

the parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-24



Jesus continued:

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, "Father, give me my share of the estate." So he divided his property between them.

Jesus' story of the prodigal—or lost—son is nearly 2000 years old; however, its truth is timeless. Everyone who reads this tract can relate to the story in some way. The young son's troubles began as most of our troubles do—with a **THOUGHT**.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.



The young son's lustful thoughts led to a fateful ACTION. Are there thoughts that you're contemplating now that could lead you to "a distant country"?

After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.



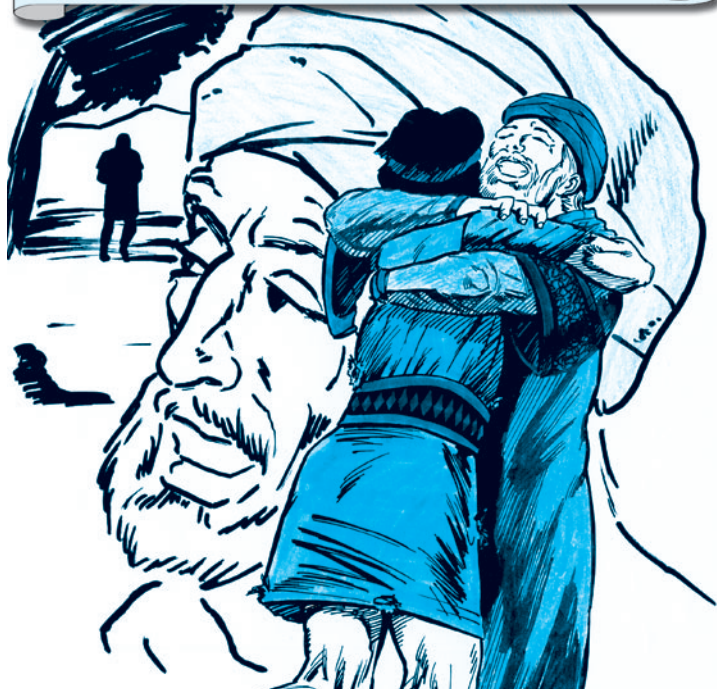
His actions led to **HABITS** that became a **LIFESTYLE**; he had to make a *choice* weighing the **CONSEQUENCES** of his lifestyle. What choices are you facing today and what are their consequences?

When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.” So he got up and went to his father.



The young man was confronted by a DESTINY that started from a *thought* that led to an *action*, becoming a *habit* that grew into a *lifestyle*. But just as bad thoughts began his problems, his right thoughts (“he came to his senses”) got him on the literal road to recovery. He *chose* a new DESTINY!

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.



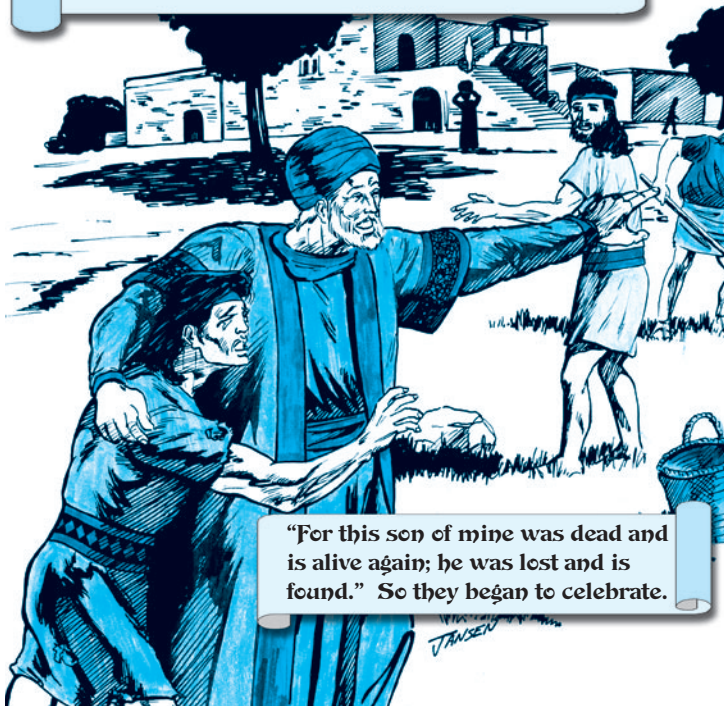
He was **ACCOUNTABLE** for his wrong decision, not blaming anyone or anything else. And he was **ACCEPTED** by the father. Although your earthly father might be dead, out of your life or uncaring, your **HEAVENLY** Father accepts you as you are if you'll only go to Him **HUMBLY** and—

The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”



—just as the young son did, TELL the Father that you were wrong and REPENT (turn away) from the wrong things you have done.

But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate.”



“For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate.

No matter how far you have fallen, the Father can RESTORE you!
And there will be CELEBRATION!

Jesus told this story not only for the people of His day but for you and me as well. He wants to forgive us and to *celebrate* with us in our new life. Will you choose to turn to the Father today?

A **THOUGHT** produces an **ACTION** that leads to a **HABIT** that can become a **LIFESTYLE** and reap a **DESTINY**.

Evil thoughts produce an evil destiny, but good thoughts can reverse and rescind your present destiny if you will allow them to become good actions and good habits.

Don't be afraid to **START** right now! Pray to your Heavenly Father something like this:

Dear Father, forgive me for all I have done that has not only hurt myself, my family and others, but has been sin against You. I receive the greatest gift of all, Your Son Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and I choose to follow Him instead of my old ways. Fill me with Your Spirit and help me to walk according to Your ways. In Jesus' Name, I pray. Amen.