

GOD WANTS US TO COME BACK

Jesus told this story. There was a father who had two sons. One day the younger son asked for a lot of money so he could leave home. The father gave him the money, and the son went to a far away place. He made bad friends who liked to live wildly. He wasted all his money and his friends left him. He found a job watching pigs in a muddy field. He was hungry and sad. He was sorry that he had made bad choices. After a long time, he decided to go home and ask to be a servant in his father's house.

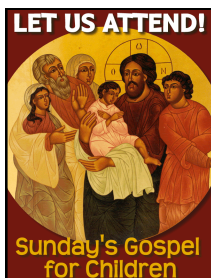
On the way home, his father saw him and ran out to greet him. He told his servants, "Give him the best clothes and prepare a feast! My son was lost and now he is found."



Icon courtesy of Iconographics (www.theologic.com)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. The story tells us about a father and two sons. The younger son made a big mistake. What did he do?
2. After he wasted all his money, he found a job. What was his job?
3. When we do something wrong, we feel bad. We say, "I'm sorry" to the person we have hurt.
4. We can also say, "Please forgive me."
5. To forgive is to make things right again.
6. When someone says, "I'm sorry," or "Please forgive me," we should say, "I forgive you."
7. We also say, "Please forgive me" to God. God is like the father in the story. He will forgive us.



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Pre-12



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THE PRODIGAL SON



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GOD WILL FORGIVE US

One time, our Lord Jesus Christ told a story to teach a lesson.

He told about a man with two sons. One day, the younger son asked his father for a lot of money. He took the money and left his home. He traveled far away and wasted all the money his father gave him.

Soon after that, there was not enough food in the land. So, the younger son got a job feeding pigs. He was so hungry that he wanted to eat the pigs' food. He worked hard, but was still hungry.

As he worked, he remembered that the servants at his father's house worked hard but had plenty of food. He thought to himself, "I will go and say I am sorry to my father for sinning and wasting his money. Then I will ask him to hire me as one of his servants." Right away, he started towards his home.

While he was still far away, his father saw him. He was so glad to see his son that he ran to him and hugged him and kissed him. The son told his father he was sorry for what he had done, and that he did not deserve to be called his father's son anymore.

But the father was so happy to see his son! He asked the servants to dress the young man in the best clothes. He told them to prepare a feast to celebrate the son's return. It was a very happy time in that house!

When the older son came in from the field and found out what was happening, he got angry. His father came out to talk with him, to ask him to join the party. But the older son said, "I have worked hard for you all these years and you didn't give me a party. It's not fair that my brother, who ran off and wasted your money gets a party, now, just for coming back!"

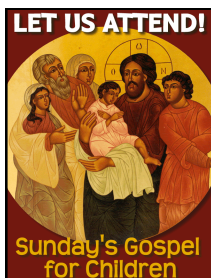
But the father said, "Son, you are always with me and everything that is mine is yours, too. It is right for us to celebrate now, though, because your lost brother has found his way back home, where he belongs!"



Icon courtesy of Iconographics (www.theologic.com)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. At the beginning of the story, what did the younger son ask his father for?
2. What did he do with all the money?
3. Why did he come back to the father? What did the father do?
4. How do you know when you've done something wrong?
5. Remember, when we do something wrong, God wants us to be sorry. To show we are sorry, we do two things. First we go to the person we have hurt and say, "Please forgive me." The person we have hurt says, "I forgive you." Second we ask forgiveness of God in the Mystery of Confession.



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A FATHER WELCOMES HOME HIS SON

The Lord spoke this parable: “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything.

“But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand,

and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to make merry.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.’ But the son was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!’

