

# Four Sons

Matthew 21:28-31; Luke 15:11-32



Rock Hill Baptist Church  
605 Rock Hill Road  
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Pastor David Buffaloe  
731-845-6104  
online at [bibleteacher.org](http://bibleteacher.org)

**FOCAL Read Together** Matthew 21:28-31 But what think ye? **A certain man had two sons**; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. (29) He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. (30) And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. (31) Whether of them twain did the will of his father?

**FOCAL** Luke 15:11-32 And he said, **A certain man had two sons**: (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. (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. (14) And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (15) And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (16) And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. (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! (18) I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, (19) And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (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. (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. (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: (23) And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill [it]; and let us eat, and be merry: (24) For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. (25) Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. (26) And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. (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. (28) And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. (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: (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. (31) And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. (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.

“A certain man had two sons”. Jesus often used parables or stories to illustrate great Biblical truths, and in two places He begins two different parables with the phrase, “a certain man had two sons”. In both parables

we see “sons” mentioned. Not employees, not workers, not acquaintances, but “sons”. Four sons, two parables, one common beginning.

In the Gospel of Luke we see two sons, one of whom decides to go out and “sow his wild oats”. He goes to his Father and asks for his inheritance so he can waste it in the world. The Father, though He does not approve, allows this young man to take off and do as he will. Every day the Father waited for that son to come home, to be in the Family where he belonged. The second son stayed home being an obedient child, yet later was angered when his repentant brother returned home.

In the Gospel of Matthew we again see “a certain man had two sons”. Neither of these sons left the comfort of the family, yet both were rebellious at heart. When the Father asked the first son to go out and work in the vineyards the first son said, quite rebelliously, “I will not”. There is no respect in what he said. He was abrupt, rude, and to the point. “I will not go”. Yet this same son later repented and did as his Father asked. When the Father asked the second son to go and work the fields, this son was very respectful. “Yes sir, I will go”. His lips said “yes”, but he never went and did as the Father asked. Though he spoke with honeyed tones to his Parent, his actions were disrespectful. “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15). “My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). Love is an action verb. “God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son” (John 3:16). If he loved his Father he would have done as he was asked. A good son must “go” and “work”. Good intentions

mean little. The vineyard must be tended, and the sons must tend it.

In today's world there are many people who profess to be Sons of God. What is a Son? A Son is someone born out of a Parent. Before a person becomes a Christian we are all “sons of Adam”. We quite naturally follow the ways of our forefather. Adam sinned, and in sinning brought condemnation and corruption on all of humanity. Prior to the supernatural work of salvation we are all “**dead in our trespasses and in our sins**” (Colossians 2:13). The dead cannot be the son of the Living God. Jesus said “**Ye must be born again**” (John 3:3, 7). Until you believed on Jesus, surrendering your life to Him, you remained a son of Adam. After you repented and gave your life to God by faith in Jesus Christ you entered into the Family of God (Galatians 3:26). “**You are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus**”. Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain, yet He washed it white as snow.

Now that you are in the Family, you are a Son. You have a future inheritance, but you also have a present responsibility. If you are a son of Adam then you have the freedom, within the laws of this great land, to do as you so please. You need not love God, nor worship Him. Unsaved, unbelieving, you are – Scripturally speaking – not a child of God. There is coming a Great White Judgment your way, and on that day the sons of Adam will be separated from the Sons of God (Matthew 13:30). The Spirit and the Church invite you to come and believe on Jesus, casting your cares and your faith on Him (Revelation 22:17). Are you thirsty? Then come!

Drink of the water of life. Repent of your current way of life, and turn unto Jesus. Don't point to what someone else has done and reject the Christ. Man may let you down. The Christian, a Son of God by faith, may fail his Father. These four sons all failed their Father in one way or the other – and yet, they were still sons. Yet God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, has *never* failed the Father – nor will He fail you. Believe on Him and be saved. Look with the eye of faith on Calvary where He bore your sins and mine. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ – not on a mere mortal but on God with Us, Emmanuel, the Blessed Redeemer. Look on Him and live. Enter the Family of God by faith and then, as a Son of God, do as the Father has commanded you. May God touch your hearts with His Word.

