

## **Come to Life Again**

Luke 15:11-32

### **Introduction:**

During the Christmas season hearts are pulled to go back “home.”

Military service men and women want to be home with family.

Anyone whose work keeps them on the road, might desire to be home.

Children want to visit their parents or grandparents.

People who have been estranged want to be with family and/or friends.

Have you come back home to the family of God?

Luke 15:11-32

### **I. Have you come back from the distant place?**

The younger son “went on a journey into a distant country” (v. 13).

He put distance between himself, his father, and his family.

He was thinking about wealth (v. 11) and freedom (v. 17-19).

Dissolute living is lacking restraint, marked by indulgence in things; a multitude of translations help us understand the living of this younger son when he was away from home.

Loose living, prodigal living, reckless living, riotous living, and wild living translate the Greek text.

His chosen style of living created separation; he moved, not his father or brother or anyone else.

In the distance disrespected people are left behind.

The father was disrespected.

The younger son was going against his upbringing.

The father had worked to gain the estate he wanted to give to his sons one day.

The share that was to go with the younger son was wasted.

The older son was disrespected.

This may be part of the reason the older son became angry (v. 28).

The older son had to do more work with the absence of his younger brothers help (v. 25).

The hired men were disrespected—more work was added to them.

### **II. Have you come back from the famine?**

After the younger son “squandered his estate with loose living...a severe famine occurred in that country” (vv. 13 and 14).

A famine is a great shortage, usually of food, but the younger son experienced a famine of other things.

A great shortage of friends (v. 16 “no one was giving anything to him”).

A great shortage of things (v. 13 “gathered everything together” “squandered his estate,” v. 14 “spent everything” “began to be impoverished-reduced to poverty”).

A great shortage of opportunities (v. 15 he was sent to feed swine and v. 16 “no one was giving anything to him”).

A great shortage of wealth (his “share of the estate” v. 12 ran out).

Eventually, the famine must be faced.

### **III. Have you come back from the senselessness?**

Verse 17 says, “he came to his senses.”

When the younger son left, he was thinking about the wealth and the freedom.

He likely ignored the advice of his father.

He probably disregarded the discipline and instruction of his father.

When the younger son came to his senses (v. 17), he was thinking about who and what supplied the wealth (Father, work, more than enough bread), and responsibility—with freedom comes responsibility, while responsibility may earn freedom.

The phrase “when he came to his senses” indicates the younger son came to himself (vv. 18 and 19).

It is senseless to consider all the expectations and reactions that come from pride and shame.

Pride and shame lead people to believe they know how others will respond to them.

The younger son did not focus on what he thought his father would do or say.

If he would have, he likely would have talked himself out of returning home.

Having come to his senses, the younger son returned to the father who responded sensibly (vv. 20-24).

He saw his son.

He felt compassion.

He ran to his son.

He embraced him.

He kissed him.

He prepared to celebrate.

### **IV. Have you come back from the sin?**

The younger son came to his senses, acknowledging what he was missing (enough bread), where he was (dying here with hunger), what he should do (I will get up and go to my Father), how he should handle going home (acknowledging his sin, accepting his unworthiness, and appreciating what his father could give him).

Then came the most difficult part of the comeback; v. 20 says, “So he got up and came to his father.”

The younger son was the only one who could make the decisions required to come back.

The father could not make the decisions for his son, the older brother could not choose for his brother, the man who sent him “into his fields to feed swine” could not decide for him.

The decision to change had to come from the younger son.

Reality had to be accepted; things were better before he left home.

A lot of pride had to cease, be cut off, and be destroyed.

A lot of shame had to be overcome.

The younger son had to carry out the right course of action.

He had to get up.

He had to leave his surroundings and go to a new place.

He had to return to his father.

## **V. Have you come back to safety and soundness?**

The father received his younger son “back safe and sound” (v. 27).

All that the younger son had done living at a distance, living in famine, senselessness, and sin was endangering himself.

The younger son endangered his physical health (by the famine v. 14 and prostitutes v. 30), mental health (by the weight of poor choices), and spiritual health (by the sin against heaven and in the sight of his father v. 18).

## **VI. Have you come back to life?**

The father said to the older son, “we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found” (v. 32).

At home, the younger son, along with the older son/brother, enjoyed all that belonged to the father (v. 31).

### **Application:**

Have you come back to the family of God?

Following Covid, our attitude toward gathering really did a number on our willingness to come together.

The wealth of additional time to spend how we wish has promoted greediness that wants to hold on to the extra time for selfish reasons.

Freedom from pesky people who are concerned about our spiritual well-being set us in a routine of avoidance from which some have not returned.

Like the church at Ephesus, some have left their first love (Revelation 2:4); they have left Christ and His bride—the church.

Have you faced the famine?

A shortage of godly people, things, and exercises has left some spiritually impoverished.

A shortage of friends, things, opportunities, and/or wealth has left some lonely, depressed, and senseless.

Have you come to your senses?

Stop worrying about how you think people will respond to you—this is senseless.

God gives every good thing and perfect gift (James 1:17).

Your responsibility is to God.

Have you left sin?

You are the only one who can leave your sins.

You are the only one who can come back for you.

Have you returned safe and sound?

Sinners get trapped in sin (James 1:14 and 15) because they are carried away and enticed by their own lust, they give into to the lust, and sin results.

If a sinner stays in sin, James says, “when sin is accomplished it brings forth death.”

Have you come back to life?

“Even when we were dead in our transgressions, [God] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (Ephesians 2:5).

In 2 Corinthians 5:15, the Bible says that Christ “died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.”

Paul wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Galatians 2:20).

We cannot remain at a distance, whatever the cause, and be reunited.

We cannot stay in a famine and survive.

We cannot continue in senselessness and receive the prodigal son's return celebration.

We cannot persist in sin and obtain a better outcome.

We cannot live in danger and be in good physical and mental health.

We cannot go on dying and live.

### **Conclusion:**

Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.

Make 2023 a comeback year; It is never too soon to start a comeback, so start now.

Come back from whatever distance you have separated from God.

Come back from the famine or great shortage of godly people, things, and exercises in your life.

Come back from the senselessness that led you away, has kept you away, and is keeping you from coming to your senses.

Come back from the sin to which you are a slave (Romans 6:6).

Come back to safety and soundness; come back to life.

Repent of the sin done against heaven.

Confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world.

Be baptized to wash away your past sins.

Children of God the Father can come back by repenting and asking God through prayer for forgiveness.

Come to life again! The Father is waiting and watching.