

The Father's Love

Luke 15:11-32

the wilderness. *"They lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul"* (Ps. 106:14,15).

B. The sad DEPARTURE.

1. *"Riotous living"* was the kind of living the prodigal wanted. He could not, live that "lifestyle" while living at home. Therefore, he had to get away from his father to live the way he wanted.
2. It must have hurt this father to see His son walk out the door and head for the "far country." Just as the prodigal's father was broken by his son's rejection, our heavenly Father is grieved by our sin and rejection of Him. But He loves you still.

II. We're DESTITUTE because of sin (vs. 13-14).

➡ The low point of the prodigal's story.

- A. The WASTE—The word "prodigal" is not found in a King James Bible. The word comes from the word "wasted." It actually has more to do with being a reckless spendthrift.
 1. He arrives in "the far country" with bags full of money, determined to live it up. Immediately he is surrounded by "friends" eager to help him spend his fortune (Prov. 19:4). He pursues his lifestyle of immorality and drunkenness, throwing his money to the wind.
 2. Holy living is economical living. It is less expensive to live for God than live for the flesh/Satan (Prov. 23:21). Sinful living is expensive, wasteful, and unhealthy.
- B. The WALLOWING (vs. 14-16). The text says, *"when he had spent all"* (Luke 15:14). He had come to town with his pockets full and now they are empty. Suddenly his "friends" are nowhere to be found. He is bankrupt.
 - Yet his father, far away, loves his son even when he is squandering everything he has given him.
 - No life is so ruined that God cannot salvage it.
 - No life is so repugnant that God cannot cleanse it.

III. We **DECIDE** to repent (vs. 17-24).

- The turning point of the story.
 - Sinful living is spiritual insanity.
- A. The father's COMPASSION (v. 20).

- Because he loved his son, he looked for him (like the shepherd looking for the lost sheep and the woman looking for the lost silver).

Question: When did the father love his prodigal son? The answer—He loved him all the time. He never stopped loving him.

➡ He loved him before he was born... He loved him when he became an adolescent... He loved him when he demanding his portion of his inheritance... He loved him when he walked out the door... He loved him when lived in sin... He loved him when he was in the pig pen... He loved him the day he swallowed the bitter pill of pride and turned for home. He loved him when he saw him coming over the horizon. He loved him when he ran to meet him. He loved him in his in stinking, filthy rags.

1. It is important to understand the Father found the son. Where does the father find the son? He finds him at the edge of the village. The prodigal was still lost when he got to the outskirts of town.
2. That which is lost does not find itself—It is found by another: The shepherd found the lost sheep... The woman found the lost silver... The father found His lost son.

B. The son's CONFESSION (v. 21).

- ➡ The father welcomes the son back with love and acceptance - no questions asked - no apology demanded (v. 22). *"BUT, the father said unto him..."* The father cuts the son off before the son can say, *"make me as one of thy servants."*

C. The happy CELEBRATION (vs. 22-23).

1. The ROBE — Belonged to the patriarch of the family. Christ's gives us a new robe of His righteousness.

2. The RING — Used for the purpose of transacting family business. It signified the authority of the family had been granted to the son.
3. The SANDALS — Sandals were worn by sons, not hired servants. The father wanted to make it clear that this is his son, not a hired servant.
4. The FATTED CALF — The prodigal is not headed for the servants' quarters but for the banquet hall. The one who was lost has been found. The one who was dead is alive! A sinner has come home and time to throw a party (cf. vs. 6-7, 9-10).

IV. We **DESPISE His loving entreaty** (vs. 25-32).

- A. Once you meet the older brother, it is easier to understand why the younger son wanted to leave home. He is a picture of the Pharisees.
- B. His words to his father reek of **pride** (*"these many years do I serve thee"*)... **self-righteousness** (*"neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment"*)... **anger** (*"thou never gavest me a kid"*) ... and **bitterness** (v. 30).
- C. He was just as "lost" and the prodigal. The prodigal was lost in the "far country," the elder brother was lost at home. He was lost because he based his relationship with his brother and father on his own works of righteousness, rather than his father's love.

SUMMATION: GOD LOVES YOU!

- God loves you, even when you don't love Him.
- God loves you, even when you go your own way.
- God loves you, even when you've wasted your life.
- God loves you, and is seeking you.

It doesn't matter how far you have wandered, or what you have done.

It doesn't matter if you attend church every night of the week and obey every rule you can find.

All that matters is God loves you passionately and invites you with open arms. Will you accept His invitation?