

The Prodigal Son

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Date: 29 November 2020

[0:00] The prodigal. The prodigal son. Now prodigal, it means being wastefully extravagant. So it just wastes money and wastes a life you could say.

! Luke 15 is where we'll take it up from verse 11. And in this context our Lord has talked about a missing sheep and he's talked about a lost coin.

And now he talks about a lost son. A prodigal son. Luke 15 verse 11. It tells of this account.

Luke 15 verse 11. And he, the Lord Jesus said, they said to them, and two sons, and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. This was a surprising request. The younger son saying, give me.

Give me my entitlement. He was entitled to one third of the estate after the father died.

[1:23] You didn't go asking for it before he's dead. Had to wait. How rude was this young son that he would dare, that he would have the audacity to ask his father for his share of the estate.

Before his father had died. It'd be like wishing that your father was dead. My son demanded it. I want it now. It was selfish. It was wrong. It was dishonorable. This was a terrible thing.

But he would demand his entitlement, his inheritance. He wanted it and he wanted it now. He wanted independence. Really, it was sin. It was rebellion.

And it pictures for us the story that we're talking here now of this father and the two sons. We could reflect that it pictures God and man.

God the father and man. And here was this psalm. I want my money and I want it now. It was rebellion. It was sin.

[2:36] And it could picture for us man's rebellion against God's authority and control. And the next surprising thing in verse 12 it goes on to say, And he divided unto them his living.

Here is the father and he gives the son what he asks. Perhaps he knew this boy well enough to realise the only way he was going to learn in life was the hard way.

So too, God gives freedom for we to choose our own way. To do our own will. And he divided unto them his living.

He gave the boy the property, the inheritance. This man rejected the father.

He dishonoured his father. But the father gave. How to? God gives us so richly. Even those that defy him.

[3:50] They still have the father shine the sun. And the bounty of earth. Yet man rejects. Verse 13.

And not many days after, the youngest son gathered all together. Here he was. He was loaded now. He had his pockets full. He had all this money.

All this wealth. All of this cash. He grabbed everything. And he sold it. You can imagine. He would have taken the family's land.

The livestock. All that was due to him. And he turned it into cash. He was loaded. He had everything. Going for him now.

He thought he'd had it made now. And it goes on to say. After he'd gathered all together. Verse 13. He took his journey. Into a far country.

[4:52] He wanted to get as far, far away. From home as he could. Move to the other side of the world. You could picture it. As sin.

Is like that. Sin is likened to a far country. A distant country. Another planet. As far away from God.

As you can get yourself. Some people are like that. Aren't they? And this far country. Is anywhere. A man. Is away from God.

There's separation. He wanted to get away from the Father. And go and do his own thing. Live his own life. It was a far country. You could say. It was a pagan country. He went away from. The Father's. Home. The homeland. And he went far, far away. As far as his feet could take him.

[5:49] It was a pagan land. It was a land. Where they did not know. The Father. The Father's God.

So this son in his rebellion. Went as far as he could. It was a complete rebellion. Against what? His father believed in. He no longer had to submit to his father's authority.

He no longer had to receive his father's permission. He no longer had to abide by his father's curfews. He was a free man. So he thought. He was now his own man.

You know. He had everything. He died. that he could wish for in material sense. And it's like that too, for the lost, those who do not know the Saviour, they are only concerned about this life, about enriching themselves, about this life, about what they can make for themselves, for their own selfish ways.

He took his journey into a far country. Sing separates us from God, far, far away from God.

[7:07] Sing rejects God's authority, wants its own way. What a picture. He took his journey into a far country.

And there it says he wasted his substance with riotous living. What did the man do? If they had pockets in the robes those days, he had his pockets full, he had his bags full, and he went on a spending spree.

He could just spend willy-nilly. He had bags of it. He went on a spending spree. He had this fling. He was having a ball.

Anything he could buy to please himself. There was laughter. There was excitement. He had friends all around him. He was a party man.

And there was much enjoyment and merry-making. It was the places of sin for a season.

[8:12] He was reckless. He slandered it all. He blew it all. Riotous living. Riotous means loud or wild.