## 1. The Two Sons of The Vineyard

**FOCAL** Matthew 21:28 **But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard.**

The first two sons (and these *are Sons, not workers, not employees, but Sons*) we want to talk about are the Sons of the Vineyard. The Father came to both of these young men and said the same thing to both. First of all, the Father addressed these men as **Son**<sup>1</sup>. There are two words used in the Greek for “son” - **teknon and huios**<sup>2</sup> (pronounced hwee-os'). We see huios found in the

1 G5043, τέκνον, teknon, tek'-non, From the base of G5098; a child (as produced): - child, daughter, son.

2 G5207, υἱός, uihos, hwee-os', Apparently a primary word; a “son” (sometimes of animals), used very widely of immediate, remote or figurative kinship: - child, foal, son.

famous:

**Greek Emphasis** John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that **he gave his only begotten Son (huios)**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**Huios** emphasizes the *relationship or direct descendant* of the parent to the son. Jesus Christ is directly related to God the Father. The word **teknon**, however, emphasizes *the dependency and emotional bonds between the parent and the child*. The **teknon** is dependent on the Parent, the Father, for all of his or her needs. We see **teknon** used in:

**Greek Emphasis** Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that **we are the children (teknon) of God: (17) And if children (teknon), 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.

We who have believed in Jesus Christ *are dependent on the Holy Trinity of God*. We have an inheritance that we are **heirs of because of Jesus**. We did not earn nor deserve our inheritance, but received it because of what **God the Huios** did. He bore our penalty, redeeming us from sin and from judgment. We are **teknon** of God because of the finished work of Christ. **Huios** deals with the physical Father to Son relationship, but **teknon** implies a bond of love between Parent and Child.

**Teknon** can also be used to describe an adopted child. When Paul wrote of Timothy, his “son in the Lord” he said:

**Greek Emphasis** 1 Corinthians 4:17 For this cause have I sent unto you **Timotheus, who is my beloved son (teknon)**, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

Paul didn't use **huios** here because Timothy wasn't actually his direct descendant. Timothy was, in fact, his *adopted son* or his *son in the Lord*. There was a bond of love between the two that led Timothy to want to please his father in the faith.

Can you see this now? When the Father of the parable said:

**FOCAL** Matthew 21:28 ... **Son<sup>1</sup>**, go work today in my vineyard ...

This wasn't a *legal command between parent and child*. This was a *command of Love*. It was as if the Father was saying, “I love you, and continue to love you. You were imprinted on My heart before you were ever born. From the time you were conceived until now I have always provided your needs. My command is borne of Love. Do this, dear Son, dear **Teknon**, for this is what is best for the Family of Whom I am Head”.

Listen dear One – God called you to salvation, saved you

with His own precious Blood. His love for you cannot be diminished. His commands are commands of love, not orders from a Heavenly Dictator.

**Supporting Galatians 4:28** Now we, brethren, **as Isaac was, are the children (teknon) of promise.**

We are **children of the promise**. God promised Abraham a son, a child to love. Abraham tried to fulfill God's promise by his works. He went in to Hagar and had a child – Ishmael – a child born to his wife's slave. But the child of the slave was not to be the child of promise. God does not require our works to fulfill His promises. He promised Abraham a child. God Himself would keep that promise.

We are children of the promise, children of love. God loved us, and saved us. The Eternal God calls us “Son”, and loves us, and has prepared an inheritance for us. It is this wonderful Father God Who tells us:

**FOCAL Matthew 21:28** ... **Son<sup>1</sup>, go<sup>3</sup> work<sup>4</sup> today in my vineyard ...**

What a joy that we – mere mortals – have been invited to

3 G5217, ὑπάγω, hupagō, *hoop-ag'-o*, From G5259 and G71; to *lead* (oneself) *under*, that is, *withdraw* or *retire* (as if *sinking* out of sight), literally or figuratively: - depart, get hence, go (a-) way. Present Active Imperative.

