

# Prodigal Son

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning. So I'm Will and yeah so today I'm going to be talking a bit on the prodigal son. Yeah if you've been around church for a while I'm sure you'll have come across this this parable before that Jesus taught but today I'm going to focus more on the first bit and about the relationship between the father and the son and focus on forgiveness and the grace and love between that is shown between the two. So before we start I would just like to ask you to think about a question and that is what have you been forgiven for by God? So what have you been forgiven for and what do you still feel guilty about in your relationship with God? So I've got one time I felt guilty I suppose this is a bit like one of those BBC Radio 2 confessions but I already know that I've been forgiven so it's okay. So this is halfway through sixth form I didn't do very well at Cleveland sixth form I was a bit lazy so I moved to Gordano and everything was going to plan. I was on ABB I was it was about January time coming to the end of A levels and I was just getting ready to go to my first choice university and I was really excited. Then this piece of history course came up I did it was split into two I did the first one got a B and I thought oh that's really good I'm on track and then the teacher I'm not sure if she should have done this but she said in controlled conditions what we're going to let you do is we're going to let you look at some previous bits of coursework and if you can just have a look at it see if there's anything you can take from it and then write your own piece. I had a bit of an evil plan actually so what I did is I was sat next to this really really lovely Christian girl called Laurie and I said right Laurie you are right sworn to secrecy and I made a sweater secrecy so one day I brought in my iPad into this controlled condition place took a photo of the highest marked question I could find yeah like for my youth in here like please don't do this please don't do this does it doesn't end well it doesn't end well so I took a photo of the highest piece of coursework I could find and took it home and I basically replicated it I changed a couple of words and then I handed it in for it was like a pre-marking thing so the teachers were allowed to mark 10% and they would tell you if there's any changes they needed to do so about three weeks later my history teacher came in and goes well I can't believe this this is just this is the best piece of coursework this is in front of the entire class she said this is the best piece of coursework

I have ever seen I just didn't think you were capable of it and to be honest neither did I it was just it was it was just so good so I actually I felt quite pleased about it originally a little bit gloaty but in the weeks coming up to the deadline I was beginning to think oh no this isn't good and about three days before I felt really really guilty so what I decided to do is I thought oh what I'm gonna if I'll just change the course a little bit um to maybe knock it down from an A star to an A because it's just or maybe a B make it like how I'd actually do it because I just felt so guilty that I just couldn't live with myself so I made a few changes I told a friend they're looking at my course and thinking well are you sure this is what you want to do um it's looking much worse than before and I said that is fine this is what I've got to do so I made changes to this piece of coursework handed it in a couple of months later the teacher came back into the classroom and just said well just what's happened um and I said well what do you mean change your coursework it's gone down from an A star to an E

I was so mad I was so mad um and I felt really guilty that I even cheated in the first place just so guilty and I cheated and messed up and you know what I probably deserved that one but guilt is such a consuming feeling um and we can see this like in the parable of the prodigal son so in this parable the son asked for half his father's inheritance and in the culture that's like him saying to his dad look dad I really wish you were dead just give me your money and let me go and live life so he took all this money had he basically went partying spent it all on prostitutes and having fun um and then a famine came and he lost all his money um and he ended up in a pig farmer's place basically feeding pigs and this to the jews was the lowest of the low so in the jewish culture they refused to even name pigs so what they called them was davah which means the other thing so they were basically the most unclean animal um and yet he was in a position where he wanted to be like the pigs and to eat with them so that is how low this man has gone and after a while the son comes to his senses and he begins to return home and that guilt feeling kicks back in and i know like in my story i know what it's like to feel guilty and i'm sure one of you do too um so he begins to rehearse a plan of what he's going to say to his father in his head so he comes up with this he's going to say father i have sinned against heaven and against you i'm no longer worthy to be called your son make me like one of your hired servants so he was basically just planning to say this to his father anyway as he approached the town his father saw him and was just immediately filled with love and compassion so he ran up to him threw his arms around him hugged him and kissed him and the son was trying to explain like um like his story like that he felt really guilty but the father ignored him and he put a robe around him and gave him a ring and this is to signify like him being restored to the sonship in the family and he even got fattened calf which was fantastic um so it was just showing the father's love and the celebration of him the son coming back to to the father um so there's three points that i've taken from this um and the first point is forgiveness so no matter how far you are or how far you've strayed from god no matter how guilty you have felt from doing bad god will always forgive you and welcome you back with open arms like the father did um and the son was always welcome back it was just his choice whether he wanted to turn back or not and i suppose that's like us it's our choice to turn back to god and to ask for forgiveness um and this leads on to the second point grace so god forgives us because of the grace of what jesus did on the cross and because of his forgiveness we are called to be free and live free for god so it's really important just to know as christians that there is actually no condemnation in christ um and you just can't earn it you just can't earn this grace so as the the son was on his way

back he was trying to think of just excuses but actually there's nothing that he could have done it was the father's love to come back and you you just can't earn that with god because we've messed up and it's actually about his grace about what jesus did on the cross taking all our sins and all the bad stuff we've done and we're just instantly forgiven by the father and i suppose the third point is this it's that you are loved and that you are like family to god so it's father's day um so it seems a bit unfair not to mention this um but each and every person was chosen at birth to be a child of god and he loves you and he always has done many of you might have had a bad personal experience of a father you may have never had a father or actually might find father's day really painful um because you may have lost a father but i just really believe that it's important that you know that god the father he loves you and wants you to know that you are part of his family and wants you to know that he's always been there for you and will be there for you if you ever have a call on him so i'd just like to ask you these two questions again what have you been forgiven for by god and what haven't you forgiven yourself for so some things could be like this i mean some of you might have not forgiven yourselves for fiddling with your tax returns some of you might not have forgiven yourself for causing family arguments for breaking up the family i mean some of you might not have given yourself for for watching things late night on your computers or even having an affair but i think it's really important to know that god has forgiven you he has forgiven you already and sometimes actually we need to forgive ourselves because sometimes it can be easier to forgive others and actually ourselves are the hardest people to forgive i mean and then there's the whole repentance thing so when you say you know what god i'm say sorry i'm i'm just really really genuinely sorry for what i've done um and turn to you this is what repentance is so repentance is you basically you turn around um and it's about accepting god's forgiveness but actually having like a change of heart and not wanting or like really trying not to um do to sin again i mean it's inevitable we will sin um because we're just human but it's that act of turning that god sees um and he just loves you and yeah can just help to begin a healing process um i also think it's important for you to give over the hurt um that what other people might have done to you so other people might have caused you pain um and it might not be your fault at all um and unforgiveness can actually cause us pain too so i first heard this explained by nicky gumbel

but he explains that unforgiveness is almost like drinking poison and hoping the other person gets hurt so it's like drinking poison hoping the other person gets hurt because when you have unforgiveness it doesn't hurt the other person it's only hurting yourself um and god might not magically cure you of unforgiveness um but turning to god he may help you deal with what you're feeling and give you the strength to begin to forgive the person who has hurt you you you and you you you