

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Luke 15:11-32.**
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (8-7-94).
- C. The text says, "...I perish with hunger."
 - 1. Here is a confession that is familiar to most Bible students.
 - 2. The one who made it is usually called The Prodigal.
 - 3. It remains a lesson for each of us:
 - a. To the person mainly seeking pleasure in sin.
 - b. To the individual just starting the Xian life.
 - c. To the soul burdened down with humiliation and sorrow.
 - d. To the traveler whose journey is almost completed.

I. HE LEFT HOME TO PLEASE HIMSELF.

- A. There are many reasons he did not have for leaving home. He did not:
 - 1. Leave to better himself, as an education.
 - 2. Leave to serve others.
 - 3. Leave to worship and serve God.
 - 4. Suddenly decide to go to a far country to wreck himself:
 - a. He was no monstrosity, but much like you and me.
 - b. He surely had no thought of ending up broke in a pigpen.
 - c. No one in his right mind sets out to end on a garbage dump.
(No train leaves the station to be wrecked. No ship leaves the harbor to sink.)
 - d. No young person sets out to ruin himself, but very often one sets out without serious consideration of the logical consequences of the course of action planned.
 - 5. He was probably so intent on doing as HE pleased, that he did not even think about
- B. He left home to please himself. And pleasing self is the source of many sins and much pain.

II. BUT PLEASING SELF IS EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE.

- A. Selfishness pushes away those who love us.
 - 1. We cannot love ourselves the most and still love others (selfishness is exclusive).
 - 2. Jesus pointed out this principle in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 6:24).
 - 3. Even if only God knows, we still rob ourselves of self-respect and peace of mind.
- B. The price of sin came very high to this young man.
 - 1. It cost him the joy of home and his family.
 - a. So it is when we break fellowship with God.
 - b. He became a homeless wanderer.
 - c. To leave God is to go from the heart's true home.
 - d. There is nothing for us except disappointment and homesickness, until we go home.
 - 2. It cost him the LOSS of freedom.
 - a. What irony! Freedom was what he was seeking.
 - b. It is an old and oft-repeated story:
 - 1) Samson took a fling at freedom.
 - 2) He went for a holiday in Gaza.
 - 3) He ended up in fetters of brass and as a blind slave in prison.
 - c. We may be able to play w/sin for a while, but it slowly turns the tables on us.
 - d. There is no real freedom, except in conforming to God's law and being responsible for our behavior.

3. It cost him by having to do what he despised.
 - a. A young Jew probably could not think of a task more disgusting than feeding hogs-an unclean animal. They are still “unclean” and an “odious” task.
 - b. It was tragic and costly because of the fine opportunities that he threw away.
4. It cost him all of his possessions.
 - a. He became a morally and spiritually bankrupt.
 - b. Every person who follows the road of pleasing-self will lose it all some day.
 - c. This young man did not lose it all in one day, but over time.
 - d. What did he get for his share in his inheritance?
 - 1) A pinched face, an empty heart, and a starving body.
 - 2) “I perish with hunger,” he said. He was starving to death.

II. **BUT THE PRODIGAL CAME BACK HOME.**

We love this story most because it has a happy ending.

- A. “He came to himself.”
 1. This term refers to one regaining consciousness or regaining sanity.
 2. It means a return to normal.
- B. He regained his sanity and faced the facts.
It is like a sick person who is afraid to go to the doctor for fear that it will be incurable--as though ignoring the condition will cure it.
- C. Having come to himself, he now makes a decision.
 1. He did not say, “It is hopeless, I will kill myself.”
 2. He did not say, “I will arise and reform.”
 3. He did not say, “I will arise and go to work.”
 4. He said, “I will arise and go to my father.”
 5. He also resolved to confess his wrongs (15:21).
- D. He put his decision into effect.
 1. He arose from the hog pen and headed home.
 2. We are happy to see him start back home, but the most tender scene is yet to come.
 - a. “His father saw him” (15:20).
 - b. “He ran--fell on his neck and kissed him.” He ran because he loved him (15:22-24).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The prodigal is every one living outside the will of God.
- B. To be at home with God is to say, “Not my will, but Thine be done.
- C. Since this is the way of wisdom, don’t put it off.
 1. Every day you put off your decision, you remain a slave of sin.
 2. Never again will a decision to render obedience mean more than it does now.
 3. Will you say, “I will arise and go to my Father.”
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.