4 G2038, ἐργάζομαι, ergazomai, *er-gad'-zom-ahee*, Middle voice from G2041; to *toil* (as a task, occupation, etc.), (by implication) *effect*, *be engaged in* or *with*, etc.: - commit, do, labor for, minister about, trade (by), work. Present Middle Imperative.

work in the Father's Vineyard. His command is **Go work today**. The word **go** is a Greek word that actually means “**lead**” or “**keep on leading**”. This is a *command* in the Greek text. Literally the Father tells the sons, “**keep on leading in the work of My vineyard**”. A sense of urgency is transmitted when the Father adds the word “**today**” - not tomorrow, but *right now*. Every Christian, saved by faith in Christ, is called to *be diligent in service of the Lord*. We are told in another place:

**Supporting Ephesians 5:15-17** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, (16) **Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (17) Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord [is].**

What did the Father tell His sons? “**Keep on leading in the work of My Vineyard**”. It is God's Vineyard, but if God is our Father it is also our Vineyard. A loving Father tells His Sons, “**Go today, work in My vineyard**”.

**a. One Son Said “No”, But Later Repented - And Received A Blessing**

**FOCAL Matthew 21:28-29** But what think ye? **A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. (29) He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented<sup>5</sup>, and went.**

5 3338 metamellomai met-am-el'-lom-ahee, from 3326 and the middle voice of 3199; to care afterwards, i.e. regret:--repent (self). see GREEK for 3326,

The first Son initially responded to the Father by saying, “**I will not go**”. He was not respectful, but neither was he a hypocrite. He refused to go as the Lord willed, preferring instead to stay in the comfort of his own house. Yet later that Son **repented**. The word “**repented**” is not truly the best translation. The word “**repent**” is usually the Greek **metanoeo**, which means “**to change the mind**”. Here's an example of its use:

**Greek Emphasis** Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**<sup>6</sup>, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Our focal text doesn't use **metanoeo**, but instead uses the Greek **metamellomai**. What's the difference? **Metanoeo** is used for the unbeliever. **Repent, change your mind from your old way of life and turn to Jesus as Savior**. **Metamellomai** is used not for the unbeliever, *but for the believer*. This is a Son of God who changed his ways. The word **metamellomai** literally means **to care afterwards**, to regret, **to feel sorry for**. This man initially told his Father “No, I'll not go”, but later – loving his Father – he regretted his action and went anyway.

---

see GREEK for 3199, Morphology: V-AOP-NSM, Tense: Aorist, Voice: passive depOnent, Mood: Participle, Case: Nominative, Number: Singular, Gender: Masculine

6 Strong's: G3340, 3340 metanoeo met-an-o-eh'-o, from 3326 and 3539; to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction):--repent. see GREEK for 3326, see GREEK for 3539, Morphology: V-AAM-2P, Tense: Aorist, Voice: Active Mood: iMperative Person: second Number: Plural

As Christians we have all, at one time or another, said “I will not go” to the Father. When we reject the will of God we have used many excuses. Sometimes we are – quite frankly – just lazy! We are comfortable where we are. We've been in a certain place for so long that paralysis has set in. We do not want to get out of our “comfort zone”. It is work to toil in the Vineyards of the Lord. It is hot in the arbor, uncomfortable. You may have to work alongside of other laborers, unfamiliar people. Yet God has told you “**go work today**”. We initially say “No, I'll not go”, but we later – because we love our Father – go into the fields and work. If you love your Heavenly Father then you will work where He has told you to work. This has nothing to do with the Pastor, the Deacons, nor anyone else in the field. The Father bids you “Go”. If you love Him you will “Go”. We are told in the **Great Commission**:

**Supporting** Matthew 28:19-20 **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.**

This is not a command given to a common laborer, but *to a child of God*. The Lord – our Heavenly Father - has commanded us to **Go today, toil, lead in the labor**. Do it for Him. He gave you so much when He saved you – serve Him!

