

Inspiring Bible Characters

The Prodigal Son

In our study of inspiring bible characters, we meet The Prodigal (Lost) Son. No matter where you are in your spiritual maturity, more than likely you have heard of this fascinating young man who wandered far away from his father and found trouble awaiting him.

The Prodigal Son's story represents the experiences of most of us. We wander away from the Lord only to find that there is nothing but trouble and unhappiness without Him in our lives. This realization helps us to understand the great reality that being close to the Lord is the best place for us and He is always willing to receive us when we come to our senses and return to Him.

The Distant Country

- Luke 15: 11-13
 - The man has 2 sons. The younger one seems discontent at home with his father. He is seeking something else for his life. Maybe he's bored, maybe he seeks an adventurous lifestyle. Desire seems to be pulling him far away from his father.
 - Not long after he gets his share of the estate, he sets off for a distant country and while there, he spends all he has in wild living.
 - Later, in scripture, we learn that he spent much of his money on prostitutes. The sin in his life grew and took him over. He lost his ability to make good decisions.

The Distant Country represents the place we “travel” to when we leave our relationship with God behind...

What is your “distant country?” What do you run to when you leave your Father behind?

The Fun is Over and Pain Begins

- Luke 15: 14-16
 - Not long into the his story, the young son spends all he has and suffers a severe famine in the land he's in. He is now in need, but has no money because he wasted it.
 - He hires himself out as a worker and things get so bad that his hunger leads him to desire the food that the pigs are eating.
 - Pigs eat slop. They eat what's leftover after everyone else eats. It's the lowest of the low to desire pig's food. I believe the Lord is attempting to show us the depths that a sinful lifestyle can take us down to. We can end up being lower than we ever imagined.
 - Living wild was fun, but inevitably there are consequences for the young man's actions. At first, sin is pleasurable, but it takes a toll on us, takes control of our lives and the end of sin is bitter and painful.

He Comes to His Senses

- Luke 15: 17-20
 - Because of his bad circumstances, the young man realizes his folly, comes to his senses, and desires to go back to his father's house.
 - His father is so happy to see him that he runs to greet him. His father must have been worried sick about his son while he was in the distant country.
 - Life Lesson: When we are far away from God, He is concerned about what the sin in our life is doing to us. When we come to our senses and return to Him, He is waiting for us with open arms.

The Father Celebrates

- Luke 15: 21-24
 - Because of his behavior, the son feels unworthy. *In our lives, there will be times that because of our behavior that we feel unworthy to be in our Father's presence too.*
 - Despite his son's actions, the father responds in love and forgiveness. He is so happy to have his son home that he doesn't ask questions of him or condemn him. He not only receives him back, but gives him the royal treatment. He is happy that his son is alive again, rather than being dead to sin.



The Trickery of Sin

In the story of the prodigal (lost) son, we see how temptation can lure us away from our heavenly Father. Sin tricks us into believing that it will satisfy us more than being home with the Lord. Sin looks good, it feels good...but really, it's a trap. Once it takes over our lives, it comes in for the "kill". When we realize the pain it has caused us, we then, seek to renew our relationship with God.

The challenge for the Christian is to stay at home with the Lord and not venture off into the distant country. We've all tried sin before, we know that the pleasure of it doesn't last. We know the pain it eventually causes us. Let us try hard to resist the pull of sin. Let us do what is best for our lives and stay at home with our Father.

The Prodigal Son Inspires Us

- Our place at home with our Father is best for us, despite the lure of sin. Sin is a trap that is meant to disrupt our relationship with God and eventually wreak havoc in our lives.
- We can be confident that we always have a room at home in our Father's house. When we venture off into sin, it grieves our Lord, but He waits for us to come to our senses and when we do, He is ready to receive us back.
- Sin can lead us to do some things we never thought we would. It has an incredible ability to take over our lives, impair our judgment, hinder our lives and cause a pain that can linger for a long period of time.
- Sin can be difficult to avoid some times. We must actively fight against temptation and prepare our hearts and minds to resist the enemy and his tactics to pull us away from God. Regular prayer, bible study, church attendance and fellowshiping with other like-minded Christians are all necessary to help us in our battle to win against sin in this world.