He was having a ball. This was riotous. This was wild. He just let his hair down. And he wasted his substance with riotous living.

Really, it wasn't life. It was death. Some people, they look like they're alive, but really they're the walking dead.

The Bible says we're dead in trespasses and sins. It wasn't life. It was death. It was a death style. Some people live that, don't they?

They don't live a lifestyle. They live a death style. It's down, down, down, down, down to the grave itself. And he was wild. He was loud.

[9:16] You know, if they had those big speaker things that people put on their shoulders, he would have the loud music. This was riot. This was, yeah, let's go for it.

You know, he was really going nuts. And it says he wasted his substance. This word wasted means literally blow away. Blow away.

That's when the farmer winnows the chaff in the wind, and the wind winnows it away. The wind blows it away. Poof.

You could say the sun blew it all. Literally blew it all. You know, you hear those stories when someone, you know, may have that windfall.

Something happens. Maybe the pokies, mostly they lose everything. But maybe it's that remote chance they get something out of those devilish machines.

[10:14] They might get some money. Or they win the lotto or whatever it be. They suddenly get this big wad of cash. But, friends, it just blows away.

They blow it away. Sin is like that. Places of sin. For a season. A momentary high. Yeah, it's exciting. It's loud. It's wild.

Wasted. Blown away. Poof. Gone. And he wasted. He wasted something precious. Friends, sin is costly.

There's wages to pay. Wages. It says the wages. The sin. It's dead. That's what it says. He wasted.

He wasted something precious. It wasn't just the cash. He wasted his life. He wasted so much. Sin is costly. Verse 14. When he had spent all, it was all gone.

[11:14] He was pulling his pockets out and there's nothing. All gone. It was all gone. He spent all. And there arose a mighty famine. In the land. And he began to be in what?

Now let's look at the trouble this young fellow was in here. Here he is. He's a foreigner. In a far country. He's a foreigner. In this distant land. He doesn't belong there.

He's from his homeland. And he's in this far country. Far, far away. He's far, far away from home. From mother. From father. And now he's bankrupt. He's blown it all.

Literally blown it all. He's wasted it all. And where's his friends now? They didn't want to know him. They didn't want to know him.

There wasn't any government handouts. Here he was, lonesome, hungry. There was a famine. This was desperation. What a loser. If you are lost, you're a loser.

[12:19] But you don't have to stay there. Verse 15. And when he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

He was in the far country. He died. But worse than that, now it's with the pigs.

Oink oink. See the pigs? Imagine that. Dirty, filthy pigs. Been around pigs.

You heard them? Smelt them? Gross. Pigs. Foul creatures. Here he was in the pig pen. These smelly, pongy, gross creatures.

They're just gross. The filthiest of animals. Pigs. And to the Jews, it was worse than that. These were something you didn't want to touch.

[13:23] Go anywhere near. This was absolute desperation, people. Here he was with the pigs. And he was desperate. This starving man.

Miserable man. He got a little job here. Like a casual job, you could say. And just scraping by. And now, he's looking after pigs.

This was the pigs. That's sin, people. That's where sin will take you. Yeah. That's where sin will take you. He'd hit rock bottom.

This was the pigs. That's sin. Verse 16. And he would faint and fill his belly. Oh, I got those. Oh. You ever had that gnawing feeling? Oh, I'm so hungry.

He wanted to fill his belly with the husks. That the swine did eat. Now this sort of scrap food, this garbage food.

[14:26] It actually appealed to him, what the pigs were eating. Imagine that. That the swine did eat. Now this sort of scrap food, this garbage food, it actually appealed to him, what the pigs were eating.

Imagine that. Imagine getting so hungry that you kind of look at your dog there with this bowl full of dog food, and you start to get hungry. But you'd even think of eating the dog biscuits.

It's kind of a picture you can imagine. That's desperate, isn't it? That's desperate. And no man gave unto him. Here he is. All his supposed friends had gone.

He was the party man. Where were they? They didn't want to know him now. He didn't have anything. They didn't want to give him anything. They didn't care about him. No one gave him anything. It was a nightmare.

