

# The Other Prodigal

by Harold Vaughan

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*The other prodigal, the elder brother, is also a prodigal, but in a different way, guilty of the sins of the spirit, not just the flesh.*

**Duration:** 51:57

**Scripture:** Proverbs 27:19, Matthew 6:33, Luke 15:11-28, Romans 3:23

**Topics:** "Prodigal Son"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the parable of the prodigal son. He emphasizes the father's unconditional love and forgiveness towards his wayward son who had wasted his inheritance. The father eagerly welcomes him back, embraces him, and celebrates his return with a grand feast. The preacher also highlights the contrast between the younger prodigal and the elder son, who is bitter and resentful. He encourages the audience to reflect on their own spiritual condition and reminds them of the importance of gratitude and repentance.

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## Transcript

Christ Himself is speaking, Luke chapter 15, verse 11, the Gospel of Luke chapter 15, beginning in verse 11. And Jesus said, And he said, A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them said unto his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

And he would fain have filled his belly with the husk that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and despair, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again.

He was lost, and is found, and they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing, and he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

And he was angry. The elder brother was angry, and would not go in. Therefore came his father out, and entreated him, and he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends.

But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was me that we should make merry, and be glad.

For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found. Now, most preaching from this portion of Scripture is directed at what we've come to call the prodigal son. The prodigal son is stated in the story.

He demanded his inheritance early. He left home. He squandered his substance.

He squandered his money. He lived in out-and-out sin. He wound up feeding a bunch of pigs, and at last he finally came to himself and returned home to his father.

Now, the prodigal, as the story indicates, he indulged the sins of the flesh. The prodigal son was living in rebellion. He was living an immoral life.

He was groveling in the world. He was involved in all sorts of sins and drunkenness. And the prodigal sins were obvious.

Where he was, what he was doing, and the way he lived indicated that he was very, very far from God. Now, the word prodigal means exceedingly wasteful. The word prodigal means exceedingly wasteful or recklessly wasteful.

Now, while the young prodigal was out wasting his father's inheritance, the elder brother was exceedingly wasteful in an entirely different way. And tonight I want to speak to you on the subject of the prodigal that stayed home or the other prodigal. Now, you can never tell that the older brother had problems by observation.

By looking at this guy, you would never know there was anything wrong with him. The elder brother was in the right place. The elder brother was doing the right thing.

In a contemporary setting, the other prodigal, the elder brother, would have made the who's who. And the young prodigal would have made the who's he. He was a loser from every, every human point of view.

Now, while the prodigal was, while the young prodigal was wasting his inheritance in a far country, the other prodigal was working in his father's field. While the prodigal's sins were obvious, the other prodigal's sins were invisible. The prodigal's sins were external, but the other prodigal's sins were internal.

The prodigal's sins were sins of action, but the other prodigal's sins were sins of attitude. The prodigal's sins were sins of the body, but the other prodigal's sins were sins of the spirit of the heart. And while the prodigal's sins were sins of the flesh, the other prodigal's sins were sins of the spirit.

Now, the prodigal, he was full of sin and he needed to repent And thank God he did. But the other prodigal was full of self and he needed to repent just as much as his younger brother. My brother, I want to tell you that the other prodigal was just as far, just as far in heart from his father as the younger product.

Now in his crowd decides tonight, there's no doubt I might be talking to some who are involved in the sins of the flesh, but I'm absolutely certain tonight in a crowd like this, I'm speaking to some here tonight. You're not involved in the sins of the flesh like the prodigal, but tonight you might be like the other prodigal and you're involved in the sins. You're guilty of the sins of the spirit.

You know, for every prodigal that goes off into the far country, there's always 100 elder brothers that always stick around home. And I'll tell you something about the elder brother type, the elder brother types. They always love to hear preaching directed at the younger prodigal.

You get up and preach on deadbeat dads, corrupt politicians, you get up and preach on drug addicts and sodomites, you'll even get the Presbyterian crowd to shout amen. But I'll tell you, it's always easier to say amen when the preaching is directed at somebody else's feelings and the elder brother loves to hear preaching directed at the prodigal. Now, the elder brother was convinced that his sins were not even comparable to the sins of his younger brother.

Sure, he'd be willing to admit things would be could be better, but he was convinced in his heart that his sins were absolutely inconsequential compared to those of his younger brother. He really didn't think his sins were all that serious. I believe that the other prodigal made three mistakes right off the bat.

Number one, he made an unwise comparison. He made an unwise comparison. The Bible talks about a crowd that measure themselves among themselves and compare themselves by themselves.

And they are not wise. He made an unwise comparison. Number two, he was unaware of his true, true condition.

He had spoken focus so exclusively on the external wickedness of his younger brother. He was absolutely unaware of the depravity and the desperate state of his own heart. And then number three, he underestimated the seriousness of his sins.

Somebody said the sins of the flesh, the sins of the flesh are like headlights in oncoming traffic. They always seem to be more glaring than our own. Amen.

Oh, they look so terrible, but we don't have any time. We don't have the idea that ours might be as glaring to God as those. Now, David was a man after the heart of God.

Nowhere in the Bible do we find that God describes a man like this. David, a man after God's own heart. And I'm sorry to have to report tonight that you already know that David, a man after God's own heart, he

indulged the sins of the flesh and committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Now, when he did it, four people died as a consequence of his stinking sin of adultery. But I want you to understand something. David indulged the sins of the flesh.

