

# LUKE 15:11-32

**11** Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

**13** “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. **14** After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. **16** He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

**17** “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! **18** I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ **20** So he got up and went to his father.

“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.

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

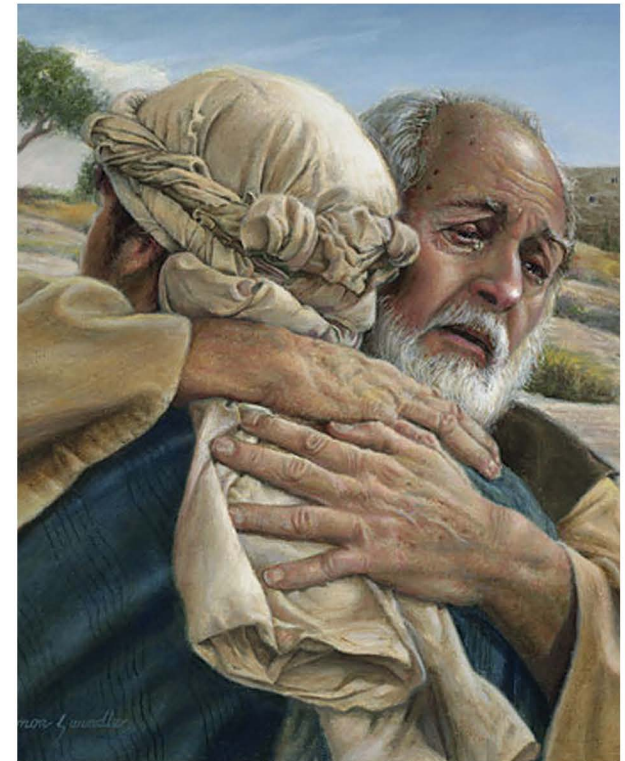
**22** “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. **24** For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

**25** “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. **27** ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

**28** “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. **29** But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been

slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. **30** But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

**31** “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. **32** But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”



This parable reveals our heavenly Father's mercy, grace, and desire for a relationship, but it also shows two sons who were each lost in their own way. The youngest son was lost in sin; the oldest son was lost in self-righteousness. The oldest son represented the Pharisees and Scribes. They viewed the Law as a cold-hearted transaction where God would deem them righteous in exchange for their obedience. There was no genuine love for the Lord. The Pharisees and Scribes understood the workings of the Law, but they failed to grasp its purpose.

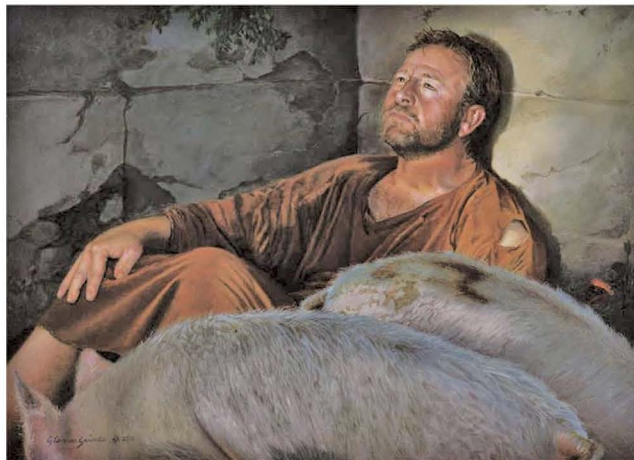
At its core, the Law was about relationships and love. It revolved around loving God and loving people. That is why Jesus said all the law and the prophets hung on two commandments: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself [Matthew 22:37-40].

The main purpose of this parable was to rebuke legalism. It does not matter how well someone obeys the Law. If they do it from a self-righteous attitude, it is a sin. Our love for the Lord should be what motivates our obedience.

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**His father saw him, and had compassion, and ran.** "The prodigal son was resolved to come, yet he was half-afraid. But we read that his father ran. Slow are the steps of repentance, but swift are the feet of forgiveness. God can run where we can scarcely limp, and if we are limping toward him, he will run toward us. Though the father was out of breath, he was not out of love." - C.H. Spurgeon

"We want to be saved from our misery, but not from our sin. We want to sin without misery, just as the prodigal son wanted inheritance without the father. The foremost spiritual law of the physical universe is that this hope can never be realized. Sin always accompanies misery. There is no victimless crime, and all creation is subject to decay because of humanity's rebellion from God." - R.C. Sproul



**#14**

## **The Prodigal Son**