And he envied the pigs. He was actually envious of the pigs. They're doing better than I am. And he wanted the scraps the pigs were eating. This was desperate. Verse 17.

[15:29] And when he came to himself, he came to himself, it says. He woke up. Bang. This is stupid. This is ridiculous. The light goes on. He came to himself.

He realized how crazy this was. This is ridiculous. This is ridiculous. I've made such a mistake. Sin is perception.

We deceive ourselves. We deceive ourselves. Sin. It's insanity. It doesn't make sense. It's foolishness.

It clouds the mind. It dulls the senses. It distorts the vision. Here he is in a peep pan. Thankfully, he came to himself.

Something happened. And he started to realize, no, this is, this is, I'm going nowhere. And he came to a decision.

[16:31] Verse 17, it continues. He said, how many hired servants are my fathers? They've got bread enough and to spare. And I perish with hunger.

Here he was in the pig pen, in the far country, at the point of desperation, of starvation. He realizes how desperate, how pathetic his condition. I perish.

I'm dying. With hunger. And he realized, well, back home, even the servants of God are better than this. Even the casual servants, the hired ones.

And he remembered the father's sufficiency. There's so much that my father has. And he realized the father's sufficiency.

Even his father's servants have more than enough. And we see that next, he confessed, he acknowledged his sin. He didn't make excuses. Verse 18.

[17:31] Here he was. You can imagine, down in the pig slop and the swelp and the mud and the mire and the muck and the stench and the foulness and the vulgar, sick, sorry state of this man.

In his rags. I will arise. I'm not going to stay here in this pig pen, this pigsty.

I'll arise and I'll go to my father. The younger son recalls, my father. My father.

He had a sweet memory. In my father's house. He'll look after me. There's sufficiency.

See, everything I need is with my father. And he brought that to mind. So he prepared his speech.

[18:35] Verse 18, it continues. And I'll say unto him, Father, I have sinned. I've sinned against heaven and before thee.

And I'm no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants. He was ashamed.

And he realized how he had sinned against his earthly father. His father didn't owe him anything. His father didn't owe him anything. He wasn't worthy of anything. His father had done everything for him.

Given him everything. But he rejected his father's love. His father's protection. His father's authority. His father's plan. His father's God.

Verse 20. And he arose. And he came to his father. So he came to his senses. And he arose. And he came to his father. This man did not just say what he would do.

[19:35] He actually did it. Now some people say, Oh, I plan to become a Christian. We had a talk to a fellow, didn't we?

Bradley. It's almost a bit like that. Maybe when I'm older. He kind of said that, didn't he? I'm just a young man at the moment. Maybe one day. One day I might consider it.

Some people are like that, aren't they? But this man was different. And he says, I will arise. And he arose. He didn't just say, Oh, I will one day.

He says, I will. And he did. It seems to so many people, they plan to come to the Lord. Maybe you want to mold him. No.

Big mistake. They plan. Plan to get more involved. Plan to pray, to read the Bible, to think seriously about God.

[20:44] They plan to. But they never do. Never do. All talk. But no action. But this man, I will arise, he said.

And he arose. He did. What he said he was going to do. And he knew the goodness of his father. His kindness. He repented.

He confessed. I have sinned. He turned from his sinful choices. And he headed home. He turned his back on that far country.

He turned his back on the pig pen. He said, I'm going to go to my father. My father. And he made that first step to go home. But his father made many more.

We read verse 20. But when he, the young son, was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

[21:51] We see here the heart of God towards us. Don't we? Can you see yourself in this young son? And the father.

Look at him. What did he owe this boy? He didn't have anger or punishment. His heart was love. His actions were love. His father saw him coming. He was already looking for the boy. He was looking. He was longing. He was waiting. He was ready. And he came running down the road to meet him.

He jumped for joy. You know, he would have been doing something. But no, his eyes, his worries, whatever he was doing, he was always looking. I see him. And you can imagine as he jumped for joy and he raced down the road.

Raced as fast as his legs could carry him. And apparently it was a bit of an undignified thing for a nobleman as the father was to run with his robes flowing and sort of like a little bit kind of undignified for the man to run.

