

Scout may not know it, but he has taken his first step toward God.

In the story Jesus told about the prodigal son, a young man left home and wasted his inheritance. When his money was all gone, he took a job tending pigs. He had hit bottom. There he sat, surrounded by pigs, feeling the gnawing hunger in his belly. He thought about home, his dad, and his father's hired men. And "he came to himself" (Lk. 15:17). Changing his mind about the direction his life had been going, he decided to go back home and admit how wrong he had been.

How about you? Have you come to your senses? --HWR

Think About It

*Have you ever decided to trust Christ as your Saviour?
Is there sin in your life that needs to be confessed?
Doesn't it make sense to accept the Father's love?*

**A broken heart is the first step
to spiritual wholeness.**



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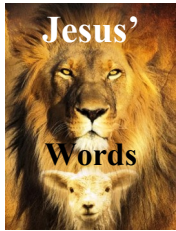
It Makes Sense

When he came to himself, he said, ". . . I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned.' --Luke 15:17-18

In his book 'Life After God', Douglas Coupland writes about Scout, a member of "the first generation raised without religion." Scout lost his wife and son because she "just stopped being in love." He trafficked in drugs and lived in a spiritual wasteland, but for an instant at least he "came to his senses."

Scout confessed, "My secret is that I need God--that I am sick and can no longer make it alone. I need God to help me give, because I no longer seem capable of giving; to help me be kind, as I no longer seem capable of kindness; to help me love, as I seem beyond being able to love."





Prodigals

There are two extraordinary actions in Luke 15:12, in a crisis situation, that we need to understand:

1. The son wants it all, verses 12-13 [last time]

- #1. The prodigal wants choices without consequences, v 13-15
- #2. The prodigal wants autonomy without accountability, v 12-13
- #3. The prodigal wants to leave without loss,
- #4. The prodigal rejects roles and responsibilities, verses 12-13
- #5. The prodigal rejects advice and Biblical truth,

In application, we can go wrong by:

- #1. Emotional over-investment,
- #2. Removing consequences,
- #3. Inappropriate caution and patience,



2. The father _____, verses 20, 32

#1. Rugged love will _____ what is _____,

(Romans 12:9) Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

(1 Corinthians 13:6) does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

(Jude 1:21-23) keep yourselves in the love of God, ... **(Jude 1:22)** And on some have compassion, ...; **(Jude 1:23)** but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, ..

#2. Rugged love is determined to do _____, verse 12

(Romans 12:9) Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. [alternate translation]

(Romans 12:21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

(Genesis 3:21) Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

(1 Corinthians 5:5) deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

(2 Corinthians 2:6-7) This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, **(2 Corinthians 2:7)** so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, ...

(1 Corinthians 7:15) But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

(1 Corinthians 7:16) For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

#3. Wise love also enforces _____, verses 12-18

(Romans 1:18-28) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **(Romans 1:19)** because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

(Romans 1:20) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, **(Romans 1:21)** because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **(Romans 1:22)** Professing to be wise, they became fools,

(Romans 1:23) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image ... **(Romans**

1:24) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, **(Romans 1:25)** who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. **(Romans 1:26)** For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. **(Romans 1:27)** Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. **(Romans 1:28)** And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; **(1 Corinthians 6:9-11)** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, **(10)** nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **(11)** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

(James 1:20) for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

When is the right time?

- Have you been _____?
- Have you excluded _____ issues?
- Have your _____ lost all influence?
- Have you had much grace, truth, and patience with little _____?
- Is the prodigal breaking all _____ and _____?

#4. Wise rugged love will continue to _____, **(Romans 2:4)** .. the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

#5. Love will continue to be _____, verses 18-20

(Romans 4:13-18) For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ... **(Romans 4:16)** Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, ... **(Romans 4:17)** (as it is written, "I HAVE MADE YOU A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS") in the presence of Him whom he believed"; ... **(Romans 4:18)** who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE."

#6. Wise love is ready to _____, verses 21-24

(Ephesians 4:32) And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you

