

A Father Forgives



Jesus was an excellent storyteller. He often taught important lessons by telling parables. A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. One parable Jesus told teaches about forgiveness.

Once upon a time, a man had two sons. The younger one told his father he wanted his inheritance money right away. So the father gave him his share of the money.

Then the son moved away and spent all of his money doing wild and sinful things. About the same time that he ran out of money, there was a severe famine in the land. The young man was poor and hungry, so he got a job feeding pigs. He wished he could at least have as much food as the pigs, but no one gave him anything.

When he came to his senses, the son remembered that the servants at his father's house had plenty to eat. He decided to go back home and tell his father that he had sinned. He would say that he was not worthy to be called his son, but he would like to become one of his father's hired servants. So he set out for home.

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with love for him. His father didn't wait for him to get there. He ran to meet him! He threw his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said, "Father, I have sinned. I am not good enough to be called your son." But the father interrupted him and told the servants to bring the best robe and put it on him. He told them to put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. He also told the servants to prepare a feast so that they could celebrate his son coming home.

The older son heard that his brother had come back home. He got very angry and refused to go to the feast. His father came out and pleaded with him to come in, but he wouldn't. He said, "All these years I have worked hard for you. I have never disobeyed your orders. Yet you have never given me a party so I could celebrate with my friends." The son was angry because his younger brother had spent all of his inheritance doing wild and sinful things, and now his father was throwing a party for him!

The father answered, "My son, you are always with me. Everything that I have is yours. But we must celebrate and be happy, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and now is found."

