

All Satan's Apples Have Worms

by John R. Rice

The sermon warns that while Satan offers enticing temptations, they ultimately lead to pain and regret, as illustrated by the Prodigal Son's story.

Scripture: Exodus 20:6, Numbers 24:20, Psalm 37:7, Proverbs 5:3, Proverbs 14:12, Proverbs 16:25, Proverbs 23:31, Daniel 12:3, Luke 15:11, John 2:17

Topics: "Satanic Deception", "Repentance"

Description

John R. Rice preaches about the consequences of following Satan's deceitful promises, using the story of the prodigal son to illustrate how all of the Devil's apples have worms. He emphasizes that every time the Devil promises happiness, it leads to lies and deception, ultimately resulting in ruin and disappointment. Through various Bible verses, he highlights the inevitable consequences of sin and the ultimate joy and forgiveness found in returning to God.

Transcript

I am speaking tonight on the subject, "All Satan's Apples Have Worms." I do not deny that the Devil has some pretty apples; I just say that all of them are fakes and that after you bite into them, you will find they have worms. All Satan's apples have worms.

Luke, chapter 15, is one of the most familiar stories in the Bible, one of the most beautiful stories in all literature - the story of the prodigal son. With what measure of strength God will give me, I will bring to your mind illustrations, Scriptures and experiences proving that every time the Devil promises happiness, he lies; proving that every time the Devil promises things will turn out well, he lies and deceives; proving that everybody who ever depended on the Devil's lie, the Devil's way, the Devil's pleasure, the Devil's whims, the Devil's plan for happiness and peace, found they were duped, fooled, deceived; found that the Devil's apples all have worms.

Now in Luke, chapter 15, verse 11 and following:

"And he said (Jesus said), A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to 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 husks 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 to spare, 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."

Satan Does Have Beautiful Apples

First, Satan does have beautiful apples. This prodigal boy thought, It is dull around here. I don't want to stay home. And my father wants me to obey him.

Obedience is always a distasteful thing to young people, "I don't want to have to stay here and mind. I don't want Dad telling me what time I must get in, what time I must be in bed. I don't want anybody telling me when to get up, what kind of company to keep, whether I can go to this place or that place, and can't go to another."

So the prodigal son thought, I want to get from under my father's thumb. How many young men have thought, Oh, if I could only get untied from my mother's apron strings, how happy I would be.

So this prodigal said to his father, "If you are going to ever give me anything, give it to me now. When you die I may be an old man of thirty with all the chances for a good time gone. I am not willing to wait until you die to have part of your estate."

Young people feel that way, that a person is awfully old when he is thirty.

"If you are going to give me anything, give it to me now." So that father divided unto them his living.

This boy thought things around home distasteful; he did not want to obey the rules.

And then he said, "I don't want to work so hard." Young people always feel, Why does there have to be so much hard work in the world? You remember God said to Adam in the Garden of Eden after sin came in, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." He did not say, "I have cursed the ground as a constant reminder that I hate you, that I am trying to whip you, that I am punishing you, that I want to make you unhappy and miserable, that I want to wear you out with hard labor." Rather, God said, "I have done it because I love you. I have cursed the ground for your sake, and you are now going to have to work for a living."

Young people think the Devil doesn't say that. No, the Devil has easy ways of making a living without work. The Devil has easy ways of getting along without buckling down. The Devil always claims to have a better way than studying hard to get your lessons. He says, "You can cheat on exams; you can postpone studying and cram before examinations." But you will soon find him to be a liar when you try that.

The Devil always has some easy way to get by without work, some way to make a living by just being smart. He says, "Just put a few dollars on the ponies and you will be a millionaire overnight." Or if it is not that way, it is some other way.

The prodigal boy thought, I don't want to stay here and work hard all the time. I want to have some fun. The Devil has a good argument, hasn't he? He does not want you to obey the rules: he does not want you to work.

Then this boy did not want to be denying himself. He wanted what he wanted when he wanted it. Here at home I can't have this, and can't do this, and can't go this way. I don't like giving up my own way and trying to please Dad. Mother grieves when I get drunk, and she thinks I shouldn't waste money. Dad acts as if he is brokenhearted just because I go out on a wild party. I want to have fun. I want my way for awhile.

The Devil always makes the far country beautiful. He always paints it in glowing colors. The Devil always says, "Out in the far country there is wonderful music and dancing. Out in the far country there is more good wine to drink, more beautiful girls to go with, and no rules. There everybody does as he pleases. People have such a good time. They have plenty of money and don't have to work for it out in the far country."

The boy thought, I must go try it. I don't like this old foggy way of working for in living, this old foggy way of obeying your parents. I want to go. The Devil agreed. "That is right. You don't have to deny yourself."

Satan brought the same old palaver, the same lies, in the Garden of Eden, saying to Adam and Eve, "Did God tell you that you would surely die if you ate of this fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Why, you will not really die. God just doesn't want you to have any good times. He just doesn't want you to enjoy the good food that is here. Besides, He knows it would make you smart. See how it shines! See how good it smells, how well it looks! Suppose you pull one. You don't have to eat it if you don't want to - just pull one and look at it and feel it. See, it is ripe and mellow and smells so good."

That is the way the Devil always works. He says, "You don't want to get drunk, so just take a little social drink. You don't want to embarrass the hostess when wine is served or when the gang is having just a glass of beer. You don't want to be an old foggy. Of course, you don't have to get drunk."

He said to Eve in the Garden of Eden, "Why don't you pull the fruit? Just feel of it. Do you really know what it would do for you?"

Eve said, "No, but I am sure it would do a lot of wonderful things."

The Devil said, "Well, it will make you smart. You will be as smart as God. If you will eat this, you will be wise like God."

The Devil has some beautiful apples. So he held an apple before the prodigal boy and said, "Out in the far country you would have lots of friends, not these old foggy folks around here. Out in the far country you could stay out as late as you liked. My, the wonderful orchestras and the night clubs and the cocktail parties - all the good times you would have! Don't stay around here." The Devil dangles some beautiful apples. So the boy leaves home.

I want you to know this, too. The prodigal son had a whale of a time while it lasted. Sure! Any fellow who has a Chrysler and enough gas, if he has money for night clubs and shows, can honk his horn in front of

nearly any girl's house and fill his car. There are beautiful apples out in the far country. Don't you tell young people that the Devil doesn't have something that appeals. He does! The Devil has some beautiful apples. They smell fine, and the first bite may taste very delicious.

So this prodigal went out into a far country. There he began to spend his money. There he began to drink. He wasted his substance in riotous living. Boy, what a high time he had!

Listen to me! We had as well face it. The Devil is out to get your boy and girl. And he has every allure in the world with which to do it.

I think I ought to say this also. We will show that God has some good things, too. That is one reason why I am out to compete with the Devil. Some people are always saying, "Don't worry about big crowds." Listen to me! God has a right to as big crowds as the Devil has. He has! Why should this big auditorium be filled with basketball games every night and then we not be able to get that many people out to hear the Gospel? We have more to draw crowds than the world has.

On my book table out there you find those pamphlets printed on nice paper, in beautiful colors, with lovely pictured covers drawn by good artists. I have tried to make my Christian books as interesting and attractive as the world makes its literature.

Why should a church not have as bright lights as a theater? Or gospel singers not have as many instruments and as well-trained voices as those in night clubs? Why should God's people not enjoy the best?

I say, the Devil does have shined-up apples. They have glowing color and a pleasing aroma. And the first bite is sweet. We must recognize that the Devil has a pull on young as well as older people.

I remember one day out in west Texas we spent two or three hours confessing our sins. A lot of people had been confessing that they had gotten drunk, or had been dancing, etc. One man about seventy years old said, "Brother Rice, I haven't been to a dance in thirty years!" A seventy-year-old bragging because he had not been and did not want to go to a dance! Brother, the truth is, if you are seventy and you go on the dance floor these days, I don't know that you will have such a hot old time! But the young people do.

I say, Satan does have some beautiful apples! That old liar and deceiver is bent on the destruction of people.

This boy said, "Dad, listen! I just can't stand it around here. It's so dull; and I have to obey all the time. I have to get up in the morning on time. I have to be in early at night. The other guy's don't have to obey. And they spend money; why couldn't I spend more money? They go to the show; why couldn't I go to the show? They think it is all right to drink beer; why shouldn't I drink beer?"

So the boy finally decided he would go into a far country and eat the Devil's apples. Oh, Satan does have some beautiful apples.

But Each Beautiful Apple Has Worms

Notice next that Satan's apples really have worms. The prodigal boy went "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 husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."

