

LORD OF THE PRODIGALS

Bible reading Luke 15:2.

THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES COMPLAINED SAYING, "THIS MAN (JESUS) RECEIVES SINNERS AND EATS WITH THEM."

In this world where sin seems to be the order of the day, almost every home has a prodigal. It is always a lonely journey for the prodigal back home. It is totally the loss of self, the complete breakdown of ego and total nothingness. Once where the son rightfully demanded his inheritance, (15:12), now comes cringing back rehearsing his acceptance speech out there in the pig sty, "Make me like one of your hired servants." (15:19). The

story of the prodigal son, is most famous. Our focus usually zeroes down to the younger son. As the story goes on, we may even think, "Serves him right for walking out on his old father."

But more than the prodigal son, the most important focus of the parable, which Jesus wanted to highlight was the kind of reception, given to the prodigal. Jesus set in motion these three parables, as a reply to the sneering accusation from the churchy people. Jesus was looked down upon the holy people, that He put His hands around the shoulders of an old drunk, carried a dirty street child on His shoulders and gave a broad open smile to a worn out prostitute. It was

totally sacrilegious. How can a Jew do that?

This parable is more for the "set-apart believers" Is our righteousness and rightness in our deeds is trying to block out the warm reception waiting in the Father's house for the prodigal son?

Clearly there are three set of people. One is the prodigal, the next is the Father running towards His son with outstretched arms and the third is the righteous elder son, standing outside judging and scorning. Let me ask you all a question. Every one of us can identify with one category.

If you are a prodigal, repent and return. The Father is waiting with His open arms and waiting to throw the

grandest party ever. If you can identify with the open-armed Father, then your countenance will resemble more clearly the face of your Heavenly Father.

But if you feel judgmental and threatened by the prodigal's arrival in the Church, it is time you check your hearts before the throne of grace. More than the prodigal, you need more grace. Grace to love like Jesus did, Grace to receive prodigals like Jesus did. Grace to embrace this sin sick world. Grace to love the orphaned AIDS kid, Grace to love the homeless, grace to love the broken folks of the world. If our hearts are hard that we cannot receive, who knows for all our uprightness and righteousness, we

still may end up outside the Door. That would be the most terrible tragedy that you live a life looking forward for Heaven and ultimately on the day of the biggest party, you opt to stay out. That would be the greatest tragedy.

My dear believer sister/brother, which group are you in? Follow Jesus, receive prodigals, love them, restore them, pray for them. We the right people need more grace to receive the prodigals. Jesus came into the world to seek the lost, in other words, the prodigals. If we say we love Jesus, then we would do the things that Jesus did. We would not mind eating with the left-out people of this world. Both the right and the left

folks need the Saviour. The left people may be openly sinful, but the seemingly right people are not in any way sinless.

The Bible clearly says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Every one in this world stand desperately in need of a Saviour. Nobody's goodness or discipline can never earn salvation. I can only receive the invitation of Jesus and enter in, be cleansed by His blood and become His sons and daughters. There is no other way. Jesus said, "I am the Door. If anyone enters by Me, He will be saved" (John 10:9). Both the prodigal and the righteous should enter through the One and the Only Door.

Dear Father

Oh Lord of the Prodigals, bend my stiffness, break my pride, make me willing and repentant as the prodigal, so that I may have the humility to receive your grace and have the grandest privilege of fellowshiping with you in Your table. Oh Lord let not my rightness block the passage through the Door. Open the door of my heart. Let me love and live like Jesus. In Jesus precious Name Amen.