[23:03] To think that God would run to you, to me. And he welcomed him with open arms. He grabs this man, this wretch of a man with his smelly clothes, smells like a pig.

Literally. Everything changes with the father's embrace, doesn't it? What a picture of the loving kindness of God. The grace of God, the father, he runs to us.

He runs to you. He gives us his mercy, his grace, unreservedly. He pours it out, he leverages it upon us. This man, he'd been in the far country, far, far away from home, far, far away from the love of the father, but he could not escape the father's love.

The father's love was always there. It always is there. And the father held him close. What an embrace. What a hug it would have been. What a closeness.

And we see it say as he kissed him. Now a kiss in this culture, well we could say in every culture, is acceptance, it's friendship. It's this full acceptance of restoration.

[24:14] He was welcomed with an embrace. Can you imagine if you come to God the father that he would hold you so tight and dear to his heart so tenderly?

Verse 21, And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight I'm no more worthy to be called thy son. He knew he didn't deserve nothing.

That's not good grammar but he knew he deserved nothing, nothing, nothing. The more he grieves ever to have sinned against that love.

Verse 22, But the father said to his servants, Servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. What a picture of restoration, of reconciliation. We see a robe that represents honour. This was a man smelling like a pig, standing there in rags. He's brought dishonour and shame on his father and his family, on the family name and the father says, bring forth the best, the best robe and put it on him.

[25:32] Who would have owned the best robe in the family? Where would the best robe have been? In the father's wardrobe, surely. It would have been the father's robe. This would have been the best of the best of robes.

It was the robe of the father and he was a noble man. You could picture it and some have reflected, well, by this gesture he was saying that make my boy look like me.

The father's robe. You can imagine people around town seeing all of this go on and even if they might have seen this young fellow after the event as they might have seen him in the distance they might have thought, oh, is that the father?

Oh, it's the son. He looks just like the father. He's got the father's robe on. He's got the best robe. They look so alike now. And that's what happens when we're born again, isn't it?

But you'll start looking like Jesus. Even you women, even you women will start looking like Jesus. Amen? Honestly, you'll start looking like Jesus.

[26:35] Amen? And you'll be born again. You'll be in your father's likeness that you'll be so like him that people will say, oh, you've got a family resemblance.

There's something that you look like God because you've got the garments of salvation. It says that we are covered with the robe of righteousness.

Isaiah 61, verse 10. Then you'll put the best robe, not just the nice robe, but the best robe. And then he gets a ring, it says.

A ring stands for authority. It's like a signet ring. As they would melt the wax and impress that signet ring upon the melted wax as a stamp of a signature, as an authorised act.

And it speaks of relationship. The father's ring. It was the father's ring. It was the family ring. It was the... You could liken it to the modern day equivalent. equivalent.

[27:42] It's like the father gave him his credit card. You could kind of picture it like that. Wow. Here's this man. He's blown all the

father's...

Blown all of his money that he probably wouldn't have really had entitlement to. He's gone and blown all his cash and throwing it all away on all kinds of sin and wickedness.

And then the father says, you are my son. I trust you. Welcome to the family business. Here's my credit card. It's like God so receives us that we can act for him.

That sense of of of that embrace that he's he is my father and I am his and I belong to him and he has that love for me that is so gracious.

Then we see the man gets shoes and shoes represent sonship because in that time slaves did not have shoes. Servants were not allowed shoes. And here we see this boy this young man he's given shoes as a child of the family as the son and it signified freedom.

[29:03] he wasn't some hired hand. He wasn't just some tender of the pigsty. He was the son. What a welcome he got from his father.

The love, the embrace, the tenderness, the kisses, the gifts. Everything the man had been looking for the father gave him. Here he was take a step back to where he was as that give me.

He wanted it all. He wanted fancy clothes and now his father gives him the best, the best road. He wanted to be a somebody. Father gave him shoes.

You are somebody. He wanted bling as it were. The father gave him a ring on his finger. He wanted to party. And now the father says let's celebrate.

My son is home. This is time for rejoicing. Only God can give us what our heart truly needs.

Everything that he wanted he could have received graciously from his father.

