

THE PRODIGAL SON  
Text: Luke 15:11-24

INTRO: At this time we will look briefly at the parable that has come to be known as the parable of the prodigal son. The word prodigal means wasteful.

We may often learn much about a parable by examining the setting in which it is told. This case is no exception. READ LUKE 15:1-2.

The prodigal son in the parable represents those who love the world & its material resources & riches more than they love the One who made the world, those who have a tendency to discard the more noble things in life to wallow in luxury & temporal pleasures, the "publicans & sinners" & their kind.

I. FIRST SCENE: A YOUNG MAN DECIDES TO LEAVE HOME.

A. He loved his father's goods more than he loved his father, vs. 12-13.

B. He had no real gratitude or sense of value for the blessings that were his at home. He could have had the best of both realms.

1. Access to his father's possessions AND

2. His father's fellowship as well, vs. 31-32.

C. He desired "freedom" from authority, like many today who seek freedom only to find themselves enslaved to:

1. Alcohol or other addictive drugs, tobacco

2. Sexual immorality

3. Evil companionships, etc.

2 Pet 2:19, While they  
promise... liberty, they them-  
selves are slaves of corrupt-  
ion; for by whom a person is  
overcome, by him also he is  
brot into bondage

II. THE SECOND SCENE: AWAY IN A FAR COUNTRY.

A. In a country much removed from his  
father's house, his sins began to  
drag him farther down. In the far  
country he wasted his money, his  
time, his talents.

1. Many a son & daughter in our time  
have drifted away into a far  
country without ever leaving  
the dwelling house of their  
parents. W. Nelson song: Today  
may be the day you walked away,  
but you left me a long, long  
time ago.

2. Just like the customs agents &  
immoral sinners Jesus had in  
mind--who had gone into a far  
country without ever leaving  
the land of Israel. The far  
country of waste & destruction  
was in their own minds.

B. In the far country, the young man  
began to experience poverty, shame &  
disgrace, vs. 14-16.

III. THIRD SCENE: THE WASTEFUL SON AWAKES TO  
HIS SORRY CONDITION & DECIDES TO DO  
SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE ABOUT IT.

A. The text says he came to himself vs 17  
B. Having realized the sordid condition  
in which his materialism, slfishness

& wastefulness had landed him, he made a momentous decision--he decided on a course of action, 18-20

1. The prodigal son is one of the best illustrations in all the Scripture of true repentance.
2. Repentance is a change of mind. Returning home was the fruit of repentance.

#### IV. SCENE FOUR: THE ERRING SON IS WELCOMED HOME.

- A. The father's love reached out to him to draw him home, even before he got there, vs. 20.
- B. His confession of sin paved the way for a complete restoration of fellowship & the joy of both father & son was made full, vs. 21-24.
- C. Thus, Jesus explained His own joy in eating with customs agents & sinners, who were being restored to the fellowship of God.
- D. Of course, the Pharisees also had a counter-part in Jesus' parable--but that's the subject of another lesson.

CONCLUSION: In this parable we have:

1. A warning for those who have not strayed. The sinner must reap the consequences of his sins.
2. An admonition for the erring child of God: All who sin must repent & confess their sin. Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9.

3. An encouragement to the penitent: The Father will receive His erring child with open arms, when the error is renounced & fellowship will be restored.

Cox Springs, TX, May 28, 1967

Springhill, LA, April 9, 1972

La Porte, TX, December 13, 1981

Exton, PA, November 19, 1989

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, November 7, 1993

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, June 19, 2005