You see, when he bit down into the apple, he found a worm. That is what you always find when you bite into the Devil's apples! Sometimes when you bite into the Devil's apples, you will find half a worm! Some of it you will have already swallowed! That is not a joke when you apply it to sin, as I am applying it now. Lots of times when you bite in and do not find a worm, you have already swallowed it. The sin is committed and you can't get done with it as easily as you think. You will find out the Devil is a liar when it is too late to retract some things, when it is too late to live over some things.

Sure, with some of his years already wasted, with his money gone, with a diseased body, with his dad brokenhearted and disgraced in public and his mother sobbing her heart out every night on the pillow, this boy found it was not so pleasant in a far country. All that had to happen before he found that Satan's apples have worms.

You do not believe that the Devil's apples have worms; but one day, when it turns out bitter, you will find a worm in that apple.

I want to read a few verses on this Bible doctrine that all Satan's apples have worms. And it is a Bible doctrine!

"And when he [the prophet of God] looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever." - Num. 24:20.

The Amalekites were the people who went against Israel and fought against them. God said, "I'm going to destroy them. They are the strongest nation in all the land, the first of the nations. But you wait until the end; you will find they are not so hot. You will find that the Devil's apples have worms."

Here is another Scripture on this Bible doctrine that all Satan's apples have worms.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass." - Ps. 37:7-10

"David, don't fret because of that old sinner. Don't complain because that man is getting along better than you are."

David had said, "Lord, here is a sinner who is making good money and having a good time. I am living for You and am having it tough. This man who is living for the Devil seems to prosper."

God said, "David, don't worry about that. He has pretty apples, but all of them have worms."

Listen to what God says:

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evil doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be."

Just watch awhile and you will find that really he does not prosper. The man who has plenty of the Devil's apples and thinks they are wonderful and seems to enjoy them - watch him for awhile, and you will find that every one of his apples will have worms. "The man who seems to prosper in his sin won't keep on

prospering." God is saying to David.

Another Scripture on this Bible doctrine that all Satan's apples have worms is Proverbs 5:3-5. This is a story to young people.

"For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb [Isn't she sweet? Aren't her kisses sweet? And there is the allure of her arms about you, and the allure of her sweet perfume and her soft hair and skin], and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end" - oh, yes, the end - "But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two edged sword. Her feet go down to death: her steps take hold on hell."

Yes, sin is beautiful to start with. Satan himself, when he sends his ministers, sends them like angels of light. My, how beautiful are the Devil's angels!

Young person, listen! Now you have your friends and you are having a high old time. You go the way of sin. You give way to your sex passion. Maybe it is in petting and necking. Maybe it is in the lewdness of the dirty picture show. Maybe it is on the dance floor. Maybe it is in mixed bathing. But wait! "Her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two edged sword. Her feet go down to death: her steps take hold on hell." This is the Bible doctrine that all Satan's apples have worms when you get down to the core!

Proverbs, chapter 14, has this same Bible doctrine, that all Satan's apples have worms, that his promises are lies, that all his good times turn out in sorrow and heartbreak. Verses 12 to 14 say:

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself."

Oh, young people, wait until you see the end! Do not judge by the beginning; judge by the end! Do not, I say, depend on how the Devil makes it look at the start. You had better see how God says it will end. The Devil's apples look nice, smell nice, taste nice at first. But you will find out the truth when you bite into the worms of sin, sorrow, corruption, disappointments, broken hearts, smiting consciences, and torment in Hell.

Listen again!

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful ..."

Oh, there is laughter in the night clubs. There is laughter in the lewd, dirty shows. There is laughter in barrooms - and shooting, too, and divorce, and broken homes, and broken hearts, and the making of paupers and harlots and drunkards! Sure, there is lots of laughter. But remember that in that kind of laughter that "even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness."

Many people laugh and laugh. But then they find it does not make them happy, and they go out - some often to commit suicide. Others go out in disappointment, with disillusionment written on their poor hardened faces because of sin.

It is said that in a great city there was a physician famous for his counsel. A man came to him one day and said, "Doctor, I want you to see what is wrong with me."

The doctor checked him over and said, "Your heart is all right. Your lungs are all right. Your blood pressure is normal. But you look as if you are run-down and tired, disillusioned, and unhappy. You need to do what I did. Go out to the circus and laugh at the antics of a famous clown with his funny mask, his big shoes, and his slapstick. He got bowled over a number of times. More funny things happened. I went and I laughed and laughed! I prescribe for you a visit to the same circus. Sit for two hours and laugh at that clown, and forget your troubles and have a happy heart."

