

# **JOURNEYING TO A DISTANT COUNTRY**

**By Titus Chu**

The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) is considered by many Bible scholars to be the prince of all the parables. This brief story reveals the two facts that are most crucial for every human being to know. First, it reveals that the triune God has a purpose; second, it shows that man has a need. God our Father is unsearchably rich, and His heart's desire is that men, as the sons in God's household, would possess and thoroughly enjoy all of His riches, which are actually God Himself to be possessed by us as our life. Man, on the other hand, has become corrupted and defiled, wandering helplessly in Satan's kingdom. He needs to be rescued out of this negative situation by returning to God to be cleansed, filled, and fully satisfied by God's wonderful provision.

## **THE STORY OF A SON**

A father has two sons to whom he divides the inheritance. The younger son leaves his father's house and journeys to a distant country. He represents many of us, who should be in the kingdom of God, but have journeyed into the kingdom of Satan. In the sight of God, the whole universe is composed of only two kingdoms: God's and Satan's. If we are not in God's house, enjoying an intimate relationship with God our Father and partaking of His riches in His presence, we are in the kingdom of Satan.

Friends, do you have the sensation that God is so sweet to you, that He is truly the source and substance of your every enjoyment, and that you are so satisfied with Him? If not, you have journeyed into Satan's kingdom. You do not have to go far. The Bible calls it a "distant country" because it is altogether another realm, totally different in nature from where God wants man to be.

Why does man wander into Satan's realm? Because he does not realize the Father's desire and provision. God wants men to be His sons, and He has given men His riches to enjoy freely. But man takes all that God has given him and, considering it his fortune, tries to utilize it to build up something for himself. By seeking the elements outside of God, he wanders into Satan's kingdom. There, man becomes corrupted and sinful; he wastes what God has given him until all his fortune is spent.

### **Have You Missed the High Purpose of God's Creation?**

Friends, can you see such a pattern in your own lives? Perhaps when you were younger, you felt that you had an abundance of resources, so much to spend. But the more the years go by, the more you discover how limited you are. Furthermore, you find yourselves ensnared by many things you thought you would never get into. At one time, you considered certain things as being beneath you, and you despised them. Now, it seems, you need them. You keep feeding on them, and you keep wanting to feed on them, although they afford you no nourishment. Eventually, you discover that you are entangled in so much that is unclean.

Nevertheless, God does not want man to be in this kind of condition. God has endowed man with so much. He never intended that any should become alcoholics or chain smokers or get involved in stealing, gambling, or immorality. God created man for such a high purpose - to be His sons, dwelling in His house, participating in Himself as man's life. But man has wasted everything and become the partaker of the refuse of Satan's kingdom.

### **Coming Back to the Father for Forgiveness and Enjoyment**

This is the turning point in this parable, as well as in the story of every person who turns to Jesus Christ. It is after coming to himself that the son rises up, leaves the swine and the husks, and returns to his father. May we all not only awaken to our real condition, but also turn to consider our Father. While we are still in our pitiful situation, God desires to restore us to the position that He originally intended for us: sons in His house. By coming to God we will receive such a position, in which we will enjoy not only the Father's love and forgiveness, but also the heavenly justification according to God, as well as the rich provision and satisfaction in His house.

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