

# “Coming to Our Senses”

Luke 15:11-32

**Scripture:** Psalms 139:23-24 “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.”

## **Introduction:**

When we were just little kids we lived out in the country around Mounds Oklahoma on a dirt road. I used to play in the woods and fish in the creek and all the stuff little boys did.

In the first grade, I had heard the boys at school talk about running away from home if your parents didn't give you what you wanted.

It seem like a good idea to me at the time so I waited till the right moment and demanded my way at home. I can't remember what it was about, but when my mom refused I informed her of the consequences.

She told me to wait right there and she disappeared back into the bedroom and returned with a little black metal suite case and told me that I had better pack some clothes for my trip. I still remember thinking that this wasn't going well. But she pushed the situation and allowed no room for discussion.

Mom was a real sport she even helped me pack. So I set off down the road carrying this suite case that was almost as big as I was. As I walked along I thought about where I would go and where I would sleep. How I would eat supper and so on.

I still remember it was really hot outside and being little it seemed like I had walked a long ways and now I image it was only a 4-5 blocks.

But, I remember realizing what a bad choice I had made as I stood there at a fork in the road of my life.... I had a decision to make. Would I walk on down that road and disappear into the world or would I choke back pride and I return home!

## **Transitional Statement:**

Church we have all watched this same scenario played out in the lives of Christians. I can think of more than one person who decided to keep walking away from home and never return. On the other hand I remember many who choose to come home.

Probably most of us have also stood at the fork in our lives roads, and been faced with a decision to turn around and make things right or just throw our hands up in the air and keep walking.

God wants us to come to our senses. He wants us through deep reflection to choose the right.

## Read

Luke 15:11-32

*"And He said, 'A man had two sons. 12 'The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them. 13 'And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. 14 'Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. 15 'So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 'And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. 17 'But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! 18 'I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" 20 'So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 'And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 'But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; 23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate. 25 'Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 'And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. 27 'And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.' 28 'But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. 29 'But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.' 31 'And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 'But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'"*

## Lesson:

### I. The younger son did a foolish thing

A. *"Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me"*

B. Notice how he didn't come to his father:

1. He didn't come with honor or respect.
2. He wasn't looking for advice or wisdom
3. But he came with demands.
4. He wanted to be separated from his father and family
5. We might ask how anyone could take that road in their lives but we have all seen this same thing played out in the church over the years.

C. *“So he divided his wealth between them”*

1. The Greek here says the father divided up his living.
2. That is he took part of the money that he lives and survives on and gave it to the young son.
3. The selfish son had asked the father to give up his livelihood
  - a. With no regard for his fathers continued success or ability to provide for his family.
4. The estate or inheritance is given after death...not before.
  - a. But the young son had regard for anyone except himself.
  - b. Which is often the case of a wayward sinner.

**II. Interestingly enough, the Father didn't stop him**

A. He could have said no

1. Reaffirm his control over the estate.
2. But he allowed his son to make this dreadful decision.

B. We call this tough love.

1. The father knew this young son needed to grow up
2. So he allowed his son to choose...him or the road.
  - a. And the son choose the road.

C. I can't imagine how hard this must have been for a father to see his son walk away from him.

1. Had the young boy even given thought to the hurt it would cause his fathers heart.
2. Usually by this time in peoples lives their consciences are seared to the point that they don't care for anything but themselves.

**III. So the son headed out for greener pastures.**

A. *“...went on a journey into a distant country”*

B. Why did he choose a distant place.....why not the next town?

1. Maybe he wanted to loose association from his family

2. Become free to shape his own life separate from any established family values.
  3. Maybe he didn't want any accountability
  4. Perhaps he wanted to be his own man.
- B. I stop and wonder how many Christians have been lured away by the promise of distant things.

#### **IV. In that distant place the young boy lost everything**

A. *"he squandered his estate with loose living"*

1. Squandered basically means "wasted"
2. He didn't exercise any responsibility
3. He didn't get a job
  - a. Take responsibility for his livelihood.
4. And he certainly didn't budget anything beyond the desire of his heart at any given moment.