Not too long ago I saw a woman who visited our Church for some time, and she's now a member of another local Church. I praise God for that – but I don't praise God for her reasoning. This lady told me that she joined her local Church “because my son liked it best there – he had more little friends to play with”. I know another lady who joined another local Church because she liked their songbook better than the songbook we use. Dear friends, these things ought not to be. The local Church is not a Wal-Mart or a Sears, some department store that you shop from place to place until you're satisfied. The local Church is a place where like minded Sons of God gather together to work the fields of the Lord. We must work the fields because the Father Who loves us so has bid us to do so.

The Son must also work the field when the Father says because – have you ever thought of this? - *the Father's Vineyard also belongs to the sons*. If the Vineyard is profitable, the Sons will be blessed. If the Vineyard fails or falls short, then the whole family will suffer. If God is calling you to work His fields – and He is if you're saved by faith in Christ – then it is in your best interests to work this field. If God calls you to swing a hammer or work a saw as the Sunday School annex is being build, if you fail to do it you're only hurting yourself. If God tell you to teach in the Sunday School or the Vacation Bible School and you refuse to do so you are hurting yourselves. If God touches your hearts to support a prayer ministry, to invite a neighbor to Church or share the Gospel with them, to visit the sick or elderly, to operate a soup kitchen, to distribute literature, or to encourage your Pastor and Deacons as they labor and

you refuse to do it – then you are hurting yourselves.

### **b. One Son Said “I'll Go”, But Did Nothing - And As A Result Lost A Blessing**

**FOCAL** Matthew 21:30-31 And {the Father} came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, **I go, sir: and went not.** (31) Whether of them twain did the will of his father?

**Supporting** James 4:17 Therefore **to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.**

It is sinful to know that God is calling you to do a thing – then to fail to do it. There was an old saying that my mother used to use, and it was “**You'd cut off your nose to spite your face**”. What she was saying was “**Your actions are hurting you more than they are hurting me**”. The same is true of the Vineyards of God. What a joy to go outside of our comfort zone and serve the Father as He has commanded. We did not know that we could build until we tried – and now look at how God has blessed. Do you see a *deficiency in the Church*? Then you see it because God is telling you, “**Go today, work in My Vineyards**”. Don't look for a problem – look to God for the solution. You have a spiritual gift. The Bible says:

**Supporting** 1 Corinthians 12:7-14 **But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. (8) For to one is given by the Spirit the**

word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; (9) To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; (10) To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another [divers] kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: (11) But **all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.** (12) **For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also [is] Christ.** (13) **For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.** (14) **For the body is not one member, but many.**

If you see a deficiency in the local Church don't complain – go to work. Seek to fix it. Look to your spiritual gifts. God has given this Church everything it needs to reach the world for Christ. It is we who must go to work.

The second Son was told the same thing as the first. Whereas the first Son was initially disrespectful, but later was sorry for his refusal, the second Son was quite different. This young man said, **“I'll be glad to go, Sir!”**

This boy even called his Father “Sir” - he was very respectful. And yet he did not go.

God does not want our *lip service* – so many people profess to know Him as Savior and yet they do nothing with that profession. You do not do the will of the Father if you do not go today and work. *Love is an action verb.* When we say **God is love (1 John 4:16)** we are not saying that He is merely sappy sentimentality. Love is not some cute Internet poem, some sappy sweet bit of homespun wisdom. Love is actually an action. The Bible tells us:

**Supporting 1 John 4:7-9 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (8) He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (9) In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.**

How do we know that God is love? Because **God sent His only Begotten Son (huios) into the world to die for you, so that you could become the adopted Son (teknon) of God.** Jesus didn't just sit up in Heaven and say, “I love you, I love you, I love you”. No! He accepted the command of the Father, came to this earth, came to toil in the Father's Vineyards, and gave Himself up for you and for me. Because Jesus Christ was *love in*

*action* He brought rich blessing to the whole of the Family of God.

