20:

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

The Prodigal rebelled against the authority which would have kept him on a straight path. The way seemed too straight and too strict.

The foolish mistake the soul makes is thinking it can be happy and satisfied with the husks and the beggarly elements of the world!

Galatians 3:5: He [Jesus] therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth He it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Thinking that salvation and holiness are kill-joys! But we cannot break the laws of God without suffering for it.

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He who desires to do as he pleases will choose the downward path. It is the beginning of self-destruction. The desire to be independent was the approach of satan to Adam and Eve.

The growth of sin is like the growth of weeds. The first fruit of sin is pleasure seeking.

2 Timothy 3:2, 4b:

2For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . .

4b lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

Matthew 13:22: He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful.

1 John 2:15: Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

The Prodigal's will is set against his father's, because his disposition was being tugged at by the devil. Satan will warp and twist our minds into thinking God is cruel and heartless, and satan will lead us to the destroying of our soul.

The boy's heart is turned to the enticing charms — the glamorous delusions of the world. He now longs for sensual pleasures. He determines to seek self carnal gratification.

To his credit, the Prodigal did not resort to violence, nor stoop to trickery to get his way. Finally, the father yields, with broken heart, and gives to his boy his desire. God does so with us, but sends leanness to our souls.

Now the father is no longer a problem to the boy. The son is a free moral agent. He is responsible for his possessions, his material and spiritual life. He starts out on life's uncharted pilgrimage on his own, for the graceless venture. He does not leave a thing behind.

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Every lust entices, and satan knows when the heart is bent on pleasure and will bring plenty of seducers. The devil will use every habit-forming, soul-binding pleasure to trifle with his soul. And the boy does not go just over the hill, or to the neighbor's home . . . he goes far away.

"Self" will drive us from God. The further we go, the more steps we will have to retrace in coming back. If only you who are looking to the world and turning your backs on Jesus would realize this, today!

This family centers in THE Family — in God's family is where the tragedy occurs. Weary of heavenly parental restraint this narrow, conventional life restrictions that bind - - the family loses its charm. It is irksome to be in church so much; Sunday school is dry and dull. The modern doctrine is that the world is getting better and better. So, the Prodigal turns his youthful eyes to the wrong crowd planted by the devil.

The sheep nibbled itself away; the coin was carelessly lost. So it is today – neglecting the garden of the soul, weeds choke the Word and we become unfruitful. But the Prodigal was willfully lost. He deliberately planned his leave, feeling his parents were backward — fugitives from an antique generation. **"Give me" is the philosophy of this generation.**

He went into a far country. You do not do this overnight. The workings of his heart are all described by Jesus. It is a time of alienation from God. This is the history of

worldliness. **The soul has been made for God. How can the world satisfy the soul?**

Why did this young fellow go into the far country? It was not because he got up on the wrong side of the bed one morning and decided to go out and wreck himself. He was no more eager to wreck himself than you are. He had no idea of landing in the hog pen, in the devil's garbage can, damning himself. Why did he go away? — Because he desired to please his old self.

This is the thought: *He can be free out yonder.* This freedom will bring him greater happiness. He can live life the way he chooses. Are you living to contend and please yourself? This is the starting place to backsliding.

Jesus lived only to please His Father. This is true of every child of God who is walking in the light in the Spirit — following Jesus.

Pleasing one's self is the very essence of sin. It is a deadly damning thing, whether it leads its victim to the gutter or to hurt and destroy someone else's life in the social climb. Pleasing one's old self is very expensive. He who is bent on pleasing himself is doomed to pay a terrible price! No one ever lived to please self without hurting others. That is true regardless of how secret that sin may be at present. Others may not know the secret aspiration to please self and desire to glory in self — but God knows. That spirit is contagious.

The hellish desire to have one's own way is petted and cuddled in the devil's incubator of modern child psychology — claiming the *privilege* of self-expression. To live this way is to turn your back on God, and to go from Jerusalem to Jericho.

What did it cost the Prodigal? The very thing he was seeking — freedom! “Give me” — self-will, please self, pet appetite — this road leads to slavery.

Samson took his fling at freedom. He took a holiday, threw off all restraints, and painted the town red; but he landed behind fetters of brass, with eyes poked out, grinding for the devil.

Play with pleasure and pleasing self as a cat with a mouse. Soon, the tables will turn and it will play with you until you die.



How slow we are to learn the truth that freedom is only in Jesus, living in the Spirit, in conformity to God's commandments.

Every child of God who turns to living to please self is lowering the spiritual temperature of his own soul and sending a chilling winter atmosphere over the House of God. You will become spiritually bankrupt — will lose all, by playing with self-pleasing. That little habit you started to play with, sure, it brings pleasure at the start; but you cannot leave it alone — you become its slave. You chose to live for old self, and self is making you pay dearly. You are unclean in your body which is supposed to be the temple of the Holy Spirit.

This Prodigal is in the hog pen in gnawing agony of body and spirit.