B. The text says that he engaged in loose living

1. Loose living here has to do with being indifferent to moral restraints.
2. An attitude of "party on dude"

C. In short, he opened his wallet to the pleasures of life.

1. You know it dawned on me that you don't even have to be in a distant country to do this.
2. Well at the end of the day he had wasted the life savings of his father....
  - a. He had ruined possibilities in his own future.
  - b. With nothing to show for it.
  - c. He was now penny-less!

#### **V. It was then and there that he found himself at the bottom of the barrel**

A. *"Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. 15 "So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 "And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him."*

- B. Famine struck the country he was in.
  - 1. Hard times came for all.
- C. He was impoverished....he couldn't take care of himself.
  - 1. Destitute
  - 2. With no-one to help
- D. Any friends he had gained through immoral living jumped ship when the money was gone.
  - 1. Now simply eating was a problem
- E. So He got a job
  - 1. Sent out to feed the pigs
  - 2. Found himself longing to eat the pigs food
  - 3. Truly the bottom of the barrel.

## **VI. There he came to his senses**

- A. *17 "But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!'"*
- B. He came to his senses.
  - 1. Here the boy got outside of himself and gained some real perspective on the situation.
  - 2. He cast away his false illusions of greener pastures
  - 3. And thought about more than the moment
  - 4. And he engaged reality
- C. It came to his mind that his dad's hired hands eat better than this.
  - 1. It was probably like being hit with a 2X4 when he muttered the words "I had it really good at home."
- D. He admits that he is dying of hunger in this distant land.
- E. Now he stands at a fork in the road of his life.
  - 1. It's decision time
  - 2. His decision will forever help or haunt him.
  - 3. True to many of us today.

## **VII. Here he makes the decision to go home**

A. 18 *"I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men"*

B. Here he acknowledges sin

1. Against God
2. And in his dad's sight
3. He owned up to his failings
4. Admitted his wrongs.

C. He says:

1. I am no longer worthy to be dad's son
  - a. That is, I am not suitable or deserving
2. He admits that he has lost his right and privilege to be his dad's son

D. He plans to ask his dad for a job so he won't starve

1. To be as a hired hand

F. This boy made a monumental decision

1. To cast away pride
2. To humble himself
3. To surrender before his father
4. And to grow

## **VIII. So he got up and went home.**

A. 20 *"So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him."*

B. His father saw him while he was still a long way off

1. He had compassion...deep yearning
2. He ran and embraced the boy...kissed him

C. The boy admits sin and says I am not worthy to be called your son

## **IX. Before the boy could ask for a job, the father restores his place as a son**

A. 22 *"But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; 23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'* And they began to celebrate.

B. The father orders:

1. The best robe
2. Ring and sandals brought out
3. The fatted calf butchered
4. A celebration !
5. This son of mine
  - a. Restores his son-ship
  - b. Was dead and has come to life again
  - c. Was lost and has been found.

C. What a picture of how God stands ready to receive his own unto himself.

**X. His older brother chooses not to associate with the younger brother.**

A. 25 *“Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 “And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. 27 “And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.’ 28 “But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. 29 “But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’ 31 “And he said to him, ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 ‘But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.”*

B. In the brother we see an angry heart

1. Undoubtedly his brother leaving had cost the older brother also.
2. He is filled with bitterness and resentment

C. He feels shortchanged

1. Dad hasn’t ever killed a calf for me.
2. So the older brother turns to the same selfishness the younger boy had embraced.

D. So his dad reminds him about forgiveness

1. And draws him to the need for reconciliation.

**Conclusion:**

**Have you ran away from the Father?**

**Are you at a fork in the road of your life?**

**Is God watching down the road waiting for you?**

**Do you struggle with resentment toward a brother sister in Christ?**

**Please give it to God today.**