

**GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
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SUNDAY 12-04-2022
GBIBLE.ORG**

**EPHESIANS - 0290-025
DOCTRINE OF GRACE, 1.
MEET PRODIGAL SON**

Turn to Eph 1.

EPH 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

EPH 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This morning I have chosen a very popular story in the word of God to illustrate how God the Father treats us in grace and what our attitude should be toward others who have failed as well!

This story is about a young man who decided to go and make a life for himself without God.

He felt that he was missing something that the world could offer him and that his life was just fading away.

In Luk 15:11, our Lord began His third parable in His message which is often called The Prodigal Son.

However, first I want you to see His audience.

LUK 15:1 Now all the tax gatherers and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.

LUK 15:2 And both the Pharisees and the scribes {began} to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

So We have tax gatherers, sinners, which includes the prostitutes, Pharisees and scribes, a very interesting combination for a congregation.

Perhaps we have all categories represented here this morning!

Now, our Lord He is going to teach them three parables about things that are lost.

You have the lost sheep, LUK 15:4-7.

The lost coin, LUK 15:8-10.

The lost sons, LUK 15:11-32.

So, this parable ranks among the finest pieces of teaching in all of Scripture.

The many applications to be learned from this parable are seen in the many titles it has been given.

The Lost Son, The Two Lost Sons, The Waiting Father, The Parable of Divine Mercy, God's Love for the Lost, and The Lost Son and the Dutiful Son.

So, the prodigal son is the emblem of a sinner who refuses to depend on the Lord and be governed by Him.

And we will see; How dangerous it is for us to desire to be at our own disposal, and to live in a state of independence, and to be our own rulers!

So, in LUK 15:11 And He said, "A certain man had two sons;

Notice that they are both sons.

They are his sons when it started and both will be His sons when this passage finishes.

In fact, the older was the worse but he was still the son of his Father.

The younger would be the obvious one to be condemned by the average Christian as being the worse, and he wasn't the worst.

He was just stupid more than anything else!

But he is also a son of the Father.

So; The man in this parable represents God the Father and the sons represent believers, therefore, this is not a gospel message, this is a doctrinal message for born-again believers.

LUK 15:12 and the younger of them [this is the prodigal son, by the way prodigal means to waste your life away], so he said to his father,

Now, Note again he called him "Father" because he represents a person who is a believer.

LUK 15:12 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' And he [the father] divided his wealth between them.

Notice that He didn't give to one without giving to the other so each one receives his share of the estate.

So, in LUK 15:12, And he divided his wealth between them.

The older brother and the younger brother both received a share of the estate.

Each one had enough so that he was independently wealthy which that represents the doctrine of logistical grace applied to your life.

The prodigal son did what most people have done throughout history;

He accepted the blessings of the Father while at the same time he turned his back upon his Father (as men do when they reject and abandon fellowship with God.

And also notice that the father made no attempt to stop him.

The father said in effect "If you must leave, then go."

God does not violate our free will nor does He force us to remain in fellowship with Him.

LUK 15:13 "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living.

Notice loose living, that's all it says!

It doesn't say exactly what is meant by loose living!

All it says is loose living.

Only his arrogant legalistic self-righteous brother said that he spent it all on "harlots or prostitutes" in verse 30.

And of course, that's gossip.

So, the Bible doesn't specify what the prodigal son did.

However, the point is that he spent it all.

He spent everything and he was breaking!

So, it didn't take long for the young son to pack up and leave his father.

And notice that it was the son who moved away from the father not the Father moving away from the son.

This is what happens when we live a life of sin, we draw away from God, He does not draw away from us.

That's why JAM 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners [rebound]; and purify your hearts [perceive doctrine], you double minded.

So, in LUK 15:14 "Now when he had spent everything [he's not investing, he's just spending], a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be in need.

This was a part of divine discipline which God brings on every one of His children who go astray for a length of time.

And whenever a believer goes astray, eventually he will come to a point as the last part of this verse says when he will begin to be in need.

Having forsaken his Father who represents God, he can now find nothing but poverty, misery, and want.

The human soul is empty if God does not fill it!

And the famine represents the fact that there's a famine in every heart which is no longer nourished by the word of God!

Turn to AMO 8.

AMO 8:11 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord God, "When I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the words of the Lord.

AMO 8:12 "And people will stagger from sea to sea, And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, But they will not find it.

There is always a famine in the heart when a person moves away from God.

So, when the famine hit, he began to be in need and he couldn't even find a job.

Until then, he'd never known hunger because he was always provided by his loving father, the one he turned his back on!

So, no matter what he tried, everything failed and I want you to notice what he finally did.