The man said, "Doctor, your prescription won't do me any good. I am that clown!"

The man who provides the laughter for the world will soon find that it turns to heaviness. You who have all the sweetness the Devil can give, drink it down. Prodigal boy in the far country, drink it down. Wayward girl here in Cleveland, when you come to the dregs in the bottom of the cup you will find them bitter as wormwood! You will wish you were dead. Oh, I tell you now, the end of that kind of mirth is heaviness! All Satan's apples have worms, the Bible clearly teaches. Every promise of a good time the Devil ever made is a lie. Every good time the Devil ever gave was misery when the other side was reached. It never turns out happily.

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." - Prov 16:25.

That is a repetition of what was said in the 14th chapter. Here is another in Proverbs, chapter 23, (This is what liquor does. And every one of the Devil's apples end up the same way - with worms.)

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." - Vss. 31,32.

Do not look at it! You say, "But it looks so beautiful. See the bubbles. See the foam sparkle. When people taste it, their eyes get brighter. Suddenly they feel so witty! Everybody laughs at their jokes after they have a few drinks, and they have such a good time. Their inhibitions are gone. They used to be so timid; now they can make speeches. They can sing the loudest of anybody now."

But listen to what the Bible says:

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. AT THE LAST (you had better think about what is in the core before you eat any of the Devil's apples) AT THE LAST it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

That is what wine does. That is what liquor does. That is what every kind of sin does. The Devil has worms in the core of every apple.

Ah, the prodigal boy! His money was gone after awhile. Did you know that it pays in dollars and cents to be a Christian and to live straight? How many people have found when they tried the Devil's way to make money they could not keep it! Did you know that a Christian can hold a better job than one who is not a Christian? Don't let the Devil tell you that you can't hold a good job unless you drink. The contrary is true. The traveling salesman thinks he has to drink a little to hold his job. But nearly always, in the same company, the president got there because he did not drink! He had character. He could be trusted.

I tell you now, the Devil is a liar when he makes you think you cannot get along in this world without sin. I say, the Devil means to deceive and ruin you. He lies when he promises anything at all for sin. Always at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.

All the prodigal boy's money was soon gone after he went to the far country. If he had stayed at home and worked hard, he would have still had money in his jeans. But his money was soon gone, then his friends were gone.

I have preached in many rescue missions in America - in the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, the Sunshine Mission, the Mel Trotter Mission in Grand Rapids, in the Evansville Rescue Mission at Evansville, Indiana. The same thing happens everywhere. A fellow spends his money in the dirty booze joint and has a high old time. Then when it is gone, he is kicked out. Then he comes down to the mission to get a cup of coffee and a sandwich or a hamburger or a doughnut. The simple fact is, the Devil's crowd are not good friends when your money is gone.

You remember Judas Iscariot. He thought, "Jesus isn't a good friend of mine. He doesn't give me enough money. I have been stealing some out of the purse, but I can't get much now. And there is Mary who came with three hundred pence. (Really three hundred Roman denarii, One denarius represented about a day's wages ordinarily.) She spent it all for perfume, then broke the bottle and poured it out over Jesus. I told her she ought to have saved the money to give to the poor. I could have carried it, and would have gotten more out of it. I never will get rich this way. These Pharisees, these scribes, will pay me more than this."

So Judas went down to see them and inquired: "How much will you give me to betray Him? I will lead you right out where He has His prayer meetings; there, when nobody can defend Him, I will show you how to take Him. How much money will you give me?"

"We will give you thirty pieces of silver."

Judas thought, Boy, that is more money than I have had in one day in a long time! I'll sure do it. And Judas fell.

Yes, Judas has gotten one of Satan's apples. He led Jesus' enemies out there and got the money. They took Jesus and brought Him back to kill Him. About that time Judas' conscience began to work. He began to find the apple had a worm in it. He came back and said to those priests, those Pharisees, and those scribes, "Take this money back! I have betrayed innocent blood! My conscience is burning like fire. I feel as if I am already in Hell. Take the money back and turn Jesus loose!"

They said, "You see to that yourself, old boy. We made the bargain and got what we wanted. What do we care about your conscience? What do we care if you go to Hell? What do we care about your broken heart?" (See Matt, 27:3-5.)

So Judas threw the money on the stone floor, then went out and hanged himself. Can you hear the ringing of the coins as he threw them down and as they scattered around the feet of those avaricious and wicked men? When Judas got down to the core of the Devil's apple, it was bitter with worms. You will find the same thing!