But David, a man after God's own heart, he also indulged the sins of the spirit. And when David numbered the people, four people didn't die. Seventy thousand people died.

Now, my brothers and my sisters, the night when David committed adultery, the sins of the flesh, what happened? Four people died as a consequence. But when David, a man after God's own heart, numbered the people and perhaps an appeal to pride, 70,000 Israelites lost their lives, not when he committed adultery, but when he numbered the people, the sins of the spirit. Now, I don't want you to get the wrong understanding that the sins of the flesh are serious before God.

It says in First Corinthians, chapter six and verse nine, Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? This is contrary to what you're hearing on the Christian broadcast in America. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived. The Bible says neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.

My brethren, I'm here today. All right, the sins of the flesh are serious and the sins of the flesh are serious enough to send a person to hell. Some of you sitting here tonight, you are never tempted with the sins of the flesh.

That's just your makeup. You're never tempted with the sins of the flesh. Like some, you're never tempted to go out and get drunk.

You're never tempted to go out here and smoke marijuana. You're never tempted to go and listen to some dirty, filthy rock music. You're never tempted to go and watch a vulgar movie somewhere.

there, you are not tempted with the sins of the flesh. But I want you to understand something as bad as the sins of the flesh are, the sins of the spirit are even worse in the sight of God. You said, well, you base that on.

I base that on Matthew chapter 11 and verse 24, where Jesus said, and thou Capernaum, Capernaum by the sea, which are exalted under heaven. Our Lord Jesus Christ, God incarnate came and spoke to a city called Capernaum. And he said, you're exalted to heaven, but he said, you shall be brought down to hell.

Listen to what Jesus said. He said, for at the mighty works, which had been done in thee should have been done in Sodom. If the works had been done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained into this day.

But I say unto you that it should be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee. This is a shocking thing. Jesus said to self-righteous, self-satisfied Capernaum by the sea, it would be more tolerable in the day of judgment for a bunch of Sodomites than for you.

My brethren, I want you to understand something tonight. It's Sodom. They indulge the sins of the flesh.

And that was bad enough. So bad that God instituted an urban renewal program and absolutely burned them off the face of the earth. But you better understand something tonight that the sins of the spirit are

worse than the sight of God than the sins of the flesh.

Isn't that what he said? More tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee. I believe in this parable tonight, men and women, that this prodigal son is representative of the Gentile people who throughout history have indulged the sins of the flesh big time and nothing has changed. And I believe in this parable, the other prodigal is representative of the Jewish nation, who, though they were self-righteous and proud, indulged the sins of the spirit.

Now, tonight, I want to talk to you about the other product. The other product was not guilty of the sins of the flesh, but the other product was guilty of the hidden sins, the unseen sins, the sins of the spirit. You said, well, what kind of sins was the other prodigal guilty of? Well, number one, he was guilty of the sin of unrighteous anger, of unrighteous anger.

Verse twenty eight says, and he was angry and he was angry. Do you realize tonight? There's such a thing as positive anger and negative anger that there is such a thing as righteous anger and unrighteous anger. My brethren, tonight, there's such a thing as holy anger and sinful anger.

And I've got a shocking announcement tonight that Almighty God is the angriest person in the universe, because the Bible says that he is angry with the wicked every day. And that's a holy anger. There's a night.

There is a place for holy anger. When, when, when Satan came in the form of a serpent to Adam and Eve and told a bunch of lies, they should have got boiling mad, challenged his lies, picked up stones and kill that serpent. They should have gotten angry.

And if they had a got angry with him, it would have been a righteous anger, a holy anger. But I don't have to tell you tonight that most anger in our world is unrighteous anger. You know, it's gotten to the point now where we even now have anger management courses in workplaces on the jobs.

Postal service really needs a lot of these anger management courses that I can put up with some of these people that work for them. What's the problem? People are angry. I'll tell you some so-called militiamen got angry enough to bomb the federal building in Oklahoma city and kill 167 innocent people.

Those bombs, because they were angry with the government and God didn't call his people to take up arms against the government. Go ahead and give me an amen on that point. Right there.

I go to some churches where we individual vigilante ism. And that is not the answer. My friend is not the answer.

The feminists are angry. They were marching down the street in a demonstration. They had a large banner and it read, it read rage plus women equals power.

I'm glad I wasn't there on the street that day. Amen. Rage plus women equals power.

I'll tell you, that's an angry man. We've got some angry women. One man said that he thought he was married to an angel.

He said he thought he was married to an angel because his wife was always up in the air harping about something. I wonder, I wonder what she would have said about him. Amen.

But a lot of angry people, there's no doubt about it. Now, the other particle was an angry man. Why was he angry? He was angry because of the wicked behavior of his brother.

Number two, he was angry because of his father, father's treatment of his brother. And number three, he was angry because of his father's treatment of him. Now, let's just talk briefly tonight about the root of unrighteous anger.

Why are people angry? Why is there so much hostility? Well, number one, number one reason is because of self-preservation, self-preservation. Now, the other particle feared that he was going to be upstaged by his younger brother, self-preservation. Number two, self-pity.

You know what he told his father when his father came out to meet him? You never killed a kid for me. You never did anything for me. I've served you all these years.

Self-pity. He didn't feel appreciated. He didn't feel recognized.

He said, this is unfair. I deserve better than this. All these years I've served the self-pity.

And then number three, selfish rights, selfish rights. He was clinging to his rights, a dead giveaway, a dead giveaway. He had not surrendered his rights to almighty God.

