

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

The Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

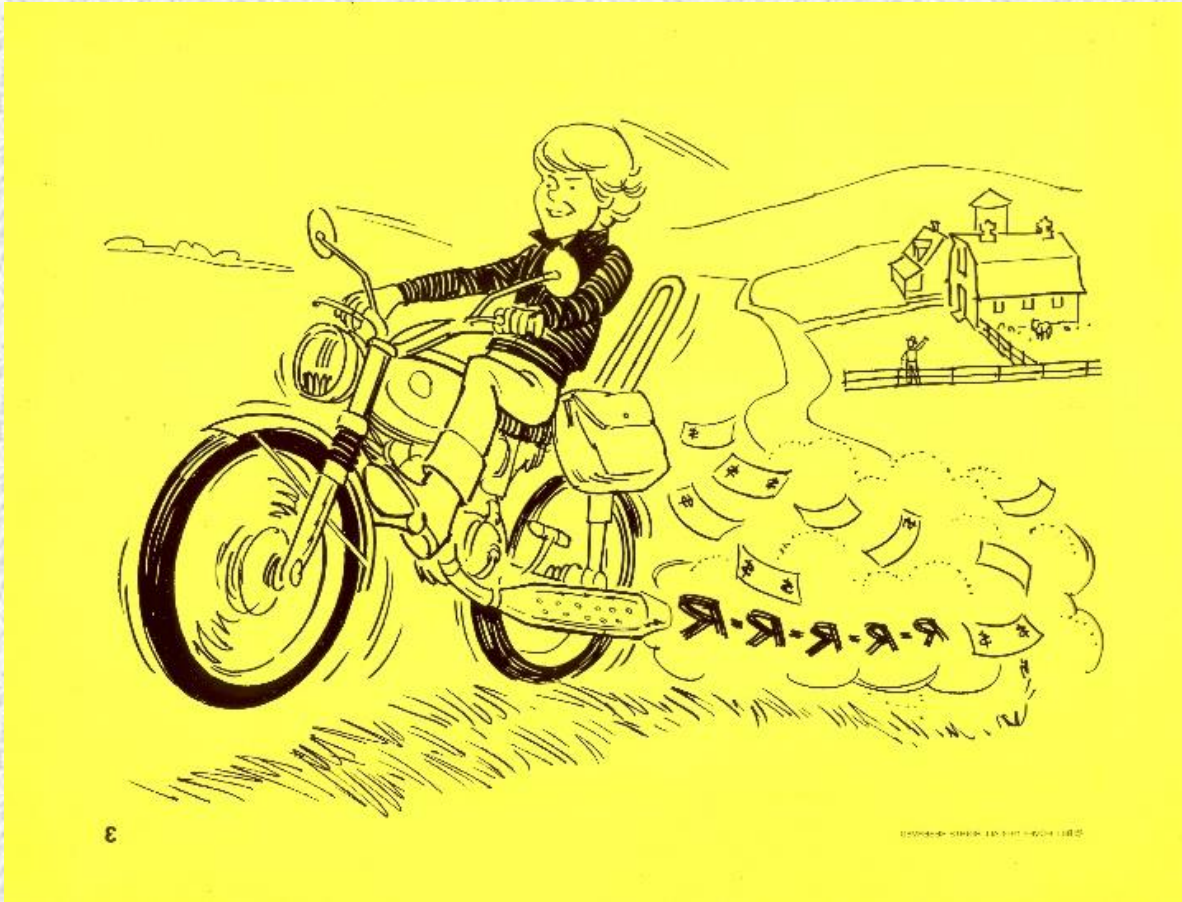
1 Our scripture today is from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 15, verses 11 through 32. 2