What I am saying is, when the man's money was gone, his friends were gone. The Devil has no friends to stick by you in the long run. The best friends you have in the world on the Devil's side will make a drunkard out of you or a dopehead or break up your home or make a sucker out of you. I say, Satan's apples have worms.

So this prodigal's money was gone after awhile, and his friends were also gone. Then there arose a mighty famine in that country.

Notice the succession of sin. First, his money was gone. That was the natural result of sin. Second, his friends were all gone; there was nobody to help him. That was the Devil's part and the Devil's way in sin. The Devil always quits you when you are in a tight spot. He and his friends never really help you when you most need them.

Next, there arose a mighty famine in that land. That was God's punishment on sin. Sin itself brought one punishment; the boy's money was gone. And Satan himself is a wicked, unreliable, hateful, pretended friend. He is the enemy, and called that in the Bible. You think he is your friend. No; the prodigal son didn't have any friends. That is Satan's part in sin. Then the famine came - God's punishment on sin. A famine always comes. You cannot sin and get by.

Isn't it strange that here in America we had first a great depression and then a war? No. That is because God won't let sin get by. God never lets a prodigal boy land in a far country, play the fool, waste his substance with riotous living and devour it with harlots, then get out without a famine. If you have gone on in sin and have not landed in the hog pen, if you have not come where the famine is, you will, you are on the right road to it. It is the inevitable result of sin, This boy came to a famine.

Young people, do not be deceived by Satan! Oh, what a fool you are if you believe that happiness comes from the Devil's way. What a fool you are if you believe his way turns out happily. It never did and it never will!

Somebody has well said that Satan has no happy old people. Satan has a lot of happy young people, if you mean happiness that comes from a good time in the sense of effervescent experiences, if you mean that kind of happiness - Hail fellow well met; pat me on the back; drink it down, and so on. The Devil has a lot of young people who start out thinking they are happy. But they soon find they are not. They find when they bite deep into the apple it has worms.

At Shamrock, Texas, where I was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Miss Irene Bryan came one day and said, "Brother Rice, a neighbor girl of mine, very prominent in society and monied circles, told me she is so despondent that she is thinking of killing herself. She is the victim of such melancholy that I wondered if I could bring her to see you."

"Sure, bring her to see me."

They came. This lovely girl, a beautifully dressed, cultured, well-educated young woman sat in my sitting room. She said, "Brother Rice, you tell me life is worth living. I know better. I have tried everything life has, I have gone with the country club crowd; I have danced; I have had my cocktails. I have enough money. I have traveled; I have seen the world. I have education. I have tried music and art and literature - I have tried all that. But I wish I were dead! Life isn't worth living, I don't see why God lets us be born into such a world, Everything in it is disillusionment and unhappiness. I have tried life, and it isn't fit to live! I wish I were dead, and I am half a mind to kill myself!"

I said, "No, you don't know all about life. You just know one side. Life is sweet and beautiful, if you are on the right side."

She said, "Do you know any way more fit to live? I try to have a good time: I go with the gang, but the next morning my heart is so lonely; my head is splitting, and I feel like a fool! Do you know any way I could have some joy in life, some contentment, something that would give me happiness?"

I said, "I certainly do."

She said, "I wish you would tell me."

"Well, we will just get right down on our knees here and you can tell the Lord how empty your heart is. Tell Him you have tried all the Devil's ways and they didn't turn out well. Tell Him that you believed the Devil but that everything he said was a lie. Tell Him that all Satan's apples have worms and you hate them. Then ask Jesus Christ to forgive you and come into your heart."

"Will He do it?"

"He sure will! Try Him and see."

Then I read some Scripture to her, and we got down together on our knees in the living room and prayed. Her tears wet the carpet as she knelt there while I prayed. She asked Jesus Christ to come into her heart and forgive her. She rose up with the peace of God in her heart. Her eyes filled with tears of joy, and her face was glad and happy.

What I am telling you about this girl, I have seen in a thousand hearts and lives and faces. I tell you, the Devil's ways are ruinous, and the end thereof are the ways of death. The cocktail looks beautiful and bright, but you drink it, and at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. In the long run, Satan's ways do not pan out.

This boy is down here in the hog pen now, a prodigal boy away from home, hungry-hearted, physically hungry, and dressed in rags.

"And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."

