

Moment of Decision



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At the moment of deciding to give our life to God—totally and completely, it must be a final decision, and never going back, and never compromising our position of faith and trust on Him. It is everyone's responsibility to repent, confess and forsake sins, and be willing to trust God in faith for everything from that moment.

The prodigal son returning to his father, is the example for us today, and it reminds us of the critical decision we must make, if we have strayed outside the will of God on anything. Every believer has that choice to remain in God's love and under His protection; or to choose otherwise—to leave that position of trust and be outside of His protection. Jude 1:21 *"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."*

The parable is about a son's *decision* to *return* and a father's *willingness* to *forgive*. Luke 15:11-12 *"A certain man had two sons: 12 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"* Deuteronomy 21:17. The father would *not* have wanted to *give* the inheritance—as it would be helping the son to make a very unwise decision—but the father could not decide for him, so granted his request.

This shows the free-will choice everyone has to do what is right, or to do what is wrong; to remain with the Father, or turn away from Him; to keep our trust on God, or to trust on a

human plan; to follow the instructions in the Word, or follow the path of the world.

God gave that power to decide to Adam and everyone since. The choice to love and obey God will always be ours. The prodigal son was about to ruin his life, and a loving father could not stop him from making that wrong choice.

Luke 15:13 *"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild [prodigal; riotous] living."* The prodigal son, by his own willful decision, travels to another country—thereby taking himself away from the comfort and protection of his father's home. In this other town, he spends all of his money *"in riotous living."* Luke 15:14-16 *"After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed [swine]. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the [swine] were eating, but no one gave him anything."*

It was difficult obtaining enough food to survive, so earning some cash was crucial. He accepts a low-paying job, but his situation worsens, because the little money he earned did not meet expenses. He would have eaten anything, but no one cared, and no one helped. Before he left his father's home, he desired a life of sinful pleasure, but now he longed for a life of faithful obedience.

Luke 15:17-19 *"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have [bread and] food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like [as] one of your hired men.'"*

It is a spiritual awakening—a revelation of God's love, mercy, and patience because He *wants* us to return—but we have to decide to make the right choice. The son thinks about the laborers and how they are well taken care of by his father. The prodigal is starving for nourishment—physically and spiritually. The key point is—the son, in a *moment*, makes the decision to *return to the father*. The choice to *repent, return*, and be *restored* by the father was the son's responsibility—only *he* could make that choice.

The Atonement sacrifice of Christ, can cleanse our heart, and enable every one of every nation to make that *same* decision—to return to God in humility of heart, and be under His protection plan. Malachi 3:7 *"Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.* That is the decision everyone *can* make, but not many are willing to make it—even though eternity is at stake. The Father of love and mercy receives us back into His family of believers, when we make the decision to repent, return, and be restored to His family by His mercy and grace.

Regardless of the mistakes we have made, or the sins we have committed, the invitation still stands—but we have to choose, decide, return, and accept His forgiveness. The first move is ours—then God does the rest. Our heavenly Father cannot make that choice for us, but He *wants us* to make that crucial decision to *repent* and *return*.

God *wants* to forgive us, but we have to *want* His forgiveness; be willing to forgive others, and to make the critical decision to go back to God's Truth, and to trust Him in faith. The regret, pain, and suffering outside the Father's will, is clearly seen. The prodigal now knows that the world is cruel, uncaring, and leading him to destruction; but the heavenly Father is loving, forgiving, and leading him to Heaven.

Luke 15:20 “So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.” God’s mercy, love, and forgiveness is waiting for every returning and repentant sinner.

Before the son could admit to his faults and failures, the father forgives, forgets, and receives him with open arms. His son lived in sin for years, but as soon as he repents and returns, the father forgives and restores.

Luke 15:21-24 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’” “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”

The father is so glad to have his son back, that he doesn’t even comment, and tells his men to bring the best robe—a sign of honor; a signet ring—sign of authority; shoes—symbol of freedom; and a feast—showing acceptance. The son was spiritually *dead*, but is now spiritually *alive*—again. He was lost and *in sin*, but is now saved and *in Christ*.

Desiring the pleasures of sin, the son cut himself off from the father—beginning the withering process. He becomes spiritually dead, but is made spiritually alive by his crucial choice to return to his father. Even though he was lost in sin with the world, he could *still* make the choice to return and be in Christ. He *still* had the *opportunity