

What lesson may we learn from the spirit of the returning prodigal son?

What lesson concerning God's attitude toward returning sinners?

Over whom is there joy in heaven? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Practical Teachings.

1. When the prodigal ceases his selfishness he begins to live to himself in a true sense.

2. The unutterable compassion of the father in this story is "very full of comfort."

3. God the Father is represented by his Son as thrilling with measureless joy over the repentance of one sinner.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That every sinner is lost and in want?
2. That every sinner may return to home and plenty?

3. That God will welcome every true penitent?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Verses 11-16.

11. Who are represented by the two sons?
12. What was a younger son's portion?
13. Why did he go far from home? How did he show his guilt and folly when there?
14. Were the pleasures lasting? What led him to seek employment?
15. To whom did he join himself? What degrading work had he to do?
16. For what food did he wish? Did his companions help him?

2. Verses 17-24.

17. What brought him to his senses?
18. What is the only remedy for those away from God?
20. Is it enough to resolve to do right? Had the father pity for him? Would this have saved him if he had not returned?
21. Why did he not complete his confession?

22. Of what were the robe and ring tokens?

24. How is God's delight at the sinner's return described?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Man wants to be independent of God. The willful child breaks away from home restraints. He wants possessions before he can take care of them. He rushes into sinful pleasures. He wastes money, time, health, character. The downward path is steep. Severe measures have to be used with the sinner. Christ welcomes every true penitent. There is joy on earth and in heaven over his return.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What is the first parable in the fifteenth of Luke?

What is the second?

What is the third story about?

What lesson do all these stories teach?

To whom did Jesus tell the stories?

Which son of a rich man asked to have his share of the father's money?

What is the share of the younger son?

Why did he want to go away from home?

When are we like this foolish boy? **When we want our own way.**

What did he do with his money?

What hard work did he have to do?

What does this show? **That sin brings sorrow.**

What did he do at last?

How did his father meet him?

What did he do to show his joy?

How did the older brother like this? (Luke 15. 25-32.)

Something to Remember—

A sinner who is sorry for sin is dear to God. Self-love is sure to bring trouble and sorrow. God cannot help a Pharisee who thinks himself good.

LESSON OUTLINE.

From Sin to Salvation.

I. THE SINNER'S CHARACTER.

1. **Selfishness.** *Give me the portion.* v. 12. Their portion is in this life. Psalm 17. 14.
2. **Ingratitude.** *That falleth to me.* v. 12. Neither were thankful. Rom. 1. 21.
3. **Alienation.** *Into a far country.* v. 13. Alienated from the life of God. Eph. 4. 18.
4. **Sensuality.** *Riotous living.* v. 13. The works of the flesh are manifest. Gal. 5. 19.

II. THE SINNER'S CONDITION.

1. **Need.** *Began to be in want.* v. 14. Of his flesh reap corruption. Gal. 6. 8.
2. **Degradation.** *To feed swine.* v. 15. I have made you contemptible. Mal. 2. 9.
3. **Misery.** *No man gave.* v. 16. He feedeth on ashes. Isa. 44. 20.

III. THE SINNER'S REPENTANCE.

1. **Conviction.** *Came to himself.* v. 17. Awake, thou that sleepest. Eph. 5. 14.
2. **Resolution.** *I will arise and go.* v. 18. To Zion with their faces thitherward. Jer. 50. 5.
3. **Renunciation.** *Arose and came.* v. 20. Let the wicked forsake his way. Isa. 55. 7.
4. **Confession.** *I have sinned.* v. 21. I acknowledged my sin. Psalm 32. 5.

IV. THE SINNER'S PARDON.

1. **Welcome.** *Ran and fell on his neck.* v. 20. Ready to forgive. Psalm 86. 5.
2. **Honor.** *Robe . . . ring . . . shoes.* v. 22. Now are we the sons of God. 1 John 3. 2.
3. **Pleasure.** *Eat and be merry.* v. 23. At thy right hand . . . pleasures. Psalm 16. 11.