

There's No Place Like Home

[Luke 15:11-32](#)

Luk 15:11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

Luk 15:12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living.

Luk 15:13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

Luk 15:14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

Luk 15:15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

Luk 15:16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

Luk 15:17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

Luk 15:18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

Luk 15:19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

Luk 15:20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

Luk 15:21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Luk 15:22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

Luk 15:23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry:

Luk 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Luk 15:25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

Luk 15:26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

Luk 15:27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

Luk 15:28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

Luk 15:29 And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet

thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

Luk 15:30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

Luk 15:31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

Luk 15:32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Often, this parable is preached as pertaining to backsliders. In truth, the correct interpretation is that Jesus is speaking about lost people. The Pharisees and the scribes were upset that Jesus was hanging out with sinners, [v. 1-2](#).

Luk 15:1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

Luk 15:2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

Jesus spoke the three parables that comprise this chapter to confront the hardness of their religious hearts against lost sinners.

- In the first parable, The Lost Sheep, we learn that the shepherd went after *1 out of 100*.
- In the parable of The Lost Coin, we learn that the woman sought *1 out of 10*.
- In the parable of The Lost Son, we see the father looking for *1 out of 2*. But, don't miss the fact that *the father went to both his sons*, thus teaching us the truth that every life matters to the Lord!

Point is, your life matters to Him and just as the shepherd sought the sheep, just as the woman sought the coin, just as the father sought his sons, the gracious Lord of glory is seeking you today.

In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy spent the first part of the movie trying to find a way to get away from home. When she finally winds up in Oz, she spends the rest of the movie trying to find a way back home to Kansas. Finally, she learns the truth that she had always had the ability to go home anytime she wanted to. All she had to do was click the heels of her ruby slippers together three times and say, "*There's no place like home.*" When she did this, she went home!

In this parable, Jesus tells the story of a young man who couldn't wait to get away from home. He makes a very selfish demand of his father, he takes his inheritance and he heads out to a far country to live it up, free from the restraints of his father and his rules. What he finds in the far country is not what he expected to find. Oh, he found good times and new friends, but when his money ran out, the good times and good friends ran out too. Because strangers don't care-
o, when you got no dinero.

So this fine Jewish fellow finds himself living with a pig farmer in the far country, working day by day feeding the pigs. He is broke, lonely and no one cares about him! When he finally reaches bottom, he comes to his senses and remembers how good things had been at home after all. He remembers that there is no place like home! He returns home with a plan to be a servant in his father's house. But, when he returns home, he finds more there than he ever bargained for. He finds out that there really is no place like home!

So, my friends, whether you are lost on the high hills of sin, lost in the house or lost in the far country, you need to know that you can come home. If you are like that elder brother, you can come home too! Regardless of where you are in the walk of your life, you need to know today that *There's No Place Like Home!* Let's find out why. First off:

There Is a Loving Father at Home

Luk 15:20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

While he was in the far country, this boy had no one who cared about him. When he arrives at home, the very first one to meet him is the father he had disgraced and dishonored many days earlier! This verse tells us something of the nature of the heavenly Father Who waits for you.

I. He Is a Concerned Father

Here comes the son down the road, he is dressed in rags, he has the filth and the odor of the pig pen all over him. Still, this father sees him while he is yet far away and he runs to meet him. Can you see the father as he spends his days looking down the road for just a glimpse of the son he saw walk away so long ago? I can see him as he steps out of the house every day and looks down the road in hopes that he will see his son coming home. He has spent the time since his son left waiting and watching for his son to return. He knew where the son had been, but he still longed for him to return home. He still loved him in spite of where he had been and all he had done.

What a picture this paints of the heavenly Father! Just like this father God sees us when we return home, but He also sees us while we are wandering in the far country of sin. He sees us as we waste our substance with riotous living. He knows what we are and he has seen everything we have done, still He longs for us to return to Him. God is a concerned Father Who loves the sinner but hates the sin.

Jer 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

II. He Is Also a Compassionate Father

When the father sees his son returning home, he surely doesn't look like he did when he left home. He doesn't smell like he did when he left home. But, when the father sees him, he forgets the hurtful things that were said when the son left. He forgets the wasted resources. He forgets all the lonely, heartbroken days while the son was away. All he knows is that his son has returned home! He is safe and he is home! Here comes the son, slowly in humiliation, when the father sees him, he runs swiftly in excitement to meet him and he kissed him repeatedly!