I have seen it all over America: the man who lives for the Devil may be picking up cigarette butts out of the street gutter. All over America I have seen that people who live for the Devil are likely to come to asking every passerby for a handout, telling some lie to get a few cents for another glass of beer. I say, all over America I have seen that such a man has to try every way, by hook and by crook, in order to keep soul and body together; and to him life is miserable, utterly miserable. No wonder people kill themselves! No wonder people take poison!

A woman in Fort Worth, Texas, put eight bichloride of mercury tablets in a glass of water and drank it down. Her home life was miserable. Jesus was not there. So she tried to kill herself. I went to St. Luke's Hospital and the doctor said, "There is not a chance for her at all." But she gave her heart to Christ; and He changed her heart, healed her body, and restored her home to happiness.

This prodigal boy found out that sin does not pay. It never paid anybody in the world, and you are a fool if you believe it does. The Devil has some beautiful apples, but they have worms in the cores. So this boy found out.

Throw Away Satan's Apples

Now notice the next thing. First, the Devil has beautiful apples. Second, the apples have worms in them. Third, this boy threw his away. And that is what I want you to do tonight. Throw away the Devil's apples! Down there in the hog pen he came to himself.

You know why you think it is such a "high old time" with drinking and dancing and necking and lewdness and these crazy ways of sin? Listen, you never have had a sensible thought. You are not in your right mind. Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." You never did sit down at a table and reason with God. If you had ever had one sober, earnest, serious consideration, you would have been saved; you would have seen it was foolish and wicked to go to Hell in your sin. This boy came to himself.

A young woman in Chicago heard me preach and then talked to me later. She said she hated God because He had taken her mother. She cursed and swore at God and said she would never serve Him. I tried to get her saved: but she would not, at first, come to Christ. She said, "I guess you think I am a fool to come and hear you preach every day when I don't believe in the stuff."

I said, "No, I think the first time you have had any sense is when you came to hear an honest preacher."

She kept on coming until God moved her heart and saved her and gave her sweet peace.

This prodigal boy in the Scripture came to his senses. And everyone who ever did come to his senses saw that sin was a fake, saw that the Devil was a liar, saw that the yawning pit of Hell was ahead of him if he stayed in sin, saw God's mercy was free and turned to run to it.

This boy came to himself. He said, "I am going to arise and go to my father. Back home, my father's servants, the hired servants, have plenty and to spare I wish I could get back home with the hired men." And he made up his mind, "I will arise and go to my father!"

Look about you at the happy old people. Look about you at other people with happiness in their hearts. They are not the people who gave way to Satan. They are the ones who lived for the Lord and stayed in the Father's house. The boy said, "I am going back to my father." So he got ready and went back.

A lot of people run down this boy. He did play the fool. He was a prodigal, a wastrel. He spent his money like water. He threw it away in a night at a poker game, perhaps, or a drinking party - money that it might have taken his father years to save. He surely was a fool. But I will tell you this about him: he came to himself and had sense enough to admit it.

Some of you are that same kind of a fool, but you have never faced the facts. You have never come to yourself. You had better say tonight, "I want to be saved; and, God helping me, I am going to turn to Jesus Christ." This boy said, "I will arise and go to my father," and he arose and came to his father.

You say, "Is being saved as simple as that?" It is even simpler! It can be done quicker than these words can be said: "The boy rose and came to his father." If in your heart you will admit that sin is a wicked business, all a fake, that it doesn't pay and if you will throw away the devil's apples and turn to God, the Lord will give you His fruit right now. God's fruit - how sweet it is! And at the last it is still sweet. A million years from now it will be getting better and better and better!

"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17). "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). Oh, righteousness and peace and joy and love without disappointment! The long years ahead will only serve to prove how good God was to those who served Him, "Showing mercy," the Bible says, "unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Exod. 20:6).

The boy thought, I wish I had stayed home! I am going to get up now and go to my father. I don't want anybody here to lift your hand for prayer unless you mean you want to be saved tonight. Most people who are "going to be saved sometime" are never saved. The road of Bye and Bye leads to the house of Never. If you are going to be saved, be like the prodigal who said, "I will arise and go to my father." He came to his senses; he made the decision: he turned his back on his sin; he got up and came home to confess it to his father; he threw away the Devil's apples. I hope you will do the same thing.

You May Have the Wonderful Fruit of God

Now there is one last word. The father had more than the Devil could ever give. His father had everything good. Here is the fruit the father gave the boy. First, the father ran to meet him, fell on his neck and kissed him.