Now, brethren, this is the root of unrighteous anger, self-preservation, self-pity and selfish rights. And selfishness is the root of all unrighteous anger. You know what our Lord Jesus Christ said? He said that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.

Now, friend, if you feel angry tonight, angry with your brother without a cause. I go to a lot of churches where people are angry with their brothers, some with cause and some without. Jesus said, you're in danger of the judgment.

Can I say to you tonight, dear people, we don't have an anger problem. What we've got is a self problem. Friends, we don't have a problem.

We are the problem. And the problem is we're self-righteous and self-centered and we'll never get victory over unrighteous anger until we surrender our rights to Jesus Christ. Now, what's the answer to unrighteous anger? The answer is not to express it, to beat the wall and yell at somebody like certain drivers in certain states.

I'm not going to call any names right there. Amen. The answer is not to express it.

The answer is not to suppress it and pretend it's not there to bury it, to ignore it, to deny it. That's not the answer. What's the answer to unrighteous anger? It's not to express it.

It's not to suppress it. What's the answer? The answer is a crucified self. Brother, when we deny ourselves and take up the cross, we are dead to our right.

When we turn everything over to God and brother, God goes to bat for us and we don't have to take a vengeance ourselves. I want to tell you, the Bible says, And an angry man stirs up strife and a furious man abounded in transgression. Unrighteous anger is a hidden sin of the spirit.

It's a sin that the other prodigal normally has. Let me give you a hit, a second hidden sin of the spirit tonight that the other prodigal was guilty of, and that was the sin of an unfounded jealousy and unfounded jealousy. You know, Roy Hession says that jealousy is the only sin that nobody gets any enjoyment out of.

Think about it. Jealousy is the only sin that nobody gets any pleasure out of. You know, with most sins, you get a momentary something good, at least a momentary, at least, but with jealousy, nobody gets any pleasure out of it.

And I want to tell you the problem with the other prodigal that he was a jealous man. It says in James chapter three, But if you have bitter envy, if you have bitter envy and strife in your hearts, worry not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descended not from above, but it's earthly, sensual, devilish.

It's demonic for where envy and strife is, there's confusion and every evil work. My brethren, I want to tell you this is a demonic hidden sin of the spirit, the sin of jealousy and envy. Now, when the prodigal came home, the other prodigal got jealous of the way the father treated his brother.

He got jealous because I think he feared he might lose his inheritance. And I'm sure he was jealous because now he had lost the undivided attention of his father. And he justified himself.

And he said, These many years have I served the enemy tonight to always justify our position on any issue. You can justify anything, my friend, in the flesh. You can rationalize anything.

And the Bible says that the way of a man is right in his own eyes. But God try it away at the hearts. My brethren, he judged his brother.

But not only that, he justified himself. He judged his brother and he did it under the guise of taking up an offense. You would have even told his father.

His father said, These many years I've served you and so on and so forth. And this by son has devoured by living with a bunch of harlots and so on and so forth. And he was trying to get the father to go against his brother.

It was all a guy. He really wasn't concerned about the fact that his father's money had been spent. He was upset with his brother and he was jealous.

That's what the problem was. He was a jealous man. Now, when I started preaching about 16, 17 years ago, something like that, I remember my wife and I, we struck out.

We preach all over the country. One summer we did 80 churches, not one year. One summer we did 80 churches and 40 states.

One summer, brother, I'd hate to do it now. But I remember when I first started preaching, we were out there all over the place and we used to get that sword of the Lord of magazine and I'd read in their evangelist. So and so had 300 say, and then I read down evangelist.

So and so had 200 say, and I read in evangelist. So and so had 50 say 500 say, and then I read that and I said to myself, Well, no wonder they're having all those professions of faith. They're preaching easy believers.

No wonder they're having all those professions of faith. And God came along to me one day and said, Harold, the problem is not easy believism, but your problem is jealousy, jealousy. Friend, have you ever seen? Have you ever seen? Have you ever dealt with? I think it's right down there at the bottom of the stack with pride and lust and all the rest read this problem of an unfounded jealousy.

Did you read in U.S. U.S.A. today? Some months, a couple of months ago about that giant squid, 22 foot squid they caught up, washed up somewhere in a net somewhere. Another probably out here where you got all this oil in the ocean up here. Amen.

But this giant squid. Now, my son, my son, Brandon and Michael, they got this book called Giants of the Deep and they got all these great sea monsters in there. And one of them is a giant squid can be 65 feet long.

I read in the paper how they launched an expedition expedition to spend five million dollars, five million dollars to go in search of the giants of the deep. They're going to go out there and look for these giant squid going to spend five million dollars. I wonder tonight, my brother, have you ever dealt with that green eyed monster called jealousy? Have you ever confronted that green eyed monster called envy? I want to tell you it's a hidden sin.

It doesn't lay on the surface. Nobody can know it's there, but God knows it's there. And I want to tell you it's a sin of the spirit that's wicked in the sight of God.

Let me give you a third sin of the spirit that the other prodigal was guilty of. He was guilty of the hidden sin of the spirit of an ungrateful heart, an ungrateful heart. Man, when the prodigal came home, the father threw a party for him, killed the cat and had cheese steak.

Amen. I mean, brother, they really, they really went all out. I mean, brother, they just did it upright and they threw a tremendous party.

But the other prodigal drew near. He heard all kinds of music going on, dancing, going on, carrying on. Obviously not a fundamental church event.