Willful — then wayward — then wasteful — then wretched — then wanting — then wakened, and —finally — Welcomed!



Ruin: *Luke 15:13: He wasted his substance in riotous living.*

Sin is the most expensive luxury in the world. The Prodigal soon exhausted his resources. He squandered all in wanton reveling. He finds the world does not satisfy long, and its pleasures are too costly. After a while, you burn out.

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The grace of God is the only reservoir with boundless proportions, and the fountain of His pleasures never runs dry, praise God!

A mighty famine came in the land. Famine is cruel, heartless, unsparring. It finds the boy unprepared for the depression. As night follows day, so those turned NOT toward God are stripped of all, and:

Luke 12:20b: whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

The son's actions become a striking parallel to our times. Thousands are wasting their substance in riotous living. Virtue, purity, and righteousness are thrown overboard. Prodigals are riding rough shod over every moral standard that God ever instituted. Lust, licentiousness [lack moral restraints], lewdness [shamelessness] are raging rampant throughout the country. Hardly a high school girl can any more boast of her virginity. Marriage vows are broken almost before the

ink is dry on the license. But that is not all! There is famine in the land. Not for bread, but for the Word of God – the Holy Bible! For preachers to preach against these modern abominations!

Many American girls are in the hog pen. There are over 15 million employed as bar maids. Twice as many girls are now employed in these soul-destroying dens of vice than are enrolled in colleges and universities. My heart goes out to the precious youth of our land, driven by the devil and these godless saloon keepers to a godless and Christ-less grave, and Hell. I will not spare preaching to these guys who hire girls to sell their virtue. Their day is coming when they will stand before — not behind — a bar. It will be the blazing Judgment Bar of God.

America is feeding on hog pen filth, on newsstands reeking with corruption that would make angels blush, the same with the godless stuff on TV.

First a cocktail party, a dance, a show, a sociable game of poker, a pretty girl, then follows broken morals, deceitfulness of sin at work, hardening of the heart. The memories of a past walk with God, church, prayer meetings — are veiled. When we give allegiance to the world, when Christ fades out of our lives, we cannot serve two masters!

Luke 15:15-16:

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

The Prodigal had spoiled his credentials for employment and could only get a job slopping hogs. The hog is closely linked to the penalty of his career — the cause of his shame. The man who hired him was not to blame for his state. He could not be trusted with anything higher. Even the devil has no use for one in disgrace, want, and rags! A drunkard in the gutter is no advertisement for the devil, so he seeks to drive the outcast to despair and to suicide. The spend thrift. He becomes so hungry. No roof over his head — no bed under his body — homeless. No associates to comfort his soul. One who gives himself to the sensual cannot make lasting friendships.

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One needs the fellowship of godly saints, refined and made noble by the grace which is in Christ Jesus to keep from destroying his soul.

No man gave to the Prodigal. None in the devil's country had compassion on him. The Gospel only has lifted humanity — womanhood — made orphanages — homes for the aged — help for the poor — rescue missions for the down-and-outers.

Think what it cost the Prodigal to serve sin! It cost him his honor, his bank account, the fellowship of home, hunger, remorse, and a bad conscience. No sinner considers the aftermath of sinning — the headaches, heartaches, separation from God, and an eternity as black as midnight, starring him in the face, for which he is unprepared.



Many of you sinners reading this will resent this true statement. This poor Prodigal, kneeling at the pig trough to fill his belly with husks, was a gentleman compared with many of you! He had a more delicate stomach, for you have been taking into your body stuff that swine would not look at. The very dregs of hell, under the name of whisky, inflames the stomach, hardens arteries, degenerates the liver, ruins the kidneys, breaks homes, robs children of bread, and one of the senses. It leads to an early grave and damns one's soul. This is what sin does: blinds the eyes, perverts reason, and dulls the senses. You vow never again to take another after that hangover, but back to the hog pen you go to do it all over again.

The Prodigal came back — HUMBLED, REPENTANT, and SEEKING MERCY. He did not come with a harlot on one arm and a bottle of booze in the other hand, or a cigarette between his fingers. He forsook the old life in the world, and then the Father came running to meet him. Did you note this: The only reference I know of in the Bible where God is running is when He comes running towards a repentant sinner.



- 1. The Father saw him (but He did not stop there).**
- 2. He had compassion on him (but He did not stop there).**
- 3. He ran (but He did not stop there).**
- 4. The Father fell on the Prodigal's neck (but He did not stop there).**

5. He kissed him (but He did not stop there).

6. The Father called to His servants to bring the best robe forth and put it on His son (but He did not stop there).



Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

7. He told the servant to put a ring on his hand (but He did not stop there).

8. He told the servants to put shoes on his feet (but He did not stop there)

9. He brought forth the fatted calf and prepared it (but He did not stop there).

10. Let us eat and be merry; or let us celebrate for this, My son, was dead, and is alive again, he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Luke 15:20-24:

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:



23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

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