Did anyone ever tell you that the Devil's crowd is friendlier than the Lord's crowd? You never did have the Devil give you things like this. The father came and fell on his neck and kissed him. The boy started to say, "Dad, I sure played the fool. I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." He had planned to say, "I am not fit to be your boy. Just let me live out in the bunkhouse with the hired hands and wash on the back porch and live just as though I were a hired man." But he did not get that said. The father already had forgiven him! He fell on his son's neck, kissed him and said to one of the men at the house, "Bring a robe for this boy." (His robe had turned to rags. It always turned out that way in the Devil's service.) "And bring a ring for his finger." (That was the sign of sonship, he was not a slave.) "And kill the fatted calf and let us be merry, my son that was dead is alive again!"

Suppose I meet that boy on the way home. "Hey, where are you going?"

"I'm going home to Dad. Don't bother me."

"Wait a minute! I want to talk to you."

"No. Mr. Rice, I must hurry home. I have played the fool long enough."

"Well, how do you feel?" (You know, a lot of people say, "If I felt right I would come.")

"I feel like a bum, a crook, a fool: but I am going anyway!"

"But don't you think you had better wait until you feel right?"

"No. If Dad will forgive me and if I get a good meal under my belt, I'll feel all right. Please leave me alone!"

And son he goes home.

I drove into a filling station down in Dallas, Texas, and said to a man there, "How are you today?"

"I'm not any good."

"What's the matter?"

"I feel like a fool."

"What about?"

"I went out last night and got on a drunk, and did I have a big'un! When I came to my senses today, my head was splitting: and I didn't have a dime in my pocket. I won't have a penny for food this week unless I borrow it. I've got to pay my landlady. I've played the fool, and I don't feel like working. If there ever was a fool, I'm that fool. If you want to know how I feel, that's the way I feel."

Don't expect to feel so good before you come home. But this boy comes home. I say, "Wait a minute! Why you look pretty ragged to be going back to your father's mansion. Isn't he the rich fellow who lives up on the hill in that nice white house with the rolling acres?"

"Oh. Yes, that's my father's place."

"Well, are you going back in those rags? Don't you think you had better buy a good suit and wait until you earn your way?"

"Oh no! I can't wait for anything. My father has a good suit of clothes. He has plenty! I'm going home and let him furnish those things."

I say, "Where is all that money you wasted? Don't you think you had better stop and earn a little?"

"No, I can't earn it; I would starve to death. But I will go to my father. He has plenty; he will take care of me."

"Well, how do you feel?"

"I feel bad, but I am going home to my father." So here he goes.

A little later I slip up there. What a good time he is having! I hear the happy laughter of friends and the father's soothing tones as he talks to the boy. I hear the rattle of silverware. I hear the servants talking as they gather around the table. I hear the father say, "Son, may I give you just a little more of this veal? It is mighty tender. We have kept this calf fattened up a year waiting for you to come home. Can't you eat a little more?"

"Well, you can give me just a little more. Boy, I have never had anything like this before!"

Mother says, "May I give you another glass of buttermilk?" (Maybe he was a Southern boy and would want buttermilk!)

He is having a good time. I slip up by his side and whisper in his ear, "How do you feel, old boy?"

"I feel wonderful! My father loves me, and he has forgiven everything, and my heart is satisfied. I have on a nice robe that represents the righteousness of Christ. I have on the ring which means I am His son, God's son. I have the shoes on my feet which means I am clothed with the Gospel of peace and am very proud of it. I have a message to tell. And I have had the fatted calf of God's richest blessing. I feel fine!"

Don't wait, brother. Let not conscience make you linger, Nor of fitness fondly dream. All the fitness He requireth Is to feel your need of Him.

O sinner, come on back to the Father's house! Throw away the Devil's apples, and you will find the Father has everything good and sweet for you. And in the long run, how glad you will be that you let Jesus be your Saviour, let God be your Father, had your sins forgiven and washed in the blood.

Don't you want to come home tonight, young people? How many here have been away in a far country? You say, "But Brother Rice, I don't see how I can give up this; and I don't see how I can give up that." Somebody says, "Well, I'll try it." No, I'm not talking about trying anything.

I say to the prodigal boy, "Will you let your father put a nice, clean, beautiful robe on you? Will you sit down and eat of this fatted calf? He has been saving this veal for you for months. Will you come and sit down and eat?" Does the boy say, "Well, I will try"? No, no! He says. "I'll take it. I haven't any money, but it is free."