And they were all having a great time and throwing a real party and carrying on. And he didn't know what was going on. And he got secondhand information.

And when he found out from one of his servants that his father had thrown a party for his for his brother. Now, the other prodigal didn't appreciate the fact that his father had provided for him every day of his entire life. And one fatted can was absolutely nothing in comparison to the continual care he had received from his father.

What was his problem? His problem is he was ungrateful. He was ungrateful. You know, the Gospels, how the Jesus healed ten lepers.

Jesus healed ten lepers. How many of them came back to thank him? What happened to the other nine? They all joined a Baptist church. Now, I had a guy tell me that one time as a joke, but the more I thought about it, I don't think he was joking.

I think he was serious. Now, Brethren, unthankfulness is serious in the eyes of God. You better get it down.

Romans chapter one, that when they knew God, they glorify him not as God. Neither were they thankful, but became vain in their imagination of their own heart. They profess themselves to be wise and became vain and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like a corruptible man and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.

Brother, the descent to depravity didn't start out with worshipping a bunch of ferns and a bunch of trees and Earth Day in public school and all this kind of stuff. Where did the idolatry start out when they were unthankful and they were failing to glorify God as God deserved to be glorified? You better understand something tonight that the failure to glorify God and be thankful calls God to give them up and God gave them up to uncleanness. God has given our generation up to uncleanness.

He gave them up to vile affection. That's homosexuality. God gave them up and then God gave them up to a reprobate mind.

My brethren, because of a lack of gratitude, God gave them up. Dear people tonight, you better understand one thing. Everything this side of hell is mercy.

Everything this side of hell is mercy. And the marvel tonight is not that you don't have everything that you desire in life, that all your all your heart desires have not been met. The great marvel that we ought to be perplexed at tonight is that God has not cast us all into a burning hell before now.

My Bible says in everything, give thanks for this is the will of God and Christ Jesus concerning you. How many believe that's true? My Bible says, giving thanks always for all things under God and the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hey, can I ask you how much time of your prayer time is devoted to Thanksgiving? How much time did you spend today thanking God instead of griping about what you don't got? How much time did you spend today just thanking God for what he has done? Do you thank God for others? Do you thank God for your blessings? Do you thank God for your problems? My friend, you don't thank God because everything is good.

You thank God because he's good and he'll use everything to an advantage if you respond with an attitude of gratitude. Are you a grateful person tonight? Are you a thankful person? Let me ask you, do you say thank you often to your mate, dear sir, dear man, young people? Do you say thank you? When's the last time you ever wrote a thank you note to anybody? You know, we've come to a point in our country where we expect so much from so many people that we have become a bunch of snobbish, ungrateful people in a lot of cases. You know what I'm talking about this evening? Are we thankful people? You know what we do in our meetings? I think we'll do it right here tonight.

We like to put people on a quarantine. A quarantine? Yes, a quarantine of Thanksgiving. You say, what's that mean? That means go for three days and don't ask God for anything.

Now, when I was a teenager, I had a guy come up and say, I want you to go for three days and not ask God for anything. I said, you don't want me to pray for three days? He said, oh no, I want you to pray. I just don't want you to thank, I don't want you to ask God for anything.

I said, what do you want me to do? He said, I want you to thank God for everything you've never thanked God for before. Well, sounds a little odd, but I'll give it a shot. I respected the guy.

So I went for three days and I didn't ask God, I don't think, for a single thing. If I needed something rather than asking God for it, I went ahead and thanked God for it before it ever showed up. Amen.

And some of you tonight, you need to quit asking all that and start thanking and believing God. Thanking God is the first step of faith. Go ahead and say, God, thank you for saving my son.

Listen, maybe they didn't get saved yesterday. That isn't the end of the earth. Took God a long time to get you to the point where you would listen.

Be patient with him, friend. Why don't you go ahead and thank God for saving your mom and dad? Thank God for converting. Thank God for meeting that need.

Thank God for giving you direction. How many of you tonight would take me up on the challenge for the next three days to make an attempt not to ask God for one single thing, but to thank God for everything you can think of? How many would take me up on that? Would you do it? Would you do it? All right. Now, Wednesday night, Wednesday night, brother, we're going to have a little testimony season here about what these days of Thanksgiving have meant to us.

A quarantine of Thanksgiving. Well, the prodigal, the other prodigal was an unthankful person. Number four, the hidden sin of the spirit of an uncalled for resentment and uncalled for resentment.

You can hear the sarcasm. And the tone of his voice, the scorn in his voice when he said this, my son, which is devoured by that he wouldn't even acknowledge him to be his own brother. He said this, my son, which is devoured by living.

He wouldn't even acknowledge him to be his own brother. He criticized his brother. What was wrong with that? Well, he thought and spoke harshly of his brother.

He said he's devoured your living with a bunch of prostitutes. Now, listen, he spoke the truth. He spoke the truth.

But you know, sometimes it's possible to speak the truth and sin in doing it if you speak the truth with the wrong kind of spirit. And I tell you, this guy had a bitter spirit. He said the right thing, but he said it in the wrong way.

If you ever have to repent, not because of what you say, but because of the way you say it. I mean, you know what I'm talking about on that point? I was in a meeting down in Little Rock, Arkansas. I don't know why I got invited in the first place.

