



SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Luke, Part 44: The Younger Son - Luke 15:11-24 - September 21, 2025

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - **Mount Rushmore** and top 4 of any given category, applied light-heartedly to Jesus's Parable, amongst which "The Prodigal Son" certainly qualifies. This text is a highlight of Scripture as a whole, not just parables - it's inspired paintings by Rembrandt and plays by Shakespeare.

Reminder: The Parable is about "two sons" (v. 11), but for the sake of detail, we will split it:

1. **The Younger Son** (v. 11-24) represents "sinners/tax collectors" (v. 1)
2. **The Older Son** (v. 25-32) represents "Pharisees/scribes" (v. 2)

Outline of the Younger Son's Story

A. Sick of Home (v. 11-13)

- Requisitioning his inheritance = wishing his father was dead. Height of *disrespect*.
- With wealth tied up in property, the father would have liquidated 1/3 of his land, a significant financial blow to add injury to insult.
- In fact, the word for "property" could be translated "life" or "livelihood".
- The son loves the father's wealth more than he loves the father - see: Romans 1:25
- ἀσώτως (*asōtōs*) - **prodigal**, profusely lavish or wasteful - "reckless living"

B. Sick (v. 14-16)

- Double whammy: the son goes broke at the same time that a famine breaks out
- κολλάω (*kollaō*) - "to **attach** or cleave" instead of "hiring himself out"
- *Detachment from God is always attachment to something lesser.*
- Feeding a Gentile's pigs would have been a worst case scenario for any self-respecting Jew.

C. Homesick (v. 17-19)

- The younger son "comes to himself", a realization of his rebellion and its consequences.
- The word "perish" could also be translated "lost" and shows up 8 times in this chapter. **To be "lost" from God is to be "perishing" or "dying".**
- The son's repentance plan is a good start, but ultimately amounts to **works-righteousness** as his plan is to earn his place back in with his father's family.

D. Home (v. 20-24)

- The father must have been watching continuously to be able to see his son from a long ways off.
- For a Jewish patriarch of means to hike up his robe and **run** in public would have been considered a breach of decorum, but reveals that the father's joy in seeing his son again supersedes any worry about what others might think.
- Jesus wants the tax collectors and sinners to understand that the goodness of God the Father will welcome them even if their morality is not that of the Pharisees and scribes.
- The son starts his "works-righteousness" speech, but the Father will not let him finish before he lavishes grace and gifts on his son. **The actions of the Father are also "prodigal".**
- **The robe, ring, and shoes** were symbols of full reinstatement into the family, not simply recognition as a servant.
- The response - same as the parable of the lost sheep and lost coin - is celebration!

Application: the Father waits to receive us all with love and celebration. Anyone who turns from sin and puts faith in Jesus will find the same reception as the younger son.



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Who is Jesus' target audience as he tells the story of the lost younger son?
2. How is the younger son an example of each and every one of us in our rebellion against Jesus? How do we find parallels of his story in our own lives?
3. How does freedom turn into slavery? Why does detachment from God always lead to attachment to something lesser? How do we see in this with our own temptations to sin?
4. What is good about the son's planned speech to his father? What is wrong with his planned speech?
5. In what ways does the father in the story represent God?
6. Why is there celebration in heaven when a sinner repents?