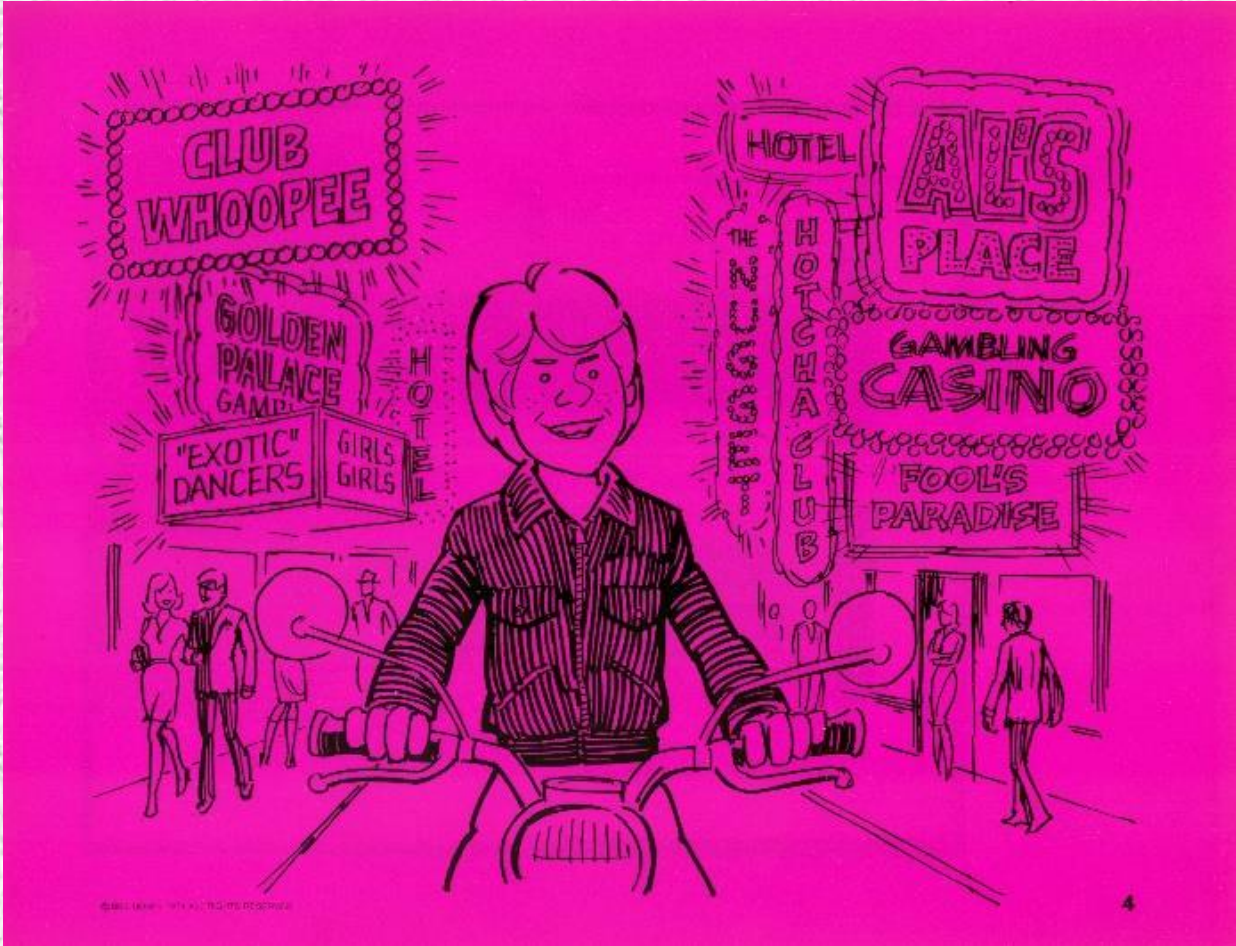
Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 3



The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. 4



“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country 5



and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 6



After he had spent everything, 7



there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 8









So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, 12



who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. ¹³ ¹

¹ v11-16.



“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ So he got up and went to his father. 14

What do you think of that?



“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. 15

2

“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a

² v17-20.

ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ¹⁶ ³

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' ¹⁷ ⁴

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 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. But when this son of yours

³ v21-24.

⁴ v25-27.

who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ “ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 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.’ ” ¹⁸ ⁵

What was the occasion for this story? In verses 1 and 2 ⁶ **some Pharisees condemned the Lord for associating with non religious people.** ¹⁹ **But the Lord's answer to scoffers has always been, **Come to me all who are weary & burdened, and I will give you rest.**** ⁷

The Lord spent His life seeking and saving the lost. His will is for you to seek and save the lost. ²⁰

The Lord He emphasized this when he told the story of a man who gave a banquet. When the meal was ready he told his servant to inform the invited guests.

⁵ v28-32.

⁶ v1-2 - Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

⁷ Matthew 11:28.

But each of the guests gave an excuse and didn't show up. So here he was with an expensive supper all prepared. Angrily he told his servant to go compel the homeless and the crippled off the street to come in and help him eat it. ²¹ ⁸

God wants all to enjoy His kingdom regardless of what they've done in the past! ²²

This young man left home and . . .

I. He Came to a Distant Country - v11-16

He came to a distant country. ²³ In doing so he separated himself from his dad and his family's godly influence. ²⁴

What is sin? ²⁵ Notice verse 12, **The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate. Sin is the "I want it now" attitude. ²⁶**

In the Garden of Eden, sin was rebellion against God's plan for you. God said to Adam and Eve not to go near the forbidden tree, don't look at it and, definitely don't

⁸ Luke 14:16-23.

eat its fruit! God had a plan for them. "Being like God" knowing good from evil, was not part of that plan! ²⁷

Then, in verse 13, **Set off for a distant country** . Sin separates you from the Lord. ²⁸

Continuing in verse 13, **and there squandered his wealth in wild living.** Sin is mismanagement of your Heavenly Father's property. ²⁹

So we come to verses 15 and 16, **So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.** He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. The result of sin is slopping the hogs! ³⁰

You know, the world believes that slopping the hogs is where it's at. If I could just get that next fix or that next drink. If I could just get that position at work! If I could just get that house and those fancy "toys". If I could just win that sweepstakes and have all that money. That world's best is just slopping the hogs! ³¹

But instead of slopping the hogs you could be sitting at your Heavenly Father's banquet table!