There's a bunch of well-known Christian leaders in there and they invited me in to having this little thing in there on revival. And I sat there for 40 minutes and listened to where I couldn't take anymore. My blood pressure was about to pop out and I was about to have a stroke.

And brother, I just lashed right out and I read him the riot act for about five minutes. Now I want to tell you something. Everything I said was right.

I'm convinced everything I said was true. Everything I said needed to be said. There wasn't anything wrong with what I said, but there was everything wrong with the way I said it.

I had to go and write every one of my blooming letter and say, look, I am sorry for blowing up. I am sorry, not for my position, but for my disposition. What I said wasn't wrong, but the way I said it was dead wrong.

And I want to tell you something. If you stand for truth and stand for it in the wrong way, you're just as wrong as the guy on the other side of the fence that has the wrong position and uncalled for and uncalled for resentment. Now he justified himself and he judged his brother and he accused his father and unrighteous anger will always lead to resentment.

You know what he accused his father? He said, you never gave me a kid. Here your son's come home. You killed him, the fatted calf.

Friends, it ain't none of our business how God treats his other servants. Give me an amen on that point right there. Complaining, griping, murmuring, full of resentment.

Leonard Ravenhill said the average prayer meeting in North America is nothing more than a dumping ground for our illnesses and diseases. And here the other prodigal is telling, is telling his father things he already knew. God doesn't need to get caught up on what's happening down here from us.

And let me tell you something. Prayer is more than telling God something he already knows, amen. It's more than giving God information he already knows.

Prayer is more than giving God advice on how he ought to react in certain situations. But here he is. Here he is just pouring it out to the father, telling him all this stuff that he knew anyway.

Let me tell you one thing about our prayer meetings. You know why the average prayer meetings in this country are dying? It's because they're problem centered and not God centered. And time to get through with Aunt Susie's toad that got run over by a pickup truck and traveling mercies for Joe Blow on his way to Europe.

And you can't get any emotional burden or attachment to any of these kind of things. And I guess there's a place for it. But brother, our problem is most of our prayer meetings are problem centered, not God centered.

How many know what I'm talking about right there? And rather than coming to rehearsing all of that to God and getting everybody in a state of depression, Lord, where are those people at tonight? Lord, they didn't show. Never mind about the people that didn't show up tonight. Let's worry about the presence of God being here with those that did come tonight.

We've got to get it right. Focus on this thing or we can get resentful. And I want to tell you that other prodigals problem was he was mad at his father.

You remember the Old Testament, how the children of Israel, they resented Moses. They criticized Moses. They rebelled against Moses.

And God came along and say, look, don't feel too bad about it. They've not rejected you. The problem is they have rejected me.

And I want to tell you, my friend, all resentment can ultimately be found to be directed at a sovereign God. If you're mad tonight, your problem is you're mad at God. Did you hear me? I don't care what kind of bum you married and ran off on you.

If you if you've not worked through it and you're resentful tonight, you're really angry at God. That's what the problem is. We were up in Connecticut as a girl there in the church, a woman in the church, mad at

God because her wicked sister, I don't think she was married, got pregnant and she didn't want to be pregnant.

But this Christian girl wanted to have a child and she couldn't have a child. And she came one night and told us that God had showed her her problem was she was angry at God and bitter at God because and resenting God because her sister could get pregnant. She couldn't get pregnant.

She was mad at God. She confessed the whole thing to God, got flushed out. We got a letter two months later.

They were expecting their first child. And then I was in Maine in a meeting. There was a girl there in Maine.

Her father, a pastor up in Illinois, eight years earlier, had been killed in a head-on automobile collision with a drunk driver. She stood before that crowd after one week of meeting after one week of meetings. She said tonight, God finally showed me what the problem is.

She said, The problem is I've been blaming God. I've been mad at God for killing. And brother, she got that thing right with God.

Her husband got right with God. He came forward and he gave this testimony. He said that he was a backslider to end all backsliders.

But when his wife got right with God, he, the heat was on him and brother, God, God got his heart and they got on fire for God. And we saw him years later and they'd moved down to New York coming, coming south, coming down to the promised land. Amen.

Hitting in this direction. And, uh, and there they were still serving God. But you know what the problem was? The problem is that she was angry and bitter and mad at God.

You hear me tonight. When you get to come into church, here's what you're thinking. The preacher's not preaching, right? The choir ain't singing right.

The lights ain't working right. The deacons ain't deacon, right? Nobody shows up for visitation except for me and a church this size. We ought to be able to find somebody working in the nursery and cut the grass.

And we get an Elijah complex. We got the Juniper tree syndrome. I'm the only one left in Israel.

I'm the only one doing anything. I'm the only one standing for truth. You know what your problem is? You're full of resentment tonight.

And if you're not careful, you can be like a lady in one of our meetings that said she had a case of ingrown eyeballs, self-pity, feeling sorry for myself. Good night. I got it so bad here, you know, and here we all the time ingrown eyeballs, self-pity.

Let me eat. We need to ask her. We all need to ask ourselves a question tonight.

Why do we do what we do anyway? Do we do it for recognition? Do we do it for acceptance or do we do it because we love God? And my friend tonight, if you're doing what you do because you love God, don't worry about the other crowd of what they're doing or not doing. You're not going to give an account, an

account for them. You're going to give an account for yourself, uncalled for resentment.

And I want to tell you tonight, we ought to be as sweet as honey. We ought to be as smart as a serpent, but as gentle as a dove. God help us tonight to have the right disposition.