[30:16] Likewise for us. Sin is not the answer. Rebellion is not the answer. Come and take his grace, his gifts.

We come as bankrupt, as beggars, as this man, stinking like a pig, unworthy, bringing nothing. And the father shows mercy, doesn't he? He shows mercy and he shows mercy again.

When we fell up he shows pardon, he shows grace, he shows love, he shows forgiveness, he gives us sonship, he gives us his embrace, he gives us his pardon, he gives us fellowship.

Verse 23, And bring hither the fatted calf, he says to his servants, bring hither that prized calf, the one we've been saving for a special occasion, the best of the calves, this beautiful animal that we can have some marinade and let's really pull out all the stops and let's have a feast, let's kill it, let us eat and be merry.

So the father takes this animal that's been long reserved for some special time and we could think too that blood is shed here, blood is shed and we think of the blood that was shed of our lord, don't we?

[31:38] The sacrifice, the father took and sacrificed for the guilty, the animal's blood, reminds us of God's blood covenant, it's a sign of fellowship, of forgiveness and in revelation 3 we know our lord says behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me.

There's a feast, there's supper, it's supper time, he says I will eat with you, I will dine with you and likewise here, the son's come home, let's rejoice, this is great, this is glad news and he says this verse 24, for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found, it's like he was a dead man when that boy stepped out of their home, went to that far country, who knows whether he would ever lay eyes on him again, he was as good as dead, now he's alive again, he was lost and he's found and they began to be married, this was a great cause for joy, like one preacher put it, only two on the farm were sad to see the prodigal return, only two didn't join the festivities, the older brother and the fatted calf, but everybody else was let's get married, let's rejoice and verse 25 we read about the older son, says the elder son was in the field and as he came and drew knives of the house he heard music and dancing, what's all this racket, what's all this noise, who started a party without telling me, verse 26 and he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant and he said unto him thy brother is come and thy father has killed the fatted calf because he had received him safe and sound, verse 28 and the older brother he was angry, what, and he would not go in, therefore came his father out and entreated him, his long lost brother was home, your brother is home, your long lost brother is home, we're having a welcome home party and this older brother really he was also a prodigal, he became angry, what, that waster, that loser, he's taken everything and now they're giving him more, a party, he was having his own party, a pity party, he was maybe

thinking why does this loser get a party thrown for him, what about me, I never left, what did I get, verse 29 and he answered and said to his father, lo these many years I've served thee, neither transgressed at any time my commandment and yet thou never gave me a kid that I might make married my friends, he said you're not even giving me a little baby goat, you're not even giving me a little goat, he gets this fatted calf, he was saying I've been slaving away, reading between the lines he could say it sounds like he was, what motivated the older son was all about duty, not loving service, I've been working non-stop, this, this man got off and blown this money, this is outrageous, I never disobeyed your orders, you didn't even give me a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends, verse 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, this son of yours, you didn't call him not my brother, your son, he was proud, the older son he lacked compassion, he was cold, cold hearted towards his father and his brother, he showed no joy on the returning of his brother, called the younger son a waster, he's devoured your assets with prostitutes, he's just been wicked and foolish, wasteful, verse 31, verse 31, and he the father said unto him, son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine, the father had a place for the older son, maybe the older son missed the point of his own relationship with the father, maybe the older son is the one who had the worst problem, and he was missing the point, the father's love, it doesn't depend on how good you are, or what you do, you know, when we reach out to some, they've got the mind of good works, we saw a lady and she said, just, and we challenged her, she said, oh yeah, I'm going to heaven, and we asked, what makes you think that, why do you say that, she says, oh, I'm a good person, just do good, be nice, do good things, wrong, wrong answer, no, no, no, no, no, not at all, only good we can trust in is his, and only work that we can trust in is his work, he's our only hope, we can be full of duty, and doing, and this, the father's love, relationship with God, that's the answer, yes, the father's love, it does not depend on how good you are, or what you're doing, verse 32, it was me, it was right, but we should make Mary be glad, for this love brother was dead, and now, he's alive again, he was found, sorry, he was lost, and he is found now, notice the grace of the father, here was the grace of this father here, there was no blame, or shame, it was gone, the forgiveness just blanked all of that out, didn't it, the grace, the love, just covered it all, all of his sin, all of his fault,

