

## *The Parable of the Lost Son*

**Read Luke 15:11-24**

**V. 11-12 “An arrogant request”** - The younger son’s share of the estate would have been one third, with the older receiving two thirds (Deuteronomy 21:17). His request was legal, since a man could divide his estate while he lived. What was unusual was that the younger son initiated the division of the estate. This showed an arrogant disregard for his father’s authority as well as risked the family’s operating budget.

**“A shocking request”**– His request was in effect saying, “I wish you were dead and had no more say in my life! I am tired of you and I want to be free from you and your control in my life.” Remembering that this is a parable meant to teach, what does this story convey about the attitude a “lost-individual” has regarding God in their life?

**“A selfish request”** – The King James translation says, “*And he divided unto them his living.*” Literally, this father had poured his very life into building his estate. This father gave his son the result and sum total of his life and work. Many people want what God can give them, but they do not want Him. The Bible calls such men “fools”, (Psalm 14:1) Can you recall your first awareness of a selfish and self-gratifying lifestyle?

**V. 13-16 “The reality of sin’s pleasures”** - When this boy left home, he also left behind all his moral restraints. He was free to live a life intent on gratifying every whim and desire of the flesh. Eternity without God is hardly worth the short time spent in the pleasure of sins embrace. Look up: Hebrews 11:24-25

*Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? – Romans 6:16*

**“Sin brings separation”** - He finds himself broke, alone and miles away from a father who had done nothing but love him. Still, by his own actions, he is separated from that father by his own pride. This is the case with every soul that is lost in sin. They are separated from God. Look up: Isaiah 59:2

**“Sin brings sorrow”** – Sin had robbed him of everything of value and it left him hopeless. That is how sin treats all its victims. Look up: Romans 6:23 James 1:14-15

**V. 15-16 “The reality of sin’s pain”** - Because of his foolish decisions, he learned some valuable lessons.

**“Sin brings shame”** - Here is a Jewish boy who finds himself feeding the pigs! For a Jewish man to stoop to this level would mean that he had reached the very bottom. Look up: 1 John 2:28

**“Sin brings suffering”** - He is suffering because of the choices he has made. Look up: Proverbs 13:15

**“Sin brings sadness”** - No one cares whether he lives or dies! He is alone. He is hungry and broken.

**V. 17-20 “A humble return”** - The boy remembers how good it had been at home with his Father. He remembers that even his father’s servants were in better shape than he is now. Seeing where we are is always the first step in getting to some other place. Do you recall a point when you examined your life of personal sin? Share that experience.

V. 18-19 - He wants to go home. Even as he makes up his mind to go home, he realizes what he has done! He sees his own unworthiness and he is willing to go home under any circumstances at all. He just wants back in the father’s house. Before, he did not want to be under the father’s authority. Now, he is willing to be a slave. This is the transition every lost sinner has to go through before they will ever be saved. God uses Holy Spirit to show us our sins and reveals to us our condition, and points us to Jesus. Look up: John 16:7-11

**V. 20-24 “A happy reunion”** - This young man found a father who had been longing, looking and living for his son’s return. He found a father filled with love, compassion and grace who received him and loved him back into fellowship! The father simply loved him back into a right relationship.

V. 20 - It was incredibly undignified for a man to run in this culture. Why did this father run to the son? Deuteronomy 21:18-21 explains the punishment which a rebellious son is to receive. This father demonstrates what God does for us. He runs to meet the repentant sinner, to extend merciful love, and to place Himself between us and the ultimate penalty for sin.

V. 22 ***“He found restoration”*** - When this boy came home, he had everything he threw away restored by the good grace of his Father. The robe served to erase all the visible signs of this boy’s sinful past (Isaiah 61:10). The ring was a symbol of son ship and authority. It conveyed access to all that belonged to the father (Romans 8:17). And shoes were brought for his feet. Only the slaves went barefoot; sons/heirs wore shoes.

When we were saved by grace, we became a child of God. He no longer sees us as a slave or as a sinner, but he sees us as His darling child, whom He loves like He loves His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

**V. 23-24 “He found rejoicing”** - The fatted calf was kept for special occasions. The father was celebrating a life redeemed and restored! Everything was given to him when he returned home. So it is when a sinner returns home to God the Father! There is rejoicing in Heaven. There is rejoicing in the House of God. And there is rejoicing in the heart of the redeemed sinner.

*If you want to live your life like there is no God, then He will allow to do just that.  
If you want to take all that He can give you without acknowledging Him, He will let you do that too.  
But, you need to know that at the end of such a life will be a Christ-less eternity!*

*If you are you lost in the far country, you need to come home. You need to return to the Father who loves you. The Heavenly Father is waiting to receive you, clean you up, wrap you in His righteousness and begin the celebration. If you are saved, how long has it been since you thanked the Father for the gracious provision He has given you in Jesus?*