This hateful sin of the spirit of an uncalled for resentment. Well, let me give you another hidden sin. He was guilty of this other prodigal.

He was guilty of the sin of an unloving disposition, an unloving disposition. Now, the young prodigal returns home. The father saw it.

He looked out the window. He arose off his seat. Brother, he jumped out of his seat.

He ran out to meet him. I love this story. He fell on his neck.

Here, this guy was out there. He'd wasted the whole work, the whole lot. He fell on his neck.

He kissed him. And the father said, bring the best robe. It's getting here, man.

Get the best one. Bring some shoes and put on his feet. Man, bring a ring and put on his hand.

Kill the fatted cat. Man, my son was dead. He's alive.

He was lost and he's found. And the Bible says the angels of God rejoice over one sinner that repents. Let me tell you something, my friend.

Conversion is so rare that the angels have a spell over one sinner that repents. Well, we're kind of upset because more people are not getting saved. Thank God anybody's getting saved, my friend.

Thank God anybody's getting saved. I'll tell you something about former prodigals, my friend. They all get teary eyed when they see another prodigal returning home.

They always do it. Let me tell you about the other product. He was angry, cold, full of unconcern, had no joy.

He had no heart for people. He was not only resentful at his father, but he was really full of disgust and revulsion at the wicked behavior of his brother. That's all he could.

That's all he could. That's all he could say. Well, he wasn't looking at this thing right.

He lived with his father, but he didn't have his father's heart. He had a hardening of the attitudes. Amen.

Let me talk to you for a moment tonight about the spirit of the elder brother, a smug self-satisfaction that has no joy in the return of sinners to the father. Let me tell you, people that have the elder brother complex, the other prodigal spirit, they have no joy in seeing a bunch of drug addicts and drunks get saved. They have no joy in seeing a bunch of prostitutes come to the Lord.

They have no excitement when a bunch of uneducated people or poor people return to the father. The elder brother, as a matter of fact, would probably leave the church and go to a more respectable church if the wrong class of people started attending the service. The elder brother feels no empathy, has no joy, feels no excitement, and you'll never see him rushing forward at the close of the service to welcome a

returning prodigal to the family of God.

You'll never see him doing that. But he's back there murmuring, condescendingly looking down on the returning prodigal, murmuring under his breath, well, she's probably an unwed mother. Look at him.

He's got an earring in his ear. He's got one in his nose. Look at him.

Well, they probably got their clothes over at Goodwill. Those kids, they probably come from the projects. Well, that's the elder brother.

That's the attitude he's got. He's as cold as ice. The elder brother, he prefers the company of people just like him.

Same background, same outlook, same neighborhood, same income level, same race, same middle class hobbies. He's got no joy in seeing a lost sheep returning to the fold. What's the problem with this guy? He's got an unloving disposition.

I read in the Bible says that love covers a multitude of transgressions. The Bible says there's three things left, faith, hope and love. And guess which of the greatest three? Love is the greatest thing.

Jesus had a new commandment. I give unto you that you do want that you love one another. Jesus said by this, you'll all men know that you're my disciples when you love one another.

You know, I'm sitting in a restaurant over Christmas holidays with one of the most godly people I ever met in my life. He's the best soul winner I've ever met in my life. I've ever met a guy with had a heart for souls.

It's him. He runs a Christian bookstore. He's a businessman.

You don't make any money running a Christian bookstore, by the way. It's a ministry. It's just a flat out ministry.

And he loves souls. He loves people. I'll tell you, it had all been good for him.

He sent all his kids to Bob Jones University. He's one of the sweetest men I know. He's also one of the straightest men I know.

I don't know anybody sweeter. I don't anybody straighter. But his daughter got involved with the man of another race, got pregnant out of wedlock.

It's a tragic story. But you know something? He accepted that grandchild. He loved his daughter.

I saw that man go through that thing and respond with the heart of Christ. And God absolutely just crushed his heart. But I'm telling you, it was for good.

And we sat in the restaurant and we were sitting there talking. And we sit there for over five hours. You know, when you get around some people, you just fellowship all night long.

And we were sitting there and everybody come by. Hey, brother. And they were all coming out.

Everybody knew him. Everybody loved him because he helped everybody in town. It's one guy or another.

And he sit there with tears running down his face. And he said to me, he said, Harold, we can do it all and we can have it all straight and have the right doctrine, all this kind of stuff. And as important as that is, he said, but if we don't have love, it's absolutely worth nothing.

And he said, the greatest thing is we've got to love God. Amen. That's why we're doing what we're we're not here to keep God in business.

We're here to love him. Amen. And I know the world's in foul shape and I wish it would get better.

But if it don't get better, friend, we can still have that proper relationship with the Lord. I want to ask you tonight. Do you have a heart for people? Do you have a heart for people? I was in Kansas City, brother Jerry, it was kind of a contemporary church.

It's even more odd than your church. I mean, it was just kidding. You're just kidding.

Everything God does is unique. No two lakes are the same. And wherever God's at, there's going to be a difference.

And this is a unique ministry. And I mean that in a positive way. And this was a unique ministry.

I mean that in a positive way. But they were kind of contemporary, but they hadn't lost the gospel yet. All right.

You know, you get so contemporary, you can lose the gospel. But they hadn't lost the gospel. And I got in there on Wednesday night, the place is absolutely packed out.

