

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

Introduction: Have you ever been so sinful that you wondered if anyone, including God, could ever forgive you? A lady once told me, “I’m going to Hell and there is nothing you can do about it.” It is certainly true I can do nothing to save anyone’s soul, but I can share God’s word. If we are willing to open our hearts, I would like to share the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

I. The parable.

A. The prodigal son is representative of us all. At some point in all of our lives we were all prodigal (wasteful; Rom. 3:9-12).

B. Jesus taught this parable because the Pharisees in their self-righteousness complained (Luke 15:2).

C. This wasn’t the first time Jesus heard this complaint (Luke 5:30-32).

D. Jesus used this parable to teach the Pharisees the importance of one lost soul. In the process of telling this parable, Christ reveals many important lessons:

1. He reveals God’s love for sinners.
2. He reveals God’s willingness to forgive.
3. He illustrates the process of repentance.
4. He reveals it is never too late for second chances in life.
5. He reveals the ugliness of not forgiving those who ask.

II. The story

A. We find a younger brother who is granted an early disbursement of his inheritance. But like many foolish and irresponsible young adults, he squanders the money on the fulfillment of his sinful desires (Luke 15:11-13).

B. He could have responsibly planned for the future (1 Tim. 6:9-10).

1. As he learned, money is not the answer to our problems, its often the cause of our problems.

2. None of us know what the future has in store. It is when we don’t make provisions for the future that the unexpected happens (Luke 15:14).

C. He now has nothing and has to settle for a minimum wage job (Prov. 1:19). He has to start all over with a job that he hates which can’t even provide for his livelihood (Luke 15:15-16).

D. Then it dawns on him, he can live his life his way and eat with the pigs for the rest of his life or he can acknowledge that his ways were wrong. He realized he could no longer afford to be rebellious to his father but he had to humble himself (Luke 15:17-19). This change of attitude and action is known as repentance (2 Cor. 7:10-11).

E. He returns home to apologize and confess his wrong doings. He correctly concludes that he doesn't deserve forgiveness but hopes for a little mercy. But to his surprise his father doesn't rebuke him (Luke 15:20-21).

F. Instead, his father rejoices for his long lost son (Luke 15:4-7).

G. However, this doesn't settle well with the elder brother (Luke 15:25-28). The elder brother basically asks, "What about me" (Luke 15:29-30)? "I never did those things; this isn't fair."

H. Listen to the father's reply (Luke 15:31-32). Isn't that how we are to treat our brethren (Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:12-14; 1 Pet. 4:8)?

Conclusion: We don't deserve to have our sins forgiven. But there is our father in heaven with open arms extending an invitation for us to humble ourselves and repent of our sins so that He might have mercy on our souls. Don't allow sin to ruin your life. Come to Him now...