



Short Stories that Speak Volumes for Our Lives

A Father's Love

Jesus said, "The son got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him" (Luke 15:20).

He was homeless, smelly, and almost starving to death. But the worst thing was that he knew it was all his fault. He thought his father was cruel and overbearing; there were too many rules. He wanted freedom. He wanted to have fun, but his father was all about responsibility and hard work. So, he asked for his share of the inheritance. He didn't care about the farm; he just wanted the money. As soon as he got it, he left. He could finally do what he wanted to do. But it didn't take long, and all that money was gone—partying is expensive. Those he thought were his friends left as soon as he ran out of money. He was all alone and miserable. He had two choices, and neither seemed pleasant. He could continue as he was and hope he could scrape enough together each day so that he wouldn't starve to death, or he could go back home.

He headed for home. He was prepared to grovel, to ask to be just a hired hand on his father's farm. But he didn't get the opportunity to do much groveling. As soon as his father saw him coming, he ran out to meet him. He hugged and kissed him and gave orders for a huge celebration in his honor. The rebellious son had expected a cool reception. He had expected an "I told you so." Instead he got what he knew he didn't deserve: a joyous welcome home.

You and I are that young man who rebelled against his father. We have all rebelled against our heavenly Father. We have considered him to be cruel and overbearing and having too many rules—someone who doesn't want us to have any fun. We have all separated ourselves from him and broken his commandments. Our consciences tell us that he is angry, that we deserve whatever pain or suffering comes our way. Could our heavenly Father still love us? Could he still welcome us to his eternal home in heaven?

Jesus' story about the disobedient son in Luke 15:11-24 is a short story that speaks volumes for our lives. It assures us of God's love and our heavenly home. Our heavenly Father loves us so much that he punished his obedient Son, Jesus, in our place so that he can welcome us as his dear children and heirs of eternal life. Instead of giving us what we deserve for our rebelliousness, he gives us what we don't deserve: complete forgiveness in Jesus.

We welcome you to gather with us for worship and learn more about our heavenly Father's love.