And they had a whole front row over here sitting on this side, a whole long queue over here on this side, a bunch of alcoholics, some former drunk in the church. Isn't it amazing that people are alcoholics until they run over somebody? And that's when they become drunk drivers. Have you ever noticed that? Isn't that strange? No, a bunch of drunks.

But you know something? There's a guy there in the church that was a former drunk, got a burden for these these these fellow drunks and got them all over the church, meets with them every week, memorizes the Bible. And they were all lined up. Pastor told me who they were.

And I looked at them when they paid attention and come down to the invitation time and the place was on their knees. And I looked over there and here was all these drunks. They're over here on their knees.

The guy had a huddle. They had arms around each other and they were weeping it out and they're getting right above. Thank God.

Thank God there's a church in Kansas City where these people can come and try to get some help. Amen. I don't know a bunch of Pharisees and we don't want that kind of scuttlebutt around our place.

No, friend, do we have a heart for people or not? Well, I know I know some of you are burdened about people. I thank God for that. Don't lose it.

Don't become self-righteous. I was in King, North Carolina. There there's a church that they had 500 on Sunday morning.

They run buses, had about 150 on buses, about 300 adults Sunday morning, 300 adults Sunday night, 300 adults Wednesday night, whether anybody special speaking or not. I mean, it's a high committed to church, but it took him 17 years to get there. Brother, it took him 17 years to get there.

Don't don't be discouraged. You'll be encouraged tonight. But they were reaching out to people.

They ran these buses. A 13 year old girl came on the buses and she gave her heart to God in September. I got the word that in November, in November, she had been shot and she'd been killed.

My first thought was, man, thank God here's a church that cared enough to run a bus out there to bring this 13 year old girl in. At least we believe she knew the Lord. My friend, love will reach out.

Love will take risk. Love will accept people, but not their sin. You know, Jesus got criticized because he kept company with a bunch of sinners.

Criticized him for it. Roy Heston said you can tell your love level by the type of people that come to you for counseling. You can tell what kind of love level you've got by the type of people that come to you for help.

Let me ask you, do people ever come up to you and say, would you please pray for me? Do people ever come up to you and ask for counsel, ask for advice, ask for help? If nobody ever comes and asks for prayer, if nobody ever comes and asks for help, maybe that ought to tell us something about our disposition of an unloving, an unloving disposition. Because when we have love in our hearts, we are vulnerable. We are approachable.

People feel free to come to us and they ask for help. They ask for prayer. They ask for advice.

How many of you know what I'm talking about? But you see, when we have the elder brother, the other prodigal syndrome, we're so cold, we have an unloving disposition. But I got to get that right down to it tonight. What was the hard problem? Well, he had the hidden sin, the sin of the spirit, of an unbroken spirit.

This is what was wrong with this guy. The other product was a picture of a proud, unbroken, self-righteous and self-deceived heart. Now, one liberal theologian, and I don't read him, but I heard it on a tape, said that there's three roots of pride, three roots of pride.

Number one, the pride of virtue. Number two, the pride of knowledge. Number three, the pride of power.

Listen, the pride of virtue. I'm cleaner than you. The pride of knowledge.

I'm smarter than you. The pride of power. I'm stronger than you.

What did the other prodigal and he had the pride of virtue? Did he not? Well, I've never done anything like this guy. I'm cleaner than you. It was the pride, the pride of virtue.

Now, the Bible says the prodigal came to himself and let me tell you something tonight. You've got to come to yourself before you can ever come to God. You'll never come to God until you first come to yourself.

And here this prodigal, he looked around at where he was on a hog pen. That's where some of us were when God found us. Amen.

Slap in the heart. Look around what he was doing. Slap on a bunch of pigs.

And we got desperate at the lowest rung of the ladder on his life. It finally dawned on him that his life was absolutely miserable. And what did he say? He said, I will return to my father.

That's why I believe repentance is in the gospel. Amen. God didn't save him and leave him in the hog pen, friend.

He had to get up out of the hog pen. He's in the light. We have fellowship one with another.

You walk in the light, you never walk alone. You're in fellowship with everybody else that's in the light. And the blood of his son, Jesus Christ, courages us from all unrighteousness.

But if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. Friends, what's the earmark of that revival? It's walking in the light. What does it mean to walk in the light? Walking in the light means we quit trying to hide behind the mask of respectability, of safe, comfortable religion.

We stop trying to hide behind the trees of the garden. We stop trying to fake everybody else out and let them know how spiritual we are. And when we walk in the light, what do we do? We come out from behind the trees of the garden.

Rather, we just get right out in the open. We ain't got nothing left to hide. Here we are.

And we just open before God and open before man. And what happens if we walk in the light as he's in the light? What happens? Well, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of his son, Jesus Christ, cleanses us from all sin. My friend, it's a marvelous thing to be in the light.

Amen. You know, when I finally got in the light, I was shocked. I didn't know the rest of the crowd was just as bad off as I was.

Amen. What a relief to find out I wasn't the only one that was a failure. What a relief to find out I wasn't the only one that was struggling.

What a relief to find out that they were just like me. And what a relief to find out we can encourage one another and we can afford to be honest and open and broken in the presence of God. And my brethren, that's when God comes in.

When people get broken, they get teachable, approachable, correctable and vulnerable. You know who the real picture of brokenness is? Jesus Christ. You want to look at somebody who's broken, you look at him.

I'll tell you, in Gethsemane, he had a broken will. He never would have died on the cross if he hadn't died in Gethsemane first when he said, not my will, but thine be done. On Calvary, he had a broken body.

