

A BOY AWAY FROM HOME

Luke 15:11-32



HOW much does God love us? Does He love us even if we have been bad? Oh yes, God loves us all the time. It makes God feel very sad when we get sin-spots in our heart, but He still loves us anyway and wants us to pray and get the sin-spots all cleaned out again. God wants us to tell Him we are sorry for being bad, and He will forgive us.

One time Jesus told a story about how to forgive someone who does the wrong thing and then says he is sorry.

Once upon a time a man had two boys. One day the younger one asked his daddy to give him the part of the money that would be his someday. He wanted the money so he could go away from home and do just what he wanted to, and his mother or daddy could not tell him, No, any more.

His daddy was a good daddy. He gave him the money and told him he could go. Away the boy went down the road, away from home and his family. He must have felt real big and smart to be going away where his mother and daddy could not see what he was doing.

Oh my, but that boy did have a good time! He had lots of new friends. He had money to buy whatever he liked. He almost forgot about home and his mother and daddy, until one day — one day something happened!

That boy looked in his purse and there was not any more money. No more money at all! He would have to find some of these new friends and ask them for something to eat. He did not have any place to sleep. What was he going to do now?

The people who said they were friends did not like him anymore because he did

not have money to buy them things. Now he knew they really were not his friends. It was only the things he bought that they liked, not him.

He had to go out and look for work, but he could not find any work. Lots of nights he was so hungry but there was not a bite to eat. He just had to go to bed without any dinner.

His clothes got so old they started to get big holes in them and some torn places. The worst part was being hungry.

One day a man said he would give the boy some work if he would do it. "I will be glad to do any work," the hungry boy told the man.

"All right," said the man, "go out in the field and take care of my pigs." Feed pigs! That was the work the boy had to do: dirty, grunty pigs. When he fed the pigs he was so hungry he almost ate the pigs' food. Nobody felt sorry for him. No one gave him anything to eat.

One day as he was with the pigs, he thought "Why am I out here hungry, and taking care of these old, grunty pigs in this dirty field. I am going home to my daddy. I am going to tell my daddy that I have been bad and that I am sorry; I am so sorry!"

The boy felt so ashamed of himself. He was not going to ask to live with his daddy in the pretty, big house where he lived with his brother before he went away. No, he was just going to ask if he could work for his daddy. He was hungry and his clothes were all full of holes. He just wanted something to eat and wear.

Walk - walk - walk, down the long, dusty road went the poor, hungry boy. He was going home. What would his daddy say? Would he let him have something to eat? The boy did not know.

Most fathers and mothers love their boys and girls. They never forget them. This boy's father and mother did not know where he was, but lots of times they would look way down the road and see if he was coming back home.

At last, one day, the daddy looked down the road, and what did he see? Not a man on horseback with good new clothes, but a lonesome, tired, dirty, hungry boy. The boy was so tired that he looked as if he would fall down.

He was a long, long way off and he did not look very good, but the daddy knew who it was. Yes, he knew. "IT IS OUR BOY COMING HOME," he called to the mother, and down the road the daddy ran as fast as he could to meet his boy.

Was the daddy mad? Oh no, he put both of his arms around the boy and kissed him. He took him to the house to get him some good, clean clothes and something to eat. They had a big dinner that night. It was better than a birthday party because the boy had been away so long and now he had come home.

The daddy did not care if he looked bad. He loved his boy no matter how he looked. They had prayed for him to come home.

The boy's brother was mad and would not even go into the house to the dinner. He

said he had been a good boy all the time and no one ever gave him a special dinner or treated him like that. The daddy tried to tell him that he loved him just as much; but he had been right there all the time. The older brother did not have much love in his heart for his lost brother.

Jesus is just like the kind, loving father in this story. Jesus is always waiting and watching for the boy or girl who had all the sin-spots cleaned out of their heart, but later forgot to pray and go to Sunday school, and then the sin-spots came in again, and made them bad.

Jesus is waiting and watching for them to say, "Jesus I am sorry. Please make my heart clean again." Jesus will take out all the bad, black spots and make that boy or girl happy again. God does not like the bad things you do at all but He still loves you, and wants to have you say you are sorry. He will always listen when you pray.

Did you know that all the angels in Heaven are happy when a little boy or girl prays to get a clean heart again? The Bible tells us that.

If you have some little sin-spots in your heart let us pray and ask God to take them out right now. Tell Him you are sorry. He is your Heavenly Father, He will hear you.