

## **A Man with Two Sons**

Luke 15:11-32

This story has many lessons. To those who wander spiritually, we see a warning of how that happens. The younger son said "give me" (vs. 12). He was only interested in what he could get from his father's hand. Later the son said "make me a servant" (vs. 19). Now, he is interested in his father's heart (Psalm 105:4; 100:2; I Thessalonians 1:9). To those who find themselves far from God, we see a Heavenly Father who is full of mercy and forgiveness. It's safe to come home (Psalm 103:8-14; Isaiah 55:6-7). To those who are very loyal to their religious beliefs, but have no heart for people caught in the trap of sin, we see a Heavenly Father reasoning with a hard-hearted, angry son to show love and compassion (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:10-13). To those who shepherd God's flock and deal with the diversities of people and their problems, we see a caring father who patiently cares for the needs of both sons (I Thessalonians 2:7-11; II Timothy 2:24-26). To fathers who want to love and guide their children, we have the following lesson:

### This father was longsuffering towards a selfish son. Luke 15:11-12

He did not indulge his son, but he did give his son freedom to make his own choices. While at home, the son worked and participated in the family business. When this son showed no heart for it, the father did not try to coerce him. Father released him to follow his heart and learn life's lessons his own way. To the father, it felt like his son died (vs. 24). He had to trust God with his son's fate. See Job's burden for his children: how he interceded for them (Job 1:4-5). Paul showed that he trusted God with the results of those to whom he ministered (II Thessalonians 3:3-5; Galatians 5:10 \* see the burden that Paul had in his heart in Galatians 1:6; 3:1; 4:11,19).

### This father had love and compassion to a sorrowing son. Luke 15:20-24

His son didn't have to say a word. The father was glad to receive him. See how God feels when he disciplines His own (Jeremiah 31:20). The waste of money and time was nothing compared to the relationship of the son with God and with his family. The soul is worth more than all earthly gain (Matthew 16:26).

### This father was looking to guide a stern son. Luke 15:25-32

He did not forget his other son. He noticed a problem and reasoned with him (vs. 28). The father listened to his son (vs. 29-30). He reminded his son that he was important and appreciated (vs. 31). He also reminded him of the importance of having a brother (vs. 30 "thy son" cp. vs. 32 "thy brother"). The father taught his son to care about souls more than things; to care about others more than himself (II Corinthians 8:9; 12:14-15; Philippians 2:1-4,17; II Timothy 2:10; I Thessalonians 2:19,20; **Luke 15:1-7**).