

Parables of Jesus **The Wilfully Lost Son!** Albert Fairweather

A 'parable' is a story told to illustrate a spiritual truth. This one illustrates God's love for the wilfully lost! He wants us to become aware that we have made wrong choices. It shows that Jesus is still there to help us get back on track and to find a fulfilling life. This is what He said:

"A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me'. So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal (wasteful) living" (read Luke 15:11-24).

In the rest of the parable, we see that this young man spent all his money, probably on girls and grog, and ended up feeding pigs, and was so hungry he would even eat their food! He reached a point where he realised he had acted foolishly, and remembered how good it was at home. It says that *"He came to himself; he realised that his fathers hired hands were better off than he was.*

This was the turning point in his life. He said *"I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants"*. The wonderful thing was that his father was watching for him, and saw him a great way off, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

The son made a full confession to his father of his folly, but the father said to his servants, *"Bring out the best robe...put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. Bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry"!*

The Religiously Lost Son

Now the elder son stayed at home and as he came in from the field, he heard the music and dancing. He called one of the servants and was told that the younger son was home safe and sound, and the father had killed for him the fatted calf! *"But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. The older son said, "Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends"*.

The father answered him, *"Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It is right that we should make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found"*.

So here we get our heavenly Father's view of things. He does not condone sin, but when we return in confession and repentance to Him, He forgives and receives us. There were Jewish religious leaders listening to what Jesus taught, and they were always finding fault with Him because He was a friend to the down and out, to those who were looked upon as real sinners. Here Jesus is not only pleading with those people, but also with the religious people, who had no real love in their hearts for others.

This illustrates the great love that our heavenly Father has for each of us. The Bible says that we have all sinned, and we need to "come to ourselves or to our senses"! He is watching out for us to do this, to make a full confession of our wrong ways, and to return to Him. Jesus also said, *"the one who comes to me I will by no means cast out"* (John 6:37).