

esteemed among men, but "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

We are now introduced to the parable of the rich man. Tell me, has this passage been rather repulsive to you than attractive? There seems something rather repulsive in it, but let us look at it. Observe the difference between the rich man and the prodigal. The prodigal "came to himself" *before* it was too late, the rich man after the door was shut. The prodigal was dissolute and abandoned, and when he came to himself he thought of his *sin*. The rich man came to himself in the place of judgment, and did *not* think of his sins but of his misery. The prodigal came to himself in the midst of his misery *here*, the rich man in the midst of torment *there*.

That is all the difference. The prodigal said, I will go back; what a sinner and a rebel son I have been! There was nothing of that gracious stirring in the spirit of the rich man when he lifted up his head in flames. The prodigal had not to finish the first sentence; his father answered him on the spot, and put on him a ring and the best robe, and killed the fatted calf; but the rich man cried again and again. It was *too late*! Here is the end of the respectable waster. Why do I call him a waster? Will you tell me he called himself a steward of God, while he was living sumptuously every day with a saint of God lying at his gate? I am bold to say you and I are just the same if we are living to ourselves. This man *died* a respectable waster, full of honour and gratification. He had no misery to call him to himself. Have you ever contrasted these two pictures? It has changed this Scripture from repulsion into attraction.