Unless the Sons of God work the Vineyard, there will be no growth. We may say “I’ll go” and yet refuse to go. Yet I guarantee you, if you don’t go, Satan’s worms will! Every time a Son of God refuses to work the vineyard Satan sends his emissaries into the field. A well worked field is free of worms and weeds – it is the untended Garden that is quickly overrun. The destitute state of America today is not Satan’s fault. He’s doing his job, and whipping the Church that will not work. The Sons of God have refused to work the Father’s Vineyard, and as a result *weeds have taken root*. We hurt ourselves when we refuse to work for the Lord. Adam brought a terrible curse on all creation when he disobeyed the Father. We bring a curse into our own world when we say “I’ll go” but refuse to go. Unless the Church of Jesus Christ stand on the Word of God and do the things that God has commanded we shall continue to spiral downward in America.

Revival will begin with the Church. As Peter said:

**Supporting** 1 Peter 4:17 For **the time [is come] that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if [it] first [begin] at us, what shall the end [be] of them that obey not the gospel of God?**

God does not ask you “What is your neighbor doing? How is your neighbor serving Me?” The Lord asks,

“What are you doing? How are you serving Me?” When each of us begins to serve God with a whole heart gladly we will see America turned upside down. It begins with us.

## **2. The Two Sons of the Home**

### **b. The Prodigal Son**

**Illustrate** Years ago the only real ride that people flocked to was the so called *merry go round*. This mechanical wheel was a hit with both the young and the old. The earliest merry go rounds were actually works of art. The horses and other animals that you rode were meticulously hand carved and hand painted. Old timey merry go round horses often bring a great deal of money at auctions. They were beautiful pieces of equipment that were fun to ride.

If you ever rode on the old time merry go round, you knew about the “brass ring”. You see, there was a brass ring that was hung on a hook on a post just out of reach of the average rider. If you could catch the brass ring while the ride was going the operator would give you another free ride for your trouble. Some children would try and stand in the stirrups, reaching far out to get hold of the brass ring. Those who kept their eyes on the brass ring rarely enjoyed the ride. Some even got hurt when they leaned out too far, falling off or being hit by the pole that held the ring. The brass ring was a tradition that ceased as merry go round operators found themselves embroiled in lawsuits. The ring just wasn’t worth it!

The Christian saved by faith in Christ should be one of the most joyous people on the planet earth. God saved you and adopted you into His family when you called

upon the Name of the Lord. The Bible says:

**Supporting Romans 8:15-16 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (16) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:**

If you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ then you are a child of God, adopted into His Family. This is true of every Christian. Every believer should be happy and living in the power of God's Spirit. Every Christian should be asking themselves “how can I be Jesus to someone today?” Rather than striving to grab the “brass ring” of life, rather than constantly chasing silver and gold, we should be chasing the righteousness of God in Christ. We should be striving – through study of the Word and prayer – to be more like our Big Brother Jesus. Yet sometimes as believers we find ourselves like the Prodigal Son. We take all of that which God has given us and head out into the world and into worldliness.

I want you to notice that the parable of the prodigal son is wonderful on several levels. Though the King James text in **Matthew 21:28** and **Luke 15:11** start out:

**Greek Emphasis Luke 15:11-12 And he said, A certain man had two sons<sup>7</sup>:**

7 G5207, υἱός, uihos, *hwee-os'*, Apparently a primary word; a “son” (sometimes of animals), used very widely of immediate, remote or figurative kinship: - child, foal, son.

**Greek Emphasis Matthew 21:28-31 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons<sup>8</sup>:**

There are two words used in the Greek for “son” - **teknon** and **huios** (pronounced hwee-os'). The word **teknon** is used in the Matthew parable, but the word **huios** is used in the parable of the Prodigal Son. A different word is used in this parable because the Lord is emphasizing *the inheritance of the Kingdom*.

Every believer in Christ has been given a great inheritance. When I say this so many of you begin to think of *heaven and the afterlife*. Yet the Bible is clear that every believer *has already received an inheritance* – it's just that most of us don't realize it. Like the Prodigal Son we're so busy grubbing after the brass ring of money, power, or fame, that we see nothing of that which we have already received. We are told in another place:

**Supporting Ephesians 1:11-12 In {Jesus} we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: (12) That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.**

Your inheritance as believers is to be **to the praise of**

8 G5043, τέκνον, teknon, *tek'-non*, From the base of G5098; a *child* (as *produced*): - child, daughter, son.

His glory. To be a blessing to the Lord Who saved you.

