

=THE PARABLES=

Lesson 2

The Prodigal Son

POINT OF CONTACT: You could act out the story of the prodigal son. Another point of contact would be to tell of somebody who ran away from home. Maybe you as a child ran away from home, and you could recount this to the pupils. Maybe you could ask them if any of them ever tried running away from home.

AIM: to teach my pupils the exact teaching of the parable of the prodigal son, as taught in Luke 15:11-32.

INTRODUCTION: There are three main divisions in this lessons: (1) Practical lessons; (2) The prodigal son picturing a lost sinner; and (3) The prodigal son picturing the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us notice these three divisions.

I. THE PRACTICAL LESSONS. Luke 15:12-16.

1. Verse 12. Notice the story starts off in Luke 15:12, "And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me...." Selfishness is the start of so many sins, especially backsliding.
2. Verses 13 and 14. The prodigal son did fine until he had spent all. This is the way the world is. As long as you have something to spend, you can be happy, temporarily so; but when you have spent all, there is no place to go. True friends are Christian friends.
3. Verses 15 and 16. Picture this fellow. He is not eating hog food. He is not even eating the corn. He is eating the husks off the corn. Even the hogs eat better than this. (Stress here for a while the way sin leaves a person. You might get some advertisements from the newspapers or magazines concerning sin. Compare them with this.)
4. Verse 16. Notice the words, "...and no man gave unto him." Worldly friends are this way. Most of the benevolent works of the world were founded by churches and God's people. When people are in need today, they usually go to a preacher or a church. The most liberal, generous people in the world and the most unselfish people in the world are God's people.

II. THE PRODIGAL SON PICTURING A LOST SINNER. Luke 15:12-23.

1. Verses 12 and 13. These verses picture Adam in the Garden of Eden representing the human race, leaving the fellowship of the Father and being separated from the Father. In other words, these verses picture the Fall.
2. Verses 14 through 16. These verses picture the curse that came upon man because of the Fall. Notice that he spent all, he was in want, and he ate with the hogs. Man by nature is a sinner and will spend eternity without God unless he returns to the Father by way of Jesus Christ.
3. Verse 16b. Notice the words, "...and no man gave unto him." This pictures the fact that man cannot save us. The only salvation we have is to return to the Father through His Son, Jesus.
4. Verse 17. "And when he came to himself...." Here we find the type of a sinner about to come to Jesus Christ. He comes to himself. He realizes his own need. He realizes that no man can save him and that he cannot save himself. For the first time in his life, good sense takes hold of him, and he realizes his only hope is salvation through Jesus Christ.
5. Verse 18. "I will arise and go to my father...." Notice here the repentance and faith. He comes from the hog pen and comes toward his father. He feels his own unworthiness. Especially is this shown in verses 18 and 19.
6. Verse 20. Notice that the father receives him. John 6:37 would be an appropriate verse here. This verse pictures the Father's desire to receive all who come the proper way.
7. Verse 22a. Notice the robe given by the father. This pictures the robe of righteousness given to every person who comes to God by Jesus Christ. This robe was first shown to us in Genesis 3:21 when God made a coat of skins to cover Adam and Eve.
8. Verse 22b. Notice the ring on his hand. A ring in the Bible is a symbol of assurance and love. As soon as we are saved, God wants to assure us of our position in Him. This ring represents assurance of salvation.

9. Verse 22c. Notice the words, "...and shoes on his feet." God desires for us to have shoes. We find in Ephesians 6:15 that shoes represent the preparation of the Gospel of peace. God wants us to go and reach others for Himself as soon as we are saved. The shoes represent the fact that we are to go and witness to others about Christ.
10. Verse 23. It is interesting here that the death of an animal is involved. I think the Lord is simply showing that there must be blood shed before a complete reconciliation can be made between the Father and the wayward child. At least we do know that only through Christ's death on the cross as our substitutionary Lamb can we come back to the Father.
11. Verse 23b, "...let us eat...." Once a person gets to the Father, there are other things he is to do. The eating here represents feasting upon the Word of God. We are to eat to stay strong as Christians.
12. Verse 23c, "...and be merry." Notice the joy that God gives to people if they are willing to come back to Him and feast upon His Word.

III. THE PRODIGAL SON PICTURING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. Luke 15:11-24.

1. Verse 11, "...A certain man had two sons." Notice there are three involved here--a picture of the Trinity.
2. Verse 13a, "And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey...." Here is a picture of Jesus Christ leaving Heaven.
3. Verse 13b, "...into a far country...." This pictures Jesus coming to earth to save us.
4. Verse 13c, "...and there wasted his substance with riotous living." When Jesus came to the far country, though He was not a sinner Himself, He did become sin for us, and He took upon Himself our sin.
5. Verse 14a, "And when he had spent all...." Jesus gave His all for us. We sing the song, "Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe." This verse pictures Jesus dying for us.
6. Verse 18, "I will arise...." Here is the resurrection of Jesus Christ pictured beautifully.
7. Verse 18b, "...and go to my father...." Here is a picture of Jesus Christ ascending back to the Father.
8. Verse 20. Notice the welcome that the father gave the son. What a tremendous reunion it must have been in Heaven when Jesus was reunited with the Father!
9. Verse 24. Here is the reason: Jesus was dead and is alive again!

CONCLUSION: Stress to the pupils the importance of salvation. See if there are any unsaved in the class. If so, bring them to Christ. If there are those who are saved and not baptized, lead them to confess Christ publicly by baptism. Bring them down the aisle in the service this Sunday morning.