Worse than that, he had a broken fellowship with the Father. And I'm telling you, it's a broken Savior that brings salvation. And it's broken sinners that receive salvation.

That's the ones that get in. And it's broken sinners that get revived. Amen.

Now, the reason some people can't get victory and can't get delivered and can't get saved is because they are not broken. But once we're broken, the Father races out to meet us, just like the Father rushed out to

meet the prodigal. And the Bible says the angels of God rejoice over one sinner that repents, and the Father rejoiced when the prodigal came home.

Brokenness brings joy in heaven and in earth. You know, they say in that East African revival that the characteristic of the whole thing was such a spirit of praise when a sinner will give a sinner's testimony, especially when a white man would give a sinner's testimony. That they say that if a sinner would ever get up there and give a testimony of how he had failed and come back into the light and the joy of God would flood his heart, the whole crowd would explode in praise.

And boy, they just start clapping and carrying on. You see, in our services, we applaud after the music because we like the performance. Or you say, well, it's for God.

Well, why don't you applaud after the pastor reads the scriptures? Think about it. Nothing wrong with applauding, but why not applaud after Brother Harold makes a good point? I know it'd be very rare that you'd have to do that, but I. But, you know, when they get excited, you know, when they start applauding, not after somebody gets up and gives a solo of a soundtrack, one of the marks of the Antichrist is soundtracks and handheld microphones. But anyway, you know, when they get excited, they get excited when somebody gives a sinner's testimony.

That's when they get excited. And they start clapping. Why? Because of the brother got back in the light.

Good. Hi. Amen.

Oh, friend, I'll tell you, this is the key to revival. And when there's openness, there's brokenness. Well, there's brokenness.

There's oneness. And when there's oneness, there's a revival. There's revival.

Now, the other prodigal was unbroken. He was an unbroken man. He was spiritually blind, spiritually busy, spiritually barren, spiritually bitter and spiritually in bondage, ruled by his emotions, ruled by his decisions, ruled by his rebellion and ruled by himself.

What was his greatest need? His greatest need was to be good. And what's our greatest need tonight? Some of you guys, you're a bunch of prodigals, but being careful, you can become another prodigal. You know what I'm saying tonight? My friend, there are three sons in this parable, the younger son who broke his father's heart.

That was the other prodigal, the elder son out of fellowship with the father. And then there was the third son who uttered this parable. He was the son of God.

And I want to tell you that it was the third son that came to a far country and he didn't come as a wayward son, but he came as a willing sacrifice. And I'm here to tell you tonight he was broken. This is the gospel.

And if you're a prodigal tonight and you're ready to return to the father, I'm telling you, the father is ready to meet you. And if you're one of those other prodigals and you're all out of sorts with the father, then you need to hear him say, all I have is dying. Now I want to give you an interesting point.

Did you notice in this story that the father took the initiative to go out and meet both of these sons, the prodigal and the other prodigal? When the prodigal came home, the father got up and ran out to meet him. And then when the other prodigal got pulled up and wouldn't come in and join in the festivities because he

was angry with his father and mad at his brother and jealous and all this stuff, the father went out to reason with him. And it is interesting tonight that God didn't tell us whether the other prodigal ever repented or not.

You know, you know, I think maybe why is because God knew that this would be such a common problem. He left it blank so we could write our own conclusion to the story right here tonight. How many of us sitting out here tonight? We're not out there in the world.

We're not out there taking dope. We're not out there running the bars. Man, we're not out there sleeping with a bunch of hookers.

But here we are tonight. Here we are tonight, not with the outward sins of the flesh or our friend, but with the hidden sins of the spirit. How many of us tonight have unrighteous anger? How many of us tonight have an unfounded jealousy? Oh, my dear people, how many of us tonight have an ungrateful heart? We ought to be cutting part of this.

How many of us have an uncalled for resentment, an unloving disposition? How many of us tonight, bottom line, have an unbroken spirit? So easy to sit around and be critical, so easy to look down on others that don't do what we think they ought to do? Oh, my brethren, tonight, are we like that prodigal that stay home, the other prodigal? For every prodigal that goes into the world, there's 150 elder brothers who always stay home. And I want to tell you that the other prodigal is just as far from God as the one who's out there in the streets. And tonight, God's going to let us write our own conclusion.

I want to how many of us are guilty, not of those outward sins, but of the inward, hidden sins? God, give us brokenness tonight. God, give us openness tonight. God, give us revival tonight.

God, give us salvation tonight. Brokenness is the key. Lord, now I've delivered my heart to these people tonight.

And Lord, I believe there's a word here for us. I believe there's a word here for every one of us. God, God, would you just speak to us tonight about these hidden sins of anger, of jealousy, of lack of gratitude, of resentment, of a lack of love? Lord, just of the fact that we're not broken in the presence of God in the presence of others.

Heads bowed, eyes are closed. How many believers here tonight said, Brother Harold, I've got the spirit of the elder brother. Man, I'm like the prodigal that stayed home.

Because I'm not out there in the world, but I'll tell you in my heart, I've got the wrong kind of attitudes and the wrong dispositions. And God has just nailed my heart tonight as being an other prodigal. And I want to come home to the Father.

I don't want to stay outside the party. I want to get in on everything God's doing. How many here tonight as believers would say, God spoke to me tonight, Harold, about the hidden sins of the spirit.

And I'll tell you, I need revival in my own heart. I'll put it in throughout this auditorium.

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