**Supporting** Ephesians 1:13-14 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, **ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

Jesus Christ has given us God the Holy Spirit. This Spirit is the *down payment on our future Heavenly inheritance.*

**Supporting** Ephesians 1:17-18 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: (18) **The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,**

You who are believers are *the Lord's inheritance*. So you as Sons of God (1) have a *present inheritance*, (2) have a *future inheritance*, and (3) *are an inheritance of Christ*. There is one *key thing* about inheritances, though. If you are to enjoy it you *must stay close to home*.

**FOCAL** Luke 15:11-12 And he said, A certain man had two sons: (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.**

The Prodigal or wandering Son was *still a son*, though he wandered from his Father. He came to his Father and said, “**give me the portion of goods that falleth to me**”. This is very interesting, because an inheritance is usually not surrendered *until the parent dies*. In the ancient world the *first born* child would divide the inheritance as he saw fit after his Father died. Yet in this text we read:

**FOCAL** Luke 15:11-12 And he said, A certain man had two sons: (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.**

When the Father was approached He **divided unto them his living**. Both children were given their inheritance. The Prodigal Son took his inheritance and went out into the world, wasting what was given him.

**FOCAL** Luke 15:13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and **there wasted<sup>9</sup> his substance with riotous<sup>10</sup> living.**

9 Strong's: G1287, 1287 diaskorpizo dee-as-kor-pid'-zo, from 1223 and 4650; to dissipate, i.e. (genitive case) to rout or separate; specially, to winnow; figuratively, to squander:--disperse, scatter (abroad), strew, waste. see GREEK for 1223 see GREEK for 4650, Morphology: V-AAI-3S, Tense: Aorist, Voice: Active, Mood: Indicative, Person: third, Number: Singular

10 Strong's: G811, 811 asotos as-o'-toce, adverb from the same as 810;

The Prodigal Son took the inheritance that was given him and **wasted his substance with riotous living**. This sentence tells you what the Lord thought of the actions of the Prodigal – **he squandered or scattered his inheritance through an empty way of life**. How sad that a Son of God will lose the blessings that God has given him. The Lord has given us so much – an assurance of salvation, a faith that will overcome the world, joy beyond measure, a perfect peace that passes all understanding. Yet these things are lost when we wander away from His presence.

**FOCAL** Luke 15:14-16 **And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (15) And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (16) And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.**

When a Son of God wanders away from God, he loses the blessing of union with God. He does not lose his position. Please note that this Son was *still a Son*, though he wandered away from his Father. You wander away from God and you're still a Son. The Bible teaches us that we who believe are **kept by the power of God**.

**Supporting** 1 Peter 1:3-5 **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us**

---

dissolutely:--riotous. see GREEK for 810, Morphology: ADV, ADVerb or adverb and particle combined

**again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."**

The Son in the parable of the Prodigal Son *did not cease to be a Son*. He was still in the family, though he was suffering in famine with the rest of the world. The Christian, saved by faith and not by his works:

**Supporting** Ephesians 2:8-9 **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

*cannot be lost by his works*. You were not born into the Family of God by your works, but were born again of the Spirit of God. Just as the Prodigal Son had nothing to do with his birth:

**Supporting** 2 Timothy 1:9 **"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world**

**began"**

You who believe *had nothing to do with your New Birth*. You asked God for it believing on Jesus – trusting His promise – but did absolutely nothing to effect it. The Prodigal Son – like the Prodigal Christian – still is a member of the Family. However you need to notice this:

**FOCAL** Luke 15:14-16 And **when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (15) And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country;** and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (16) And **he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.**

If you by sin walk away from fellowship with the Father, when the **famine comes on the land** you can expect to suffer *in exactly the same way that all unbelievers suffer*. Here this boy is a member of a great Family. Famine hits. What does he do? He **joins himself to a citizen of that country**. Rather than go back home where he belongs he turns to the same resources the non-family world has. How pitiful! How sad! How utterly unnecessary! This young man is **eating the wormy slop that the filthy hogs were eating**. His belly was empty, and **no man gave unto him**.

This reminds me of another young man named **Joseph**

who trusted the Lord no matter what. When his own family members cast him into a pit and sold him into slavery, Joseph was forcibly removed from his family. Yet he kept his eyes and his relationship with his Heavenly Father very real. When famine hit the land the Lord, continually watching over Joseph, kept His Son's belly filled. Joseph not only *did not eat the husks of the hogs*, he became the means by which Egypt and his own lying brothers would be kept alive during the famine. God has told His Sons that if they would stay close to Him that:

**Supporting** Job 5:20-26 **In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.** (21) Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. (22) At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. (23) For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. (24) And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle [shall be] in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin. (25) Thou shalt know also that thy seed [shall be] great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth. (26) Thou shalt come to [thy] grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

If this young man had stayed with his Father he would be fine. Instead he finds himself alone, eating hog swill, and barely staying alive. The young man finally comes to his senses:

**FOCAL** Luke 15:17-19 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! (18) I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,** (19) And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

What does the Christian lose when he moves into carnality? He has a **disturbed and distraught mind**. “My Father's hired servants are eating better than this. What have I done!” The backslidden Christian loses all self worth. “I am no more worthy to be called thy Son – just treat me like a hireling!” The backslidden Christian experiences **disease, depression, disgrace, defilement**. Light has been extinguished, and now he walks in darkness like the rest of the world. How pitiful, how pitiful the believer who wallows in sin.

What happens next in this wonderful parable never ceases to bring tears to my eyes. We read:

**FOCAL** Luke 15:20-24 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.** (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. (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: (23) And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill [it]; and let us eat, and be merry: (24) For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

The Father had been waiting for His Son to come home. Every day He watched, hoping that today the Son would come to his senses. **When the Prodigal Son was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him.** Though the Son began his rehearsed speech (and how many times do you think he rehearsed it before he got home) “I am no more worthy to be called thy Son”, the Father would hear none of it. “Get the best robes, replace this tattered clothing. Give My Son a ring for his hand, shoes for his feet, food for his stomach. My Son was dead – fallen into carnality – but now he lives once more!”

### **b. The Angry and Judgmental Son**

What a joy when a Christian returns to his Father. It is a joy to him, a joy to the Father, a celebration throughout all Heaven. But *one person* failed to celebrate when the Prodigal came home. Who was that? We read:

**FOCAL** Luke 15:28-32 **And {the second son} was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him.**

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

I encourage you to stay away from the judgmental and self righteous Sons of God, these *joys of delight*. The self righteous are just as bad as the Prodigal, because they never attribute their blessings to the freedom of the Father's Grace. The Father gave both Sons their inheritance at the very beginning. The Prodigal wasted his inheritance, whereas the self righteous Son didn't. Yet both were blessed because of their relationship to the Father.

I really don't know who is the worst off in this parable, the Prodigal or the Proudful. The Prodigal, though he caused himself great suffering and lost many blessings, did repent in the end and receive greater Grace. The Proudful, on the other hand, denied himself the joy of the reunion party while he murmured and complained. The warning of:

**Supporting Romans 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.**

It is wise for every Son of God to remember that we have what we have because of Grace. None of us are more special than the other. We are all, like the Prodigal Son, liable to fall if we do not look to our relationship with the Lord. None of us have earned nor deserved the blessings we have. We are blessed because Jesus Christ chose to bless us. If He in His great love had not given Himself for us, none of us would be born again, none of us would be in the Family of God.

**Supporting John 14:19 ... because I live, ye shall live also.**

We are what we are because of Jesus Christ. When a brother or a sister wanders from the Family, encourage them to return. When they return be careful to rejoice with the Father. In the words of the song:

**Oh how He loves you,  
Oh how He loves me,  
Oh how He loves you and me.**

His love is enough for us all. Encourage one another to stay close to home. Warns those who stray that they are straying from happiness when they stray from the Father.

Love one another with a fervent heart.

**Supporting 1 Peter 1:22-25** Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto **unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently: (23) Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God,** which liveth and abideth for ever. (24) For all flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: (25) But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

May God touch your hearts with these words.