LUK 15:15 "And he went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

He did get a job feeding pigs on a farm.

In this state, he attached himself which is the Greek verb kollao meaning to glue or to closely unite himself to a citizen of that foreign country which represents the devil's children instead of God's.

And this reveals the misery of becoming a slave to the Devil and his cosmic system.

The further a believer goes from God, the nearer he comes to being a slave to the devil.

And there is no master so cruel as the Devil.

There's no burden so heavy as that of sin.

And No slavery so nasty as slavery to the old sin nature and the carnal, shameful, passions of the flesh.

Now, Times of distress often lead to self-examination and are used by God to bring about changes or repentance in people's lives.

However, this young man still held on to the belief that he could maintain his self-sufficiency, his separation from his father, even though it meant complete humiliation.

This parable describes the depths to which the prodigal son had sunk.

His emptiness was shown by the job that he had to take, tending pigs.

There could be no worse job for a Jew than feeding pigs.

Pigs were considered to be unclean animals and expressly forbidden in the Mosaic law, Lev 11:7; Deu 14:8.

LUK 15:16 "And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods or the slop that the pigs were eating, and no one was giving {anything} to him.

He's starving while he's working because pay day only comes after the pigs are marketed.

And this is a picture of what happens when a believer goes back to the lifestyle that God has rescued him from.

As 2PE 2:22 It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A dog returns to its own vomit," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."

This shows the humiliation the young man was now enduring.

Gone were the fine robes and the rich food.

Now he was occupied with the filthiest of jobs.

And his hunger was so great that he considered filling his own belly with the pig slop.

The food that he was feeding the pigs called pods made passable livestock food, but despicable human food.

And even that food was unavailable for the prodigal.

So that the detestable pigs were now eating better than the prodigal.

So, we read in LUK 15:17 "But when he came to his senses,

I don't know if you realize it or not but you do your best thinking on an empty stomach.

And so This man finally became honest with himself and looked at his life from a biblical perspective, which means to face up with the situation as it really exists.

To recognize the sins in your own life, to stop rationalizing or justifying them, to stop blaming others for them, and to come to a point where you acknowledge them and recognize that it is wrong and contrary to the word of God.

And remember, this is not a parable about what happens to a believer when he sins, this is a parable about what happens to a believer when he changes his lifestyle.

LUK 15:17 "But when he came to his senses, he said [or thought to himself], 'How many of my Father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger starving to death!

He realized the absurdity of his situation.

He knew that the hired servants in his Father's household were far better off than he was.

Self-realization of the hopeless and useless predicament of the sinful life is the first step towards true repentance.

The believer must see that his own actions have led him away from the loving Father (God).

You must realize that the seeming pleasures of the sinful life are vanishing and un-satisfying, while life with the father is full and rich.

The believer must understand that a life of sin offers only destruction, while life with the father offers prosperity and happiness.

And until a person can be convicted of the reality that he travels a dead-end road; true repentance cannot come to pass.

So, he figured that his father's servants were better off than he was and so he was going to go home to see if the father would take him in as his servant and let him live with them.

So, in LUK 15:18 'I will get up and go to my Father, and will say to him, [and here's the rebound technique]"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; Period.

Now, He's going to add a lot of emotional nonsense that merely shows his emotionalism and guilt but that will be dealt with!

So, verse 19 is just a lot of emotional nonsense.

LUK 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."

This was stupid, emotional and asinine.

We're all sinners.

This is just sheer unadulterated asininity and exactly the way people think in the cosmic system.

Please notice, rebound in verse 18, I have sinned.

But when you add all the nonsense in LUK 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men., it's ridiculous"

It doesn't mean anything.

Do you tell the Lord you're not worthy?

Listen, He knew billions and billions of years ago that you weren't worthy.

In fact, how arrogant of any believer to make an issue of himself in rebound.

The issue is sin, you are to name it and cite it, period!!!

So, notice the arrogance.

His big problem now isn't loose living, it's arrogance!

The same problem his brother has, who isn't living it up at all and who is still at home with his father.

So, in LUK 15:19 "I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."

The doctrine of eternal security says we are the sons of God and we will always be a son.

Whether we are worthy or unworthy doesn't change our son-ship.

So, in LUK 15:19 “I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.”

Treat me like one of your servants, one of those hired hands, which by the way is an insult to his father.

That's like saying that his father has no character and no integrity and He is not the forgiving type.

For people who have character and integrity are t
he forgiving type!

So, in LUK 15:20 "And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion {for him,} and ran and embraced him, and kissed him.

Now, notice his Father is a wonderful person and this is a magnificent way of expressing God the Father.

His Father saw him while he was a long way off.

It almost appears as if his father had been looking for him.

And notice the grace orientation;

LUK 15:20 His father saw him, and felt compassion {for him,} and ran and embraced him, and kissed him.

The Father's not interested in some asinine speech like "I'm no longer worthy to be called your son!"

The Father was filled with compassion and his father ran to him.

And the father threw his arms around him and kissed him again and again.

Now where's that silly speech?

LUK 15:21 "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight [there's rebound];

He shouldn't have said anything else after that but he did.

LUK 15:21, he said I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

And that's as far as he got.

He wasn't allowed to continue with the nonsense like LUK 15:19 "make me as one of your hired men."

LUK 15:22 "But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet;

Does he think his sons unworthy?

'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him" = is a picture of what happens when one rebounds and recover which is back to restored righteousness.

The best robe represents restoration to full experiential righteousness.

LUK 15:22 and put a ring on his hand which was the signature to the father's checkbook.

This was a signet ring representing withdrawing from the father's resources, logistical grace.

LUK 15:22 and sandals on his feet; which means that once again you're getting the opportunity of service and production.

LUK 15:23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat [have a feast] and be merry [celebrate];

The fattened calf represents fellowship in the word, feeding on divine truth or Bible doctrine.

That is the divine attitude of grace when you're brought back into fellowship with God.

LUK 15:24 for this son of mine was dead [which means temporal death, loss of fellowship because of involvement in the cosmic system], and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found. 'And they began to be merry.

The son wanted to do penance.

He wanted to make it up to the Father or to compensate for his wrong decisions.

However, the father had no intentions of making him a hired servant.

He did not say this boy needs a lesson so I'll give him some nasty job cleaning the stables.

He deserves to pay for his offenses and sins!

The father's attitude was to bring the best robe and put it on his son.

This was his son who he thought had died and so he wanted to prepare a feast for his son's life.

Now, You cannot have a story like this without some legalists and his personal opinion trying to spoil everything.

So, before we close it could have been like the following
that I was taught by Keith Green, notice what he wrote so
I will put the words on the screen for you

I was done hoeing, out in the fields for the day

I was thinking of going, I had to leave right away

My life was just fading, and though I felt so alone

the nearest young maiden was, a full day's ride from
home.

My father was reading, the holy books in his room my
heart was just pleading, I knew I had to go soon.

He smiled and pointed, to an old wooden chair

I wanted to hold him, but then I just wouldn't dare!

I said "Father there's so much to know, there's a world of things to see

And I'm ready, to go to make a life for myself if you give me what is mine, I will go if I can have your blessing.

But, if you won't bless my journey, I'm going to leave anyway."

"Son, I've always tried my, best for you, but if You must be leaving home, then go, with the blessing, of God."

Not too many days later, I was well on my way

I met a traveling stranger, who seemed to have much to say

He told me tales of the city, and all the women he had I
asked him wasn't that sinful?

He said "No, it isn't that bad!"

Then a few days later, on an old city road we were
drowning in laughter, and we had women to hold

And this went on quite a long time, my father gave me a
lot but when my pockets were empty Lord oh, my
"friends" all left me rot!

Then a famine hit and drained the land

everywhere I looked I saw starvation

And a job was so hard to find

I wandered through the city streets
competing for the food of common beggars
up until then I'd never known hunger

But now I wasn't too proud

I finally found some employment feeding pigs on a farm.

I wasn't treated too kindly Lord

I had to sleep in the barn.

I had to eat with swine!

the bread I ate was like stone.

It didn't take too much time until I was dreaming of
home!

Oh! the servants there are better fed

If I could only have what my father gives them

I would truly need nothing more

Oh, I will go and say to him, "I'm no longer worthy to be
in your family

Will you take me as your servant? And let me live with
them?"

It didn't take too long to, pack my things I left with only
what I wore, and I prayed, that I still had, a home.

I was near home, in sight of the house

My father just stared, dropped open his mouth

He ran up the road, and fell to my feet, and cried, and
cried

"Father, I've sinned, Heaven's ashamed

I'm no longer worthy, to wear your name

I've learned that my home, is right where you are

Oh father, take me in."

"Bring the best robe, put it on my son

Shoes for his feet, hurry, put them on

This is my son, who I thought had died

Prepare a feast, for my son's life!

I prayed and prayed, never heard a sound

My son was lost, Oh Thank you God! He's found!

My son was dead and he's now alive

Prepare a feast for my son's life!

My son was dead, my son was lost

My son returned in the hands of God."

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Amen! (ta-da)