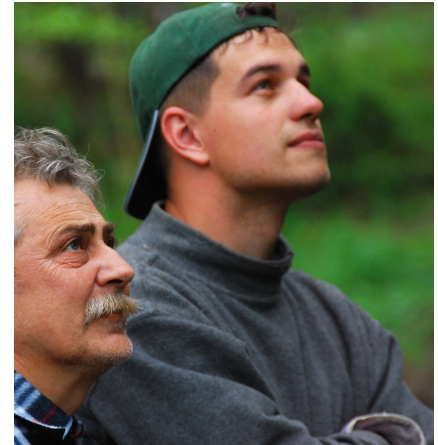
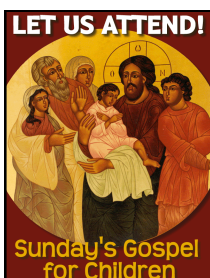


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And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.’”

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Why did the younger son come back to the father?
2. How did the father react to the return of his younger son?
3. How do you know when you’ve done something wrong?
4. What words do we use to apologize?
5. When we apologize we are asking for forgiveness. We want to make things right again.
6. Have you ever asked for forgiveness?
7. How does it feel when you are forgiven?
8. Whenever we have done something wrong, we have also hurt God who wants us to act kindly and do only good things. Besides apologizing to the person we hurt, who else do we need to ask forgiveness of? How do we do that?
9. Jesus told this story to teach us about God. Who in this story is like God?



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A FATHER WELCOMES HOME HIS SON

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Son, Father,
Servant, Brother

Narrator: The Lord spoke this parable:

Jesus: There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father,

Son: Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.

Jesus: And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said,

Son: How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.

Jesus: And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son

said to him,

Son: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

Jesus: But the father said to his servants,

Father: Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.

Jesus: And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him,

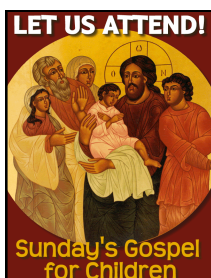
Servant: Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.

Jesus: But the son was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father,

Brother: Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!

Jesus: And he said to him,

Father: Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.



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"WELCOME HOME" — GOD

The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything.

"But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him Father, I have sinned

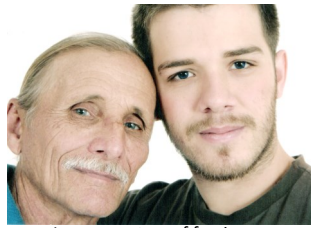


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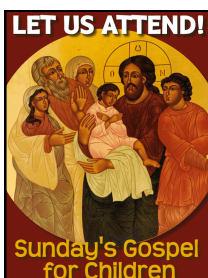
against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry.

"Now his elder son was in

the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But the son was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.'"

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. When did the younger son make his first mistake?
2. If you were friends with the younger son, what would you have said upon learning of his plan?
3. What might the father have been thinking and feeling while the younger son was away?
4. Jesus told this story to teach us about sin and God's love for us. Which action of the son symbolizes sin?
5. The typical icon shows a father and son embracing. In the version to the left, the father is replaced with Christ. Look at Christ. Do you see anything interesting about his depiction?
6. Every day we should be walking on the good path that leads to God. When we stray from the path by doing something wrong, God is on the path waiting for us to return to Him.



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THE FATHER RAN!

The Lord spoke this parable: “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything.

“But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the



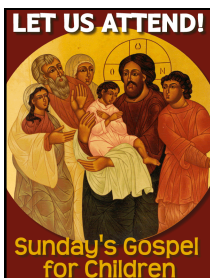
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fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to make merry.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.’ But the son was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.’”

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. When did the younger son make his first mistake in this story?
2. If you were friends with the younger son, what would you have said upon learning of his plan?
3. What might the father have been thinking and feeling while the younger son was away?
4. Why do you think the younger son went back to his father? Did he have choices? Would you have done the same?
5. Do you know anyone who reminds you of the younger son, the older brother, and the father?
6. Some say that Jesus’ message to forgive was the most radical of all his teachings. Do you agree, or disagree?
7. What could be some alternate endings for the story?



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