



THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL

MARCH 8 - 14

SUNDAY: SCRIPTURE

LUKE 15:11-32

¹¹ Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

¹³ “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 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.

²¹ “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “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. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.



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²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹ “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² 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.’”

MONDAY: OBSERVATION

Can you think of a time in your life where you have had a “younger brother” experience? A time when you arrogantly and thoughtlessly caused deep hurt to someone you love with careless and selfish words? A time where you thought money, and the pleasures it could buy, were what life was all about? Or maybe, a time where you hit rock bottom? Where you realized that the path you were on, that you had invested so much into, is a path that leads to nowhere. Is it possible that you are still on that path and don’t even realize it?

Have you ever wondered to yourself, how did I get here? Sometimes it is a slow drift. Other times, like the younger brother in this story, it can be a willful turn. After wasting his inheritance on wild lavish living, the younger brother finds himself starving to death. His money is gone, and so are his party friends. Now he longs to eat the slop of the pigs in his care.



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TUESDAY: APPLICATION

You don't have to hit rock bottom to turn around and choose another path...the path that actually leads to life and flourishing. Verse 17 says, "when he came to his senses" he remembered his father's house and his father's goodness. Would you take an honest look at the path you are on in life? Is it the path that leads to Jesus or a path that leads away from Him? No matter what you have done, no matter how bad it has gotten, you can turn to Jesus. He is waiting for you with open arms, longing to give you a new life.

WEDNESDAY: PRAYER

Jesus, forgive me. I want to come home. Jesus, free me from my shame, and give me the courage to accept your grace. Amen.

THURSDAY: OBSERVATION

In the cinematic medium, the clearest depiction of the power of sin can be found in the movie *The Lord of the Rings*. The transformation of Sméagol over centuries into the creature Gollum displays how the power of sin overtakes us. The desire to possess the ring, the greed to protect it at all costs, and the treachery to keep it for himself literally consumed him.

We think this is an overly dramatized picture of the impact of sin, but the reality is that this is what happens to all of us. Jesus illustrates the power of sin in a very relatable way in this story known as the parable of the prodigal.

Sin overwhelms us and can overtake our daily lives. This story shows an ancient example of the consuming power of sin. Sin drives us to destroy relationships, sacrifice our future, and dissolve our hope.



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FRIDAY: APPLICATION

We'd like to believe that sin and the pursuit of it don't lead to death, but without completely turning away from sin, totally relinquishing the hold it has on you, death is the only result. What leads to life is the grace and mercy of Jesus. Gollum never fully turned away from the power the ring had over him. He never recognized sin was destroying him.

The pathway back to the father in this story was the son's recognition that the life he was living wasn't what he wanted. The younger son wondered aloud, "Wouldn't it be better to be a servant in my father's house? I don't want to do this anymore."

What may be surprising to some is the response of the father in this story. He didn't say, "I told you so." He didn't say, "How dare you." He ran out to meet his son. He was watching for him to return, and he ran to him when he saw him coming. He wanted to celebrate his return. The son was dead in his sin, but now he is alive!

The same is true for us. We are dead in our sin, until we repent and turn away from the sin that has consumed us. Which do you choose, life or death?

SATURDAY: PRAYER

God, show me where sin is consuming my life. Show me how I need to repent and return to you. Teach my heart to let go of my selfish desires and cling to your love and grace. Amen

