

Luke, Chapter 15, Verses 11-32

Excerpt from verses 18-24

(18) I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. (19) I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers." (20) So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. (21) His son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son." (22) But his father ordered his servants, "Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. (23) Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, (24) because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found." Then the celebration began.

Dave's Spiritual Reflection

We are all familiar with the parable of the prodigal son. A man had two sons, and the younger asked to have his inheritance. His father gave it to him, and he went off and squandered it all on dissolute living. Then he found himself in desperate need. He came to his senses, and thought to himself, "I will go back to my father and beg to be allowed to work as one of his servants."

When he returned, his father welcomed him back with great joy and celebration. Meanwhile, the elder son was angry, saying, "I have worked hard for you all these years, yet you never had a celebration for me." I can identify with the elder son. That would have been my response.

But this is not a parable about the elder son. For that matter, it is not even primarily about the prodigal son.

It is a story about a loving father who cares for his son dearly, no matter what he has done. He willingly forgives him and welcomes him back with open arms.

This is how God loves us, more than we can ever imagine. When we offend Him, He still loves us dearly and welcomes us back joyously when we acknowledge our offenses. This is a source of great consolation for us, knowing we are children of such a gracious Father.