So Danny left his father's farm and went to the big city to enjoy his swinging single life. But when you leave the Lord behind, you eventually end up slopping the hogs! ³²

Eventually . . .

II. He Came to His Senses - v17-19

He came to his senses. ³³ Verse 17 continues the story, **When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! He came to his senses by an awareness of his condition. He became poor and hungry. Life on his own wasn't as glamorous as he had thought. Before you can really appreciate God you need to become aware of your lost condition.**

³⁴

Verse 18, I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: **Father, I have sinned against heaven and**

against you. He came to his senses by a resolution to do something about it! After the story of the shepherd who found his lost sheep, verse 7 says, **there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.** After the story of the woman who found her lost coin, verse 10 says, **I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.** ³⁵ The word "repent" ⁹ means to make up your mind to change your life! ³⁶ This boy humbled himself and made his own choice to return home. ³⁷ Like Lord Jesus, he set his face toward Jerusalem! ¹⁰

The story continues as he came to a distant country, then he came to his senses, then . . . ³⁸

⁹ μετανοέω.

¹⁰ Luke 9:51.

III. He Came to a Compassionate Father - v20-

24

He came to a compassionate father.

Lord Jesus intended to have His audience understand that the compassionate dad was the Heavenly Father's attitude toward us straying children. ³⁹

This dad was full of forgiveness. Dad may have been sitting on the porch longing to see his wayward son ever since the day he left.

This picture is a loving, forgiving God in contrast to the self righteous Pharisee. God always longingly desires for His straying kids to humbly return. ⁴⁰ The promise of First John, Chapter 1, verse 9, is always true, **if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ⁴¹**

This dad was full of joy! Verse 20 ¹¹ says he had compassion. ⁴² "Compassion" ¹² means that he was so overjoyed that his guts ached! ⁴³ The phrase "threw his arms around him" literally means that dad forcefully fell on his son's neck. I picture what happens when a professional football team makes a touchdown. The other players on the team jump up and down, throwing their arms around their teammate and lifting him in the air with exuberance. It's a very thrilling time. The flavor of the original language is that dad didn't just peck his son on the forehead, he kissed him continually and forcefully. ⁴⁴ Verse 21 ¹³ tells us that dad was so overjoyed he didn't even give his son the chance to finish the confession of his sin! ⁴⁵ He quickly began treating his son so richly: robe,

¹¹ v20 - "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.

¹² σπλαγχνίζω.

¹³ The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son . . . '

sandals, fatted calf, party ¹⁴; that servants were running in all directions to obey.

That's the picture of a loving Heavenly Father who loves you so much that when you decide to return to Him He explodes with compassion and excitement.

So, the youngest son came to a distant country, came to his senses and came to a compassionate father. ⁴⁶

But also . . .

IV. He Came to an Older Brother - v25-32

He came to an older brother. Verses 29 and 30 tell us he came home to an older brother full of bitterness and jealousy. ⁴⁷ **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. But when this son of yours who has squandered your**

¹⁴ v22-24 - 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. Bring the fatted calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' 48

First Corinthians, chapter 3, verse 3, ¹⁵ says jealousy for a Christian means he is still in the world. ⁴⁹ First Corinthians, chapter 13, verse 4, ¹⁶ says when you're jealous, you're not walking in love. ⁵⁰ James, chapter 3, verse 14 ¹⁷ boldly states that when you're jealous you're denying the truth! ⁵¹

Remember, younger brother already spent his inheritance. So, older brother would receive the entire estate when his dad passed on. According to the Law of Moses, the oldest son would receive a double portion of the inheritance. In this case, it would be two thirds of the estate. In addition, dad was still alive to grow the estate even bigger than it currently was. Big brother would get everything! So big brother could

¹⁵ I Corinthians 3:3 - For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?

¹⁶ I Corinthians 13:4 - Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

¹⁷ James 3:14 - But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

rejoice in the safe return of junior and still be the big winner financially.

But, in this story, Jesus is pointing out the attitude of the self righteous Pharisee who criticized Jesus mingling with the non religious folks. With that kind of character, he would be the loser as far as a relationship with the compassionate Heaven Father. ⁵²

So, who do you identify with in this story? ⁵³

The lost son? If so, then come home to a Heavenly Father who loves you as passionately as the father in this story. ⁵⁴

The older brother? If you do, you need an attitude check! ⁵⁵

The abandoned father? If so, make your goal to be like him. Become more like the Lord Jesus in your attitudes and relationships. ⁵⁶

You have to decide. Is the church a country club for saints or a hospital for sinners? ⁵⁷ Our Lord was the

Great Physician and came to seek and to save the lost.

It's time for you to reach out into a dark and immoral world and touch those who are entrapped there!

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