



## SEEKING SATISFACTION IN \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 15:11-16**, *And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So 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. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything."*

- ✳ **Squandered** | diaskorpizo: to scatter, disperse, waste.
- ✳ **Reckless** | asotos: excess; noun form: related to getting drunk, depravity, excess.
- ✳ **To Be In Need** | to fall short. The Jews had a well-organized system of financial aid in the Diaspora, but the Prodigal instead chose to get a job that revealed he had lost his family, ethnic, and religious identity.
- ✳ **He thought his selfish and reckless life choices would bring him satisfaction**, but instead of finding himself, he lost himself. We were made to be filled with God, but when we shut Him out and pursue lesser things to fill our soul, we will always end up empty and wanting.

## HOW TO RETURN \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. COME TO \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 15:17-19**, *When he came to his senses, he said, "How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men."*

- ✳ **He Came To His Senses** | He came to himself; he woke up and recognized the reality of his situation.
- ✳ **Go Back** | he changed the direction of his life; the Bible calls this "Repentance".
- ✳ The father indirectly drives the plot of this story: the son remembers his father's goodness, graciousness, and reputation. If the Prodigal had only focused on his own sin, he would have despaired, but remembering his father's goodness brought hope.
- ✳ **When it comes to the "paradoxical mystery" regarding repentance**, it is likely that the three parables in Luke 15 are to be taken as a whole. These parables reveal two different active agents of repentance: the shepherd and woman who seek and find the passive sheep and coin, and the Prodigal who makes the decision to seek out the father who is waiting for him.

### 2. CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 15:20**, *So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

- ✳ **He Got Up And Went** | before reconciliation is possible, the son must act.
- ✳ **Filled With Compassion** | splagchnizomai: to have the bowels yearn; feel sympathy.

### 3. EMBRACE GOD'S

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**Luke 15:21-24**, *The son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." So they began to celebrate.*

- ✳ **The robe, ring and sandals symbolize** the love, forgiveness, and honor bestowed on the Prodigal. He is fully reinstated into the family.
- ✳ **The father is setting precedent for community:** if he receives his son, everyone should receive him. If the father rejoices, everyone should rejoice.

## RESENTMENT VS

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**Luke 15:25-28**, *Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. "Your brother has come," he replied, "and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound." The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.*

- ✳ **His Father...Pleaded With Him** | In the same way, Jesus tries to persuade the resentful Pharisees to welcome home repentant sinners with joy.

**Luke 15:29-32**, *But he answered his father, "Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!" "My son," the father said, "you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."*

- ✳ **This Son Of Yours** | the older brother cannot bring himself to say, "My brother".
- ✳ **We Had To Celebrate** | Joy is the only option.
- ✳ **The parable ends** with the older brother standing outside. We don't know if he came in or not. While sinners need to leave behind their filth, the righteous need to leave behind their self-righteousness.

**Romans 15:7**, *Therefore, accept (welcome) one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.*

- ✳ **The older son's refusal to rejoice over his brother's return** highlights the difficulty many have of accepting repentant sinners, particularly if notorious sinners.
- ✳ **This parable reminds us that God is creating a community based on grace, not merit.** Those who accept Christ must accept others accepted by Christ.

## SOME THINGS TO PONDER

- ✳ **AM I PLAYING THE PRODIGAL RIGHT NOW?** What steps do I need to take in order to move back to the Father?
- ✳ **DO I KNOW A PRODIGAL?** How can I help them move back towards the Father?
- ✳ **REMEMBER MY OWN PRODIGAL STORY AND THE GRACE GOD HAS FOR ME.** Refuse to adopt the attitude of the older brother.