

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:10–32

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. Luke 15:20

Jesus taught the people about repentance, and to help them understand the joy in heaven when one sinner repents, He told the story of the prodigal son (see Luke 15:10). (*Prodigal* means wasteful.)

A man had two sons. The older son helped his father and obeyed him (see Luke 15:29). The younger son asked for his inheritance and then went away and wasted all his money in sinful living. When a famine came to the land, the younger son had no money left to buy food. He found work feeding swine and was so hungry he wanted to eat the swine's food. (See Luke 15:11–16.)

In his despair, the son thought of his home. He knew that even his father's servants were well fed, while he lay dying of hunger. He knew he had been sinful and did not feel worthy to be called his father's son, but he decided to return home and beg his father to forgive him and let him work as a servant. (See Luke 15:17–19.)

As the son neared his home, his father saw him coming and ran to him and kissed him. The son

said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son" (Luke 15:21; see also Luke 15:20).

But the father ordered his servants to put fine clothes on his son and prepare a great feast in his honor. He said, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke 15:24; see also Luke 15:22–23).

The older son had been working in the field. As he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. When he learned the reason for the celebration, he was angry and would not go in to the feast. His father came to him and pleaded with him to join the party, but the son refused. He reminded his father that he had always been a righteous son and had never been given such a celebration. (See Luke 15:25–30.)

The father said, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine" (Luke 15:31). Then the father explained that it was right to rejoice over the younger brother's return, for it was as if he had been dead and was alive again (see Luke 15:32).

Summary

As Jesus taught about repentance, He told the story of a man who had two sons. The older son was obedient and faithful. The younger son asked for his share of his father's property and left home. He soon wasted all his money in sinful living, and he became very hungry. Realizing he had been wrong, the younger son decided to return home and beg forgiveness.

As the son neared home, his father saw him coming and was overjoyed. The father celebrated his son's return with a feast. This made the older son angry. The father explained to the older son that he would be given all the father had but that it was right to rejoice over the younger son's repentance.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS