

# THE MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS

## Lesson Twenty-Two

### VIII. Gospel Presentation (3): The Loving Father Receives the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24)

#### Burden to Impart:

In this lesson we see that we all, like the prodigal son, need to come back to our loving Father, God. Although we have all turned aside and gone our own selfish and foolish way, our loving God patiently awaits us to come to our senses, to repent and come back to Him. And when we do, He does not scold us or punish us; He receives us with tears of joy and kisses of love. He forgives our sins, covers our nakedness and satisfies our hunger with His Best: the Lord Jesus Christ who was sacrificed for us. Thus, we rejoice that we have come back to our Father, and He rejoices that His son who was dead is now alive, and who was lost is now found.

**Memory Verse:** Let us eat and be merry; because this son of mine was dead and lives again, was lost and was found!  
Luke 15:23-24

#### Facts to Teach:

1. The younger of two sons grew impatient awaiting his father's inheritance. He did not wait until his father died, but rather demanded his inheritance even while his father was still living. How heartless and selfish he was!
2. Very shortly after receiving his father's hard-earned gift (inheritance) the younger son left his father's home and went to a distant country. In a short time of loose and wasteful living all was spent. Also, when all of his money was gone so were his "friends."
3. Famine struck. He had no money, no friends, no job, and an aching, hungry stomach. Finally, one job was available, for nobody else wanted it: tending and feeding the dirty, stinky hogs.
4. The loneliness, hunger and shamefulness however did it's work. This foolish, hard-hearted and sinful son came to his senses. He realized it would be much better to swallow his pride, repent and go back to His father and see if perhaps he would have mercy on him and receive him back, in spite of all he had done. He determined to confess his sinfulness and ask to work for his father as a servant, for he felt he was not "worthy to be called your son."
5. The father saw his son coming back home while he was still a long way off. Probably every day the broken-hearted father would go out to look for his son and to pray for him to come back home. Seeing his son, the father's heart was filled with compassion, love and mercy. He ran to him, fell on his neck and kissed him.
6. Once the prodigal (recklessly wasteful) son had confessed his sin and said, "I am no longer worthy to be called your son," the father allowed him to say no more. He could not stand to hear such words! Although he did not appear worthy, for he appeared as a poor tattered begger dressed in filthy rags, he was this loving father's dear returned son!
7. The prodigal son expected some harsh treatment from his father, if he would even receive him back at all. What a surprise! The father forgave all his sins and was rejoicing to receive his son back again. He changed the filthy rags for the best robe. His ragged hands received a golden ring, and his tired bare feet were comforted with sandals. And the greatest surprise of all: a specially fattened calf was slaughtered to feast upon together and remove all of his hunger.

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8. The father's exclamation, "This son of mine was dead and lives again, was lost and was found," shows us the deep feeling in this loving father's heart. He did not call him a "wicked son" or an "ungrateful son," but a "dead" son and a "lost" son. This shows that his heart was full of sorrow and grief that his son left, not full of anger and vengeance.

#### Apply This As The Gospel To The Children

1. When our heart is selfish and we turn our back on God and go away from Him, we, like the prodigal son, are only headed to ruin and misery.
2. God's mercy brings us to our senses and causes us to remember our dear God and Father.
3. Whenever we turn back to Him we will find that He still loves us, and He is sorrowfully and patiently waiting for us to return to Him.
4. Regardless of our sins and mistakes, He still loves us, welcomes us, receives us, and meets our need completely. He forgives our sins, covers our nakedness and shame and satisfies us with Christ who as the fatted calf died for us.
5. Should we not open our hearts, believe in Him and come back today?

## The Ministry of the Lord Jesus

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1. After his father died, the younger son received his inheritance.  
(Luke 15:12)  
 True       False
2. The younger son handled his inheritance money wisely and spent it carefully. (Luke 15:13)  
 True       False
3. When the famine came and all his friends left, what did the prodigal son have to do for a job? (Luke 15:15)
4. When the prodigal son realized how sinful and foolish he had been, what did he decide to do? (Luke 15:18)
5. What did his father do when he saw his son returning home? (Luke 15:20)
6. What four things did the prodigal's father provide for him?  
(Luke 15:22-23)
7. What does this parable show us about God's love toward us?