

Welcome Back!

Bible story from
Luke 15:11-24

Jesus often taught large crowds of people. Some who went to hear Him were people who knew they had done wrong things. Others were religious leaders called Pharisees (FAIR-uh-sees).

The Pharisees thought that they did everything right. They thought that God should accept them because they never did “really bad” things. And the Pharisees

thought that God should not accept people who didn't live up to their example.

The Pharisees saw all the people around Jesus. They said, “Jesus teaches these sinners that God loves them. How can He please God that way?”

So Jesus told a story. It was about a son who did wrong things. Pretend the son kept a journal. He might have written his own story like this.

1

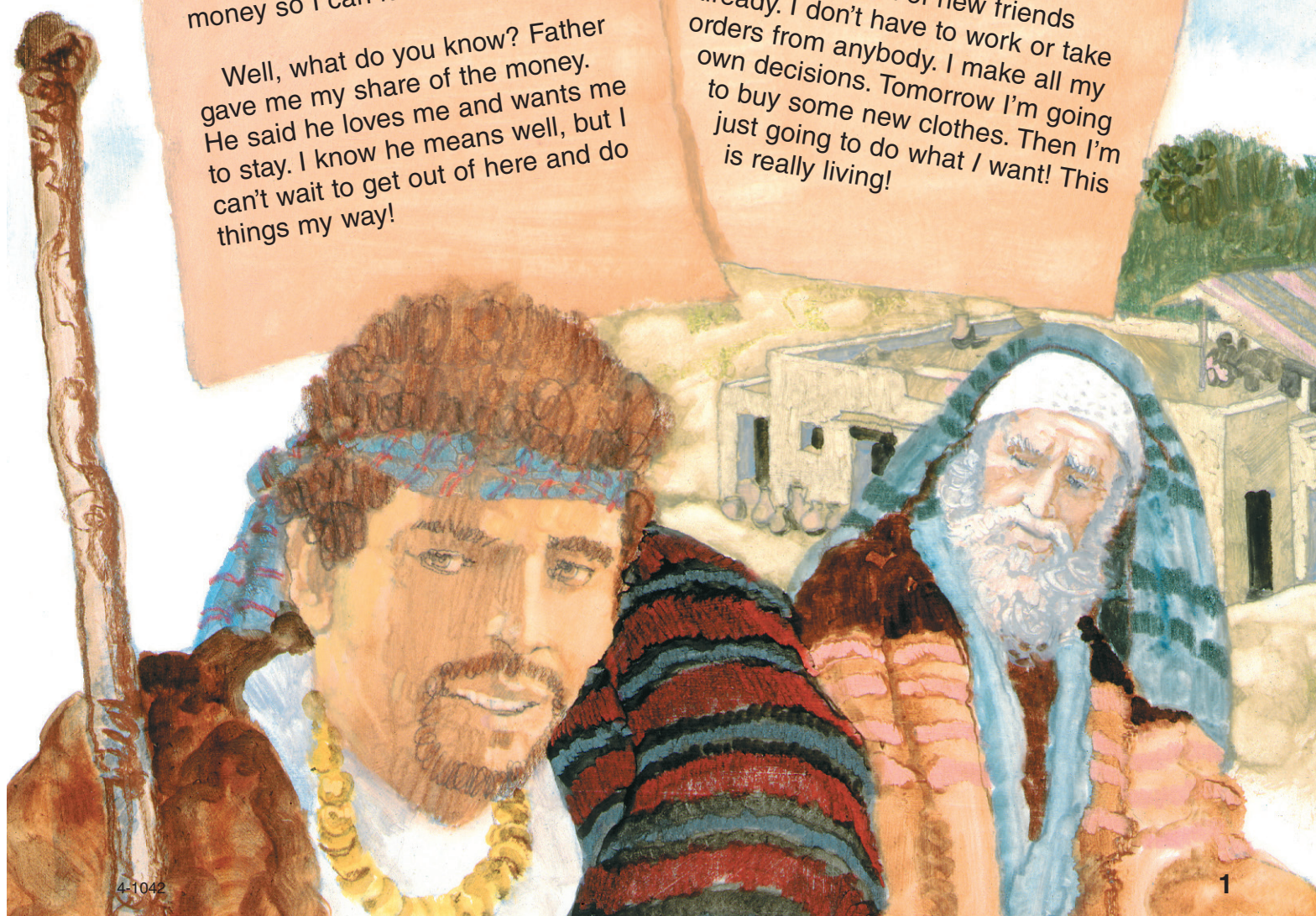
I'm sick and tired of taking orders from my father! I want to have money, make my own decisions, and enjoy life. I'm going to ask him to give me my share of the family money so I can leave home.

Well, what do you know? Father gave me my share of the money. He said he loves me and wants me to stay. I know he means well, but I can't wait to get out of here and do things my way!

2

What a great day this has been. This is my second day away from home, and I'm on my way to see the world. I know that I'm going to be successful and famous.

I've made a lot of new friends already. I don't have to work or take orders from anybody. I make all my own decisions. Tomorrow I'm going to buy some new clothes. Then I'm just going to do what I want! This is really living!



3

Things certainly have changed! First, I used up all my money! Then all my friends disappeared. I had to get a job. But the only job I could find was taking care of pigs! At home, nobody even *raised* pigs.

Today has been terrible! I hate this job! My clothes get dirty and stink of pigs. It hasn't rained for a long time. There's not much food. I'm so hungry I'd eat the pigs' food, but the greedy beasts don't leave any.

I was wrong to leave home. Even my father's *servants* have more to eat than I do. I'm going home! I'll tell my father that I've sinned against God and him. Maybe he will let me be one of his servants.



If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.

1 John 1:9

4

Before I reached home, Father ran to meet me! He hugged and kissed me. I told him how sorry I was and that I wasn't good enough to be his son anymore. I told him I'd just be one of his servants.

 **Read Luke 15:22. What did the father do for his son? Fill in the blanks below.** But my father told the servants to give me

a _____, a _____,
and _____.

Jesus ended His story by telling how the father gave a big party for his son.

The father still thought of the son as his own son. The father willingly forgave his son and welcomed him back.

In the same way, we can go to God when we sin. We can tell God we are sorry. And God is happy to see us. He welcomes us as His own children. Because God loves us, He forgives us.

