



GREAT CHAPTERS FOR GREATER LIVING: LUKE 15
“THE TURNING POINT”
LUKE 15: 11-20

THIS IS THE THIRD ASPECT OF JESUS' GREAT PARABLE ON GOD'S LOVE FOR THE LOST. THIS STORY INVOLVES TWO SONS. THIS MORNING WE WILL FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE SCANDALOUS SON, FOUND IN VV. 11-24. PEOPLE ARE LOST LIKE SONS ARE LOST--- THROUGH REBELLION, PRIDE, SELF-WILL, AND DELIBERATE CHOICE. THIS YOUNGER SON WAS LURED BY THE “FAR HORIZONS” OF A LAND FAR AWAY LAND WHICH TOOK HOLD OF HIS SOUL. DOUBTLESS, HE WAS FED UP WITH THE RULES, RELIGION, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF HIS FATHER, SO HE LONGED TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL.

I. HIS DEPARTURE(VV. 11-13)

HIS DESIRE CAUSED HIM TO APPROACH HIS FATHER WITH A HEARTLESS DEMAND. APPARENTLY FEELING NO GRATITUDE FOR ANYTHING, HE COLDLY ASKED FOR HIS SHARE OF HIS FATHER'S INHERITANCE TO HIM. THIS WAS AN OUTRAGEOUS REQUEST ACCORDING TO THE LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF THE TIMES, BUT THE FATHER RELINQUISHED AND GAVE HIM HIS PORTION. IT WAS THE DESIRE OF A YOUNG FOOL.

II. HIS FOOLISHNESS(V. 13)

SCRIPTURE TELLS US THAT HE DID INDEED TO A FAR AWAY LAND, AND IN A SHORT TIME HE HAD SQUANDERED HIS FORTUNE WITH LOOSE LIVING. THE “FAR COUNTRY” IS A PICTURE OF THE WORLD WHICH IS OPPOSED TO GOD'S WILL AND WAYS. THE YOUNGER SON WASTED HIS MONEY, HIS HEALTH, HIS STRENGTH, HIS CHARACTER AND HIS TIME ON ALL THAT THE DEVIL TEMPTED HIM WITH. ALL THE WORLD HAS IS BUT LUST AND PRIDE, YET MILLIONS WASTE ALL THEY HAVE ON IT.

III. HIS DESTITUTION(V. 14)

THE BIBLE SAYS HE “SPENT ALL.” ALL OF HIS MONEY WAS GONE, AND SO WERE HIS FAIR-WEATHER FRIENDS. TWO DISASTERS STRUCK HIM SIMULTANEOUSLY—HE HAD LOST ALL OF HIS MONEY AND FRIENDS, AND THEN A FAMINE STRUCK THE LAND. THIS WAS GOD AT WORK. THE FAR COUNTRY IS NO PLACE TO BE WHEN YOUR FUNDS RUN OUT, YOUR FRIENDS TAKE OFF, AND FAMINE MOVES IN. THIS IS A VERY VIVID PICTURE OF THE SINNER WHO IS IN THE FAR COUNTRY AWAY FROM GOD.

IV. HIS DEGRADATION (V. 15)

THIS SON LACKED THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE, AND THE ONLY JOB HE COULD FIND WAS FEEDING SOME SWINE FOR ONE OF THE CITIZENS OF THE FAR AWAY LAND. HE WAS SO DESTITUTE THAT EVEN THE SLOP FOR THE HOGS LOOKED ENTICING FOR HIM. FOR A JEW TO FEED PIGS WAS THE ULTIMATE LOW. SO MUCH FOR THE “FAR HORIZONS.”

V. HIS DELIBERATION (V. 17)

HE FINALLY “CAME TO HIMSELF”, WHICH MEANS HE CAME TO HIS SENSES. IT WAS AS IF HE HAD GONE CRAZY FOR A BRIEF TIME AND NOW RETURNED TO SANITY. HARDSHIP HAS A WONDERFUL WAY OF BRINGING SOMEONE TO FACE FACTS. HE REALIZED THAT EVEN THE HIRED SERVANTS OF HIS FATHER HAD MORE AND BETTER FOOD THAN HE DID.

VI. HIS RESOLUTION (VV. 18-19)

AS A RESULT OF HIS DELIBERATION ABOUT HIS CONDITION AS COMPARED TO THAT OF THE HIRED SERVANTS OF HIS FATHER, HE RESOLVED TO GO BACK TO HIS FATHER. “I WILL ARISE AND GO TO MY FATHER.” ONCE HE RETURNED HE WOULD CONFESS HIS SIN AGAINST GOD AND AGAINST HIS FATHER. THAT WAS THE MOMENT WHEN THE WILL TOOK OVER. THE GOSPEL INVITATION FIRST REACHES THE CONSCIENCE, THEN THE HEART, THEN THE MIND, AND FINALLY THE WILL.

VII. HIS RETURN (V. 20)

HE NOT ONLY RESOLVED TO GO, BUT HE GOT UP AND ACTUALLY RETURNED. WHAT A GREAT THING INDEED IT IS FOR A SINNER TO COME HOME TO HIS HEAVENLY FATHER!