[38:58] God's love, friends, is the answer for you and me, it says in John 1, 12, that God's love is to as many as receive him, receive him, receive him, simply that, John 1, 12, but as many as received him, to them, gave you the power, power, to become the sons of God, even to them, that believe on his name, it's an amazing transaction, that's so awesome, isn't it, that we, stinking like a pig, can be embraced by the father, and received, is there a prodigal here, you're spiritually bankrupt, feels like you're in the pig pen, God seems far, far away, you're not worthy, you might think, what would he want with me,

I've got good news for you, the loving father, the heavenly father, he's watching, he's watching, he's looking, he's looking, he's saying, is that my son, I see him, he's looking for you, he's compassionate, he's kind, he's gracious, he wants you to be reconciled, and if you'll be like the young man here, you take the first step towards home, take the first step, come to your senses and then say, I'm going to come to the father, I'm going to come to him, he's going to get up and he's going to run to you, and he's going to get hold of you, he's going to run to you, you're not going to be fast enough because he's going to come to you, that's the love of God, isn't it, and you are the object of his love, of his affection, that he loves you so, but I'm not worthy, he loves you still, and ever more so if you acknowledge, yes,

I don't deserve anything from him, I don't deserve anything, I've shaken my fist in his face, I've done stupid things, I've wasted my life, yet, he says come to me, behold the love of your heavenly father, he doesn't hold back, he's going to run to you, he's going to run to you, he's there, like just imagine he's at the, kind of picture it, you know, he's at the line, as soon as I see him, I'm going to race to him, just give him a big bear hug, you know, he's willing to accept, you, to trust, to receive you, in 1 John 3 verse 1 it says, behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, children of

God, wow, that's something isn't it, to go from the pig pen to the father's house, to go from the rags to his robe, the best, his robe of righteousness, to go from being desperate, without shoes, with

nothing, to be given his love, his relationship, to be given his ring, his robe, his shoes, his feast, his joy, his embrace, his tears, his forgiveness, his pardon, his mercy, that we should be called the sons of God, that beats everything, doesn't it, that's the ultimate, that's the ultimate, and I urge you tonight, just, let's just close our eyes for a moment, just to dwell on these thoughts, and think of this one, this young son, and even of the older son, that we don't miss the point of God's love, and don't miss his goodness for you, it says that he's not willing that any should perish, that all should come to repentance, he's not willing that you should miss heaven, simply come to your senses, and come to the father, he says come unto me, he's calling, he's beckoning, he's waiting, he's watching, he's looking for you, he's looking out for you, he's watching for you, and he wants you to come, simply come to him, you might say preacher I want to,

I do want to, then do it now, do it now, come to him now, don't just say I'm planning to, say I will, I'm going to, I am doing it right now, and whatever you can do to, well, he's done everything, you simply have to take what he wants to give to you, receive it, as a gift, the Bible says the wages of sin is death, it's the pig pen, it's waste, it's loss, it's foul, it stinks, it's emptiness, it's desperation, that the father's wanting to give you everything, everything that you need, it's found in him, he'll give you the robe, the ring, the shoes, the feast, his embrace, his love, your pardon, and he'll call you his son, his daughter, just come, simply come to him, me, by the cross, it's where the path was made possible, because at his death and resurrection, everything is done and paid for, and this living saviour simply says come,

[45:20] I've done everything that you can be saved, simply come to me, pray that God will move you to that action tonight, if you'd like prayer at the close, don't rush off, talk to a Christian, say I want to settle it now, talk to a Christian tonight and say I'd like prayer, I want to trust Jesus tonight as my Lord and saviour, I want to receive his gift of eternal salvation, there's Christians all around you here, talk to someone you trust and know, say please pray for me, I want to know, I want to take that step by faith right now, and they'll rejoice with you, they'll be the fattened calf, they'll be the robe, the best robe, they'll be his ring, they'll be the shoes, they'll be a feast, the angels will be rejoicing in heaven, and God will receive you to himself, simply trust him now, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Amen. Amen.