Why all the excitement? Because the father has carried this boy in his heart since he left home! Now, he doesn't have to hold a memory, he can embrace the reality! He runs, which was totally out of character for men of the East. It was considered beneath a man's dignity to run. Still, this father is excited! His prayers have been answered and he runs to meet his son. He meets him and he falls on his neck, kissing him over and over again! Why did he cling to him so? Because the Law demanded that sons who had disgraced the name of their fathers be stoned to death.

Deu 21:18 If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that*, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

Deu 21:19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

Deu 21:20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son *is* stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; *he is* a glutton, and a drunkard.

Deu 21:21 And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

In this parable, the father hastily placed his body between this rebellious son and any neighbors who might want to stone him to death. Any stones that fell would have struck the father first!

Again, this father is a picture of the Heavenly Father. He too responds in compassion to all those who return to Him in faith. When we take a step of faith toward God, He moves in great leaps toward the us.

An ancient eastern proverb says: *"Who draws near to me an inch, I will draw near to him a mile; and whoso walks to meet me, I will leap to meet him!"*

James put it this way,

Jas 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

He is able to run to us, receive us and kiss us back into His sweet fellowship because He literally interposed Himself between us and His wrath on the cross.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

When Jesus died on the cross, He took the penalty for your sins! Now, the way is open for you to come to Him for salvation. If you will come to Him, you will not be turned away!

Imagine the fear that must have been in this boy's heart as he headed home. It is clearly seen in [verses 17-19](#). He wanted to return home as a "*hired servant*". Hired servants were lower than slaves. Slaves often came to be considered a part of the family. Hired servants, on the other hand, could be dismissed at any time. He feared being turned away, but he found a father who loved him and who was filled with great compassion for this boy. My friends, you need not fear the Lord turning you away today. He loves you and if you will come to Him, you will find a warm welcome, not a harsh rebuke!

Joh 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Thank God there is a loving father at home! Secondly I would like you to see that:

There Is Lasting Forgiveness at Home

Luk 15:21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Luk 15:22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

This son returns home with a prepared speech for his father, but the father interrupts him to declare that all is forgiven. The Father's statements in [verse 22](#) prove that all is well between him and the son. His statements demonstrate the fact that all is forgiven!

A. This Forgiveness Involves Purity

Here stands the son in the rags of his sins. He doesn't look like a child of this father. But, the father orders the best of his robes to be brought and to be put on the son. This robe would cover all the stains and dirt of the pig pen. This robe would make him look like the father. Imagine a servant walking up, who had not been there when the son returned home and seeing this boy from behind in the father's robe. He would naturally mistake him for the father! This robe served to erase all the visible signs of this boy's sinful past.

When a sinner comes home, they also receive a robe from the heavenly Father.

Isa 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of

righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

This righteousness is not the righteousness of good works or of human goodness. No, this is the very righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to those who receive Him by faith. When we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ, all the pain and the stain of our past is forever washed away! All the dirt and the filth of a life of sin is forever washed away from us! And, if you are not very careful, there are times when the saints of God might be mistaken for their Father! Certainly, they are viewed by their Father as though they had never been away from home at all.

B. This Forgiveness Involves Privilege

If we look back to verse 22 of our text, we see that after the robe came the ring. The ring was a symbol of sonship and authority. The one with the ring could speak for the Father! The one with the ring had access to all that belonged to the father! The one with the father's ring was in a position of great privilege!

When we trust Christ and come home to the Father, we are given the great privilege of being recognized as His sons.

1Jn 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

1Jn 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

We are allowed access to all that belongs to the Father as well.

Rom 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

When we come to the Father, He opens the storehouses of His grace and gives us everything He has! What a privilege belongs to those who go home to the Father!

C. This Forgiveness Involves Position

Looking back at verse 22 of our text, the father calls for shoes to be brought for the feet of his son. Only the slaves went barefoot, sons wore shoes! This boy returned home desiring to be just a mere hired servant, but the father is determined to recognize his position as a son! In the boy's eyes, he didn't even deserve to be a slave, but even lower,

even a hired servant. The father, however, looked at him and said, “*This is my son!*” The father alone determines the position and worth of his children!

Let me just remind you today that you are not a nobody if you are saved by grace! We have this idea that we are supposed to think of ourselves as “*just old sinners saved grace.*” Well, let me tell you, when you were saved by grace, you became a child of God! He no longer sees you as a slave or as a sinner, but he sees you as His darling child, whom He loves like He loves His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ! We are right to humble ourselves in His presence, but let's never forget that if we are saved by grace, that it is the Father Who determines our standing in the family and not we ourselves! What I am saying is this: Don't let the devil or the flesh keep you down by telling you that you are not worthy to be a child of God. If you are truly saved, you have been accepted by the Father in Heaven and He has called you His child! Sounds to me like you are in a special place of privilege! Finally I would like you to see that:

There Is Lavish Fellowship at Home

Luk 15:23 *And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:*

Luk 15:24 *For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.*

You see:

A. There Is Fellowship with the Father

After the son has been covered and restored to his place in the family, the father calls for the fatted calf to be slaughtered. This calf was kept for the sole purpose of great celebrations and for entertaining honored guests. The father calls for this celebration because he wants to fellowship with his son. This hadn't been possible before because this son was like one that was like one that was dead. Now, the son is home and he and the father can fellowship!

Before a person is saved, they can have no fellowship with God because they are separated from Him by a great chasm of sin.

Isa 59:2 *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

But, after grace has worked in the heart and faith has been exercised toward God, the lost can experience sweet fellowship with God Himself! There is nothing in this world like knowing and experiencing the personal and powerful presence of God Himself. I want you to understand this morning, that the Father is pictured in the Bible as rejoicing over sinners that repent.

Luk 15:10 *Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.*

Not only does the Father rejoice, but this parable indicates that He allows those who return home to celebrate with Him. You see:

B. There Is Also Fellowship with the Family

Luk 15:24 ...And they began to be merry.

Luk 15:25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

Luk 15:26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

Luk 15:27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

Luk 15:28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

Luk 15:29 And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

Luk 15:30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

Luk 15:31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

Luk 15:32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

So the celebration begins! The father invites the servants, the neighbors and the friends of the family to a great celebration! But, notice that when the father and rest of the family and many friends are gathered together to celebrate, the elder brother stays out in the field. He is angry because he has always been there, but the Father hasn't so much as given him a goat, much less a fatted calf. He may have lived in the father's house and worked in his fields, but he did not love the father like he should have. He may have been home, but he was in the far country in his heart!

This is a picture of many who are in the family of God today. They are always around the Father, but they take Him for granted. They do not enjoy His fellowship and they refuse to rejoice when someone else comes to know Him. They could eat the fatted calf anytime they want to, but they refuse to enjoy the blessings of their Father. The fact of the matter is this: not all the prodigals leave home! Many stay right there in the Father's house, sulking because they are jealous of the lives lived by those off in sin. What a blessing it would have been had this elder brother ran behind the father to greet this boy! What a difference there would be in the house of God if those who were already there would join the Father in looking for those who aren't home yet, and would rejoice with Him when they do finally come home!

Note that the end of this parable is left open. Did the elder brother ever come into the feast? Did he ever reconcile with his younger brother? We do not know because those things are in

the future. Jesus left the parable open-ended so that the Pharisees and the scribes could write the final paragraph.

Today, you get to write the final paragraph to your story. How it ends will be determined by what you do with the call of the Lord in your heart. Have you found yourself down in the pig pen of life this morning? Why not give that pig a permanent wave and come home to the Father? He will receive you and He will erase your past and restore you to a place of blessing and rejoicing. Maybe you are like the elder brother. You are in the Father's house, but you aren't having a good time! Maybe it's time to come on down to the feast. Maybe it's time for you to come to the Father and renew your vows before Him.

Friends, regardless of where you are today, there's no place like home! If you are in the far country, you need to come home. If you are out in the Father's field, but lack the kind of love you need for the Father, you need to come home too. The door is open, the table is spread and the Father is waiting for all who will come!