

Interview with the Prodigal Son

by Bryan Gibson

The parable of the prodigal son is found in Luke 15:11-32. I encourage you to read it in full before you read the rest of this article. Using what we learn from the text of the parable to form his answers, let's ask the prodigal son a few questions about his experiences. Here's hoping this will help someone who has taken that same journey into the "far country" (world).

Question #1: Why did you leave your Father's house in the first place?

Whatever may have been on my mind, it gave me freedom—the freedom to do **what** I wanted to do, **when** I wanted to do it. And that's exactly what I did—in fact, I spent every bit of money I had.

Question #2: What was it like out in the far country?

Not even close to what I thought it would be. I thought I was free, but I ended up in the confines of a pig pen. I thought I was free, but I became a slave—a slave to this so called "free lifestyle."

And I'll tell you something else about the far country—it's hard to find true friends in that place. When I was at my lowest point, at the point when I needed help the most, no one helped me; no one was there to give me what I needed the most. What I'm trying to tell you is that love, in its highest form, does not exist in the far country. You can find it in my Father's house, but you won't find it there.

Question #3: Why did you decide to go back to your Father's house?

I finally came to my senses. I realized that the folks back in my Father's house were a whole lot better off than me, that the life I once had was much, much better than I ever thought. I thought the far country had a lot to offer, but it was really just an illusion. There's nothing substantial about it; it doesn't last, and it leaves you feeling empty. If anyone understands the phrase, "the passing pleasures of sin," it's me!

People tell you, "If you really want to live, go to the far country." That's a lie. It's more like, "If you really want to die, go to the far country." Because that's what happened to me—I died, not physically of course, but in all the ways that matter the most. My soul, the only part of me that will endure, was just as dead as it could be. I returned to my Father because I wanted to live again. I returned to my Father because I was lost and needed to be found—by someone who truly cared.

Question #4: What kind of reception did you get when you returned to your Father's house?

Better than I deserved, I can tell you that. I squandered all my money—my Father's money—on prodigal living, yet when I went back and humbly confessed my sin, my Father received me with open arms. And let me just tell you, I've never seen such rejoicing in all my life. Now I know what true freedom feels like.