Will you let your Father come and fall on your neck and kiss you and forgive you? This boy did not say, "I will try." He said, "Well, if Dad loves me enough to do it, I will take it." And so he came home.

All God wants is for you to get out of the hog pen and start for home. The Father will rush to meet you and fall on your neck and kiss you and give you everything He has. Why don't you come to the Father?

I remember when I first started preaching about the prodigal boy. I told about how long the way home was. I talked about how rough the road was and how tired the boy was. I discussed how his feet bled because he had no shoes. I talked about how he dreaded the long trip home and how he wondered whether the Father would be willing to take him in.

Then one day I discovered that was not in the Bible.

The Bible said, "I will arise and go to my father ... 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."

Listen, a sinner doesn't have to do a lot of praying and begging and pleading to get God ready to save him. God is ready before he is. God is ready now: and if in your heart you will say to Him, "I am coming, Father, I am coming! I am tired of my sin," the Father will meet you. Come on! Why, you couldn't lift your heart up to Him before it is all done. You can't take one step down the aisle, if you mean it, before He has already met you.

You remember Zacchaeus. Before he could slide down out of that tree and hit the ground, Jesus had already saved him! You can come to Jesus now and be saved as that boy was who went home. The father saw him and met him, and it was all over with. Will you come like that?

Oh, the feasting at the Father's house! Oh, the blessing of the robe of righteousness! Oh, the security of a ring of sonship! Oh, the blessedness of carrying the Gospel with your feet shod with the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel of peace! Oh, the rejoicing and communion, sitting at the Father's table, being fed on the glories of Heaven!

Don't you want to come to the Father's house? Throw away the apples of Sodom. Throw away the Devil's promises which are lies! Throw away the Devil's company - it will lead you to ruin - and come on.

Somebody says, "Brother Rice, I am just afraid I can't give up so-and-so." Do you really think so? Let me slip back to see the returned prodigal again. I hate to interrupt this happy party: but I slip back to the table and say to the young fellow, "How do you feel?"

"Oh, boy! This is wonderful!"

"Don't you think you will have a good deal of trouble giving up the slop down there where you fed the hogs in the hog pen? Don't you wish you were down there now for just a few more of those husks the swine ate?"

"Don't talk to me like that! No, no!"

God will fix up the whole thing. He will change your heart, give you victory, joy and happiness unspeakable. Throw away the Devil's apples. Come on home. The Father has better fruit than the Devil's. Every promise of God is yea and amen! It will be better tomorrow than it is today. If you have gone on to serve God, when you are eighty years old, you will just begin to find how sweet it is. You will say, as I have heard a thousand old saints say, The way grows brighter the farther along I go. Oh yes, how many times they have said it; and how they love to say it, I have been serving the Lord fifty years (or sixty years), and I am not tired yet. And you never will be.

When I get to Heaven, I am going to say, "Paul, what about all the beatings you got?"

Paul will say, "Wasn't that great! Wonderful! It doesn't hurt any more. I've never regretted it at all, and I never will."

At the end, the Devil's way is sad and the cup is bitter. The Devil's apples have worms. But the end, for the Lord's people, is happiness and joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then come and be saved today. Won't you be saved today?

How I thank God I was converted when I was just a little child! How I thank God that in His mercy He kept me from some of the ways of outward sin. Oh, how good He was! I want to serve Him until I die and then praise Him forever in Heaven. Oh, thank God for such a Saviour!

I wonder how many will say. "I have tried both ways, and I have found the Devil is a liar and a deceiver. His ways are miserable ways, and they lead to ruin. The Devil's apples all have worms. The Devil's promises are all lies." How many can say, "I have tried both ways, and I know sin never pays. It breaks the heart; it smites the conscience; ruins the life, and I hate it. Thank God I found peace in Jesus." How many will say, "I have tried both ways, and I have found the Devil's way didn't pay and God's way did."

Now listen, don't you want to be saved tonight? All right, can you say, "Father, I am tired of the hog pen. I am tired of the ways of sin." Can you say, "I am sorry for going away from home and going out in wickedness. It doesn't pay. God forgive me." Will you come back as that boy did and say, "I have sinned." Will you come back that way? You will be received with open arms and go away happy tonight in the Saviour's love. Won't you come?

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-r-rice/all-satans-apples-have-worms/>

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