

## GOOD THINGS ABOUT THE LOST BOY\*

TEXT: Luke 15:11-24

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Luke 15 is a very familiar chapter in the Bible.
  - a) Jesus' response to the criticism of the Pharisees and scribes.
  - b) "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them!"
  - c) He explains why he eats with sinners in this parable.
  - d) The lost things increase in importance as the parable goes on.
    - 1) Sheep (valuable, but not as valuable as a coin).
    - 2) Coin (more valuable than a sheep, but as precious as a son).
    - 3) Son (human being, the highest of God's creation, The most valuable of all because of his eternal soul!)
2. It is one parable that is naturally divided into three parts:
  - a) Lost sheep
  - b) Lost coin
  - c) Lost boy
3. Good way to remember it is three "S" sheep, silver, son.
4. We have all heard many lessons on the so-called "prodigal" son.
5. There is no place in the bible where he is called such. The closest we can get is the NKJV translation of verse 13, "Wasted his possessions with *prodigal* living."
6. We rarely hear anything positive about this young man.

### I. PLENTY OF NEGATIVE THINGS WE CAN SAY ABOUT HIM:

A. He was selfish:

- 1) Verse 12: "I want what's mine!"
- 2) It's all about me!
- 3) I am the most important person on the planet.
- 4) Narcissism is not new is it?
- 5) 2 Timothy 3:1-5 "*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come for men will be: lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*"
- 6) Hard to overcome, we are born with it: Have you ever seen an unselfish baby? (K. Parker)

#### 7) Good example of something with we are born that we must be taught to undo!

B. He was sinful: Verse 13

- 1) Riotous KJV; Wild NIV; Loose NASV; Reckless TEV; Dissolute NRSV; Wasteful;
- 2) This wild sinful life took him to a far country. It always will.
  - a) Stories about meth addiction in local paper.
  - b) Started out as one experiment and led to destroyed life!
  - c) Isaiah 59:1-2, Sin separated him from his father.
- 3) Sinful, riotous, rebellious living will always:
  - a) Take us farther than we wanted to go;
  - b) Keep us longer than we wanted to stay;
  - c) Cost us more than we intended to pay;

- 4) He never intended to wind up in the hog pen! Farther down than he ever planned to be!
- 5) He probably never intended to be totally cut off from his father, so far away from home, for so long a period of time, that he was presumed to be dead! (Verse 24).
- 6) He never intended to be broke! (vs.12; vss. 14-16)

C. He was starved: Verses 14-16 “No one **gave** him anything!” (vs. 16)

- 1) He was willing to eat hog slop!
- 2) He was willing to work for a Gentile!
- 3) He was willing to be in the same vicinity working daily with swine.
- 4) The ultimate unclean animal for a Jewish boy!
- 5) Whose fault was it that he was down and out?!

## II. POSITIVE THINGS WE CAN SAY ABOUT HIM:

A. He blamed no one else for his troubles!

- 1) Gen 3:12 "The woman whom **You** gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."
- 2) Gen. 3:13 “The woman said, the serpent deceived me, and I ate.” (Devil made me do it)!
- 3) He didn’t blame his older brother. “bully me and take my lunch, you favored him etc”
- 4) He didn’t blame his parents or the way he was raised.
- 5) He didn’t blame the system or society!
- 6) He didn’t blame God! We all need to look inside ourselves and try to achieve that level of maturity where we don’t blame everyone else for our failures!
- 7) He simply said “*I have sinned*” (Verse 18)!
- 8) The author of Lamentations did not blame God for the devastation and captivity: 587 or 586 B.C
  - a) Lam 1:8 Jerusalem has sinned gravely, therefore she has become vile.
  - b) Lam 1:9 She did not consider her destiny; therefore her collapse was awesome.
  - c) Lam 1:18 "The LORD is righteous, for we rebelled against His commandment.
  - d) Lam 3:42 "We have sinned and rebelled.
  - e) Lam 4:12-13 No one anywhere, not even rulers of foreign nations, believed that any invader could enter Jerusalem's gates. But it happened, because her prophets sinned and her priests were guilty.
  - f) Lam 5:16 We sinned, and now we are doomed.

B. He didn’t beg. ***He began to be in want. He was left without a thing, in need*** vs. 15!

- 1) He worked! (**Got a card board sign and stood on the Exit ramp begging**).
- 2) He considered no job to be beneath him!
- 3) He worked at what he could find!
- 4) We have accounts of beggars in the Bible, but who were they?
  - a) Luke 16:20-22 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who a) **was laid at his gate**, b) **desiring to be fed** with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. The c) **dogs came and licked his sores**. He was apparently sick and lame and not able to work, not able to feed himself or even to shoo away the dogs!
  - b) Mark 6:56 Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.
  - c) John 9:8 Those who had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat & begged?"
  - d) Acts 3:2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple , to ask alms from those who entered the temple;

- 5) He didn't beg because he was not lame or blind, he was able to work!
  - a) 1 Thess 4:11-12 Aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.
  - b) 2 Thess 3:10-12 If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.
  - c) For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all.
  - d) Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.
  - e) Eph 4:28-29 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

C. He came to himself. verse 17: He corrected his thinking;

- 1) He started thinking as he should!
- 2) He remembered what he had been taught!
- 3) Do you ever asked yourself, "What was I thinking?!"

D. He said "*I am sorry*" verse 18:

- 1) So many broken things in our lives can be mended by simply saying "I am sorry"!
- 2) "I have sinned, can I come home?"

E. He "came forward." Verse 20 He arose and came! (Got up and went)!

- 1) We invite people to come forward, all the time and have seen many do so over the years.
- 2) It is a very good thing when one realizes the need to publicly repent!
- 3) It is equally a good thing when one "comes forward" and says "*I need help, I need prayers, I need hugs, I need love!*"

**III. HIS FATHER'S RESPONSE:** Had compassion, Ran to him, Fell on his neck, Kissed him, **Put a robe on him** , **A ring on his hand** (This returns him to the standing of the son of a respected man in the community) , **Shoes on his feet**, **Killed a fatted calf**, **Made a feast**, Made merry, Celebrated the return of a lost son, and the resurrection of one who was presumed dead!

### CONCLUSION:

1. The son in the story is you and me.
  - a) There is plenty of bad we can say about us.
  - b) There is also good we can say about us.
  - c) We have all sinned
  - e) Sin has taken us farther than we wanted to go, kept us longer than we meant to stay and cost us more than we thought it would.
  - f) Some of us have come to ourselves.
  - g) Admitted that we are to blame for our own predicaments.
  - h) Said "I am sorry" and got up and went back home to the Father.
2. The Father in this story is God. He is watching for us on the horizon. He will run to meet us. He will clothe us with His righteousness and love! He will welcome us home and forgive us! He will reward us with eternal life!

(\*The idea to write a sermon about this topic came from Keith Parker)

