



GOOD BIBLE TRIVIA · SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32 · King James Version

ADULTS · AGES 18+

HOW TO USE THIS PACK

1. Read the story summary together, then look up Luke 15:11-32 in the KJV.
2. Learn the memory verse — say it together a few times.
3. Take the quiz. Answers cite chapter and verse; the answer key is on the last page.
4. Finish with the activity and the discussion. No timer, no pressure — have fun.

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Memory Verse

“It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.”

Luke 15:32 (KJV)

The Story

The parable is the third in a sequence about lost things, and it is the only one with two lost sons. And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. In a culture where inheritance followed death, the demand functions as a wish that the father were dead. The father's response is the parable's first shock. He does not rebuke or refuse; he divided unto them his living, a division that necessarily settled the elder son's share at the same moment. [Luke 15:11-12](#)

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. Luke compresses the ruin into a single clause and then adds the element the son did not choose: And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. Folly and circumstance combine. The far country delivers exactly the independence he asked for, and independence turns out to be indistinguishable from abandonment. [Luke 15:13-14](#)

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. The degradation is calculated for a Jewish audience: a son of Israel employed among unclean animals, at the furthest possible distance from the household he left. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. The final clause is the harshest. His poverty is absolute and his invisibility is total; the society he bought his way into has no obligation to him at all. [Luke 15:15-16](#)

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! The idiom implies that the entire venture was a form of insanity from which he now wakes. His resolution contains no self-justification: I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. It is genuine repentance and it is still a calculation, proposing employment because he assumes sonship is forfeit and unrecoverable. [Luke 15:17-19](#)

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. That the father saw him at a distance implies he had been watching; that he ran was, for an elder in that society, a public loss of

dignity. The son begins his rehearsed confession and is cut off before the clause about hired servants. Restoration is granted in tokens that are unmistakably filial rather than servile: the best robe, a ring on his hand, shoes on his feet, and the fatted calf, with the reason given twice, For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. [Luke 15:20-24](#)

The parable then pivots to its real target. Now his elder son was in the field, and hearing musick and dancing, he learns what has happened and was angry, and would not go in. The father comes out a second time and intreats him, mirroring exactly the movement toward the younger son. The elder's reply exposes his understanding of everything that preceded: Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. He describes sonship as service and obedience as a claim on wages, and he refuses the family word, saying this thy son rather than my brother. The father grants his faithfulness and corrects his premise: Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine, then restates the necessity of joy, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. The parable ends without recording whether he went in, leaving the question with the audience of Pharisees who prompted it. [Luke 15:25-32](#)

Quiz

1. What is implied by the younger son's demand for his portion?

- A.** That he intended to invest it
- B.** That he treated his living father as though already dead
- C.** That the father was in debt
- D.** That he was of age to marry

2. What did the father do in response to the demand?

- A.** He divided unto them his living
- B.** He gave only a portion
- C.** He delayed a year
- D.** He consulted the elder son

3. What arose in the land after he had spent all?

- A.** A pestilence
- B.** A war
- C.** A mighty famine
- D.** A flood

4. To whom did the younger son join himself?

- A.** A merchant of the road
- B.** A citizen of that country
- C.** A kinsman
- D.** A priest of the land

5. What phrase marks the depth of his abandonment?

- A.** He had no shoes
- B.** The famine was sore
- C.** No man gave unto him
- D.** He was far from home

6. What idiom does Luke use for the son's change of mind?

- A.** When he came to himself
- B.** When he repented sore
- C.** When his heart failed
- D.** When he took counsel

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7. What did the son resolve to request?

- A.** To be restored as heir
 - B.** To be received as a guest
 - C.** To be made as one of the hired servants
 - D.** To be given passage home
8. What does verse 20 indicate about the father before the son arrived?
- A.** He had gone out to search the roads
 - B.** He saw him when he was yet a great way off
 - C.** He had given him up for dead
 - D.** He was told by a servant
9. Comparing verses 19 and 21, which part of his prepared speech does the son never deliver?
- A.** The confession of sin against heaven
 - B.** That he is no more worthy
 - C.** The request to be made a hired servant
 - D.** The greeting to his father
10. What three tokens of sonship does the father command?
- A.** The best robe, a ring, and shoes
 - B.** Bread, wine, and oil
 - C.** A staff, a seal, and a cloak
 - D.** A house, a field, and a servant
11. How does the elder son characterise his years at home?
- A.** As a season of learning
 - B.** As years of service in which he never transgressed a commandment
 - C.** As a burden laid on him
 - D.** As a joy shared with his father
12. What does the father say belongs to the elder son?
- A.** The fatted calf
 - B.** A double portion
 - C.** All that I have is thine
 - D.** The house only

Go Deeper

Discuss as a group.

1. Compare the two sons' speeches, the younger in verses 18 to 19 and the elder in verses 29 to 30. Both are addressed to the same father and both concern worthiness. Work through what each son believes he has earned, what each believes he deserves, and how the father's reply to each exposes the same underlying error.

2. The parable was told to Pharisees and scribes who murmured that Jesus receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. Read the ending with that audience in mind, and discuss why Jesus left the elder brother outside the house with the question unresolved rather than supplying a tidy conclusion. What is the cost to a church of never noticing which son it resembles?

Reflect & Apply

1. Both sons are estranged, and only one of them ever left home. The younger sought freedom through rebellion and the elder sought entitlement through compliance, and both treated the father as a means to something else. Which of the two describes your own default relationship with God more accurately, and what evidence would you cite?

2. The elder brother's complaint is that his obedience never earned him what his brother received without earning it. Where does resentment at unearned mercy shown to others reveal that you have been treating your own standing as wages rather than gift?

3. The father goes out of the house twice, once running toward open rebellion and once pleading with cold compliance. Consider that both departures cost him dignity in the eyes of the household. What does that tell you about what God is willing to spend to recover a person, and does it change what you assume he thinks of you at your worst?

4. Jesus leaves the ending open, with the elder brother still outside and the invitation still standing. Sit with the fact that the parable was told to people who saw themselves in that son. What would going in actually require of you?

Go Deeper — Cross-References

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“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8 (KJV)

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”

Ephesians 2:4-5 (KJV)

Answer Key

1. B. That he treated his living father as though already dead (Luke 15:12)
2. A. He divided unto them his living (Luke 15:12)
3. C. A mighty famine (Luke 15:14)
4. B. A citizen of that country (Luke 15:15)
5. C. No man gave unto him (Luke 15:16)
6. A. When he came to himself (Luke 15:17)
7. C. To be made as one of the hired servants (Luke 15:19)
8. B. He saw him when he was yet a great way off (Luke 15:20)
9. C. The request to be made a hired servant (Luke 15:19, 15:21)
10. A. The best robe, a ring, and shoes (Luke 15:22)
11. B. As years of service in which he never transgressed a commandment (Luke 15:29)
12. C. All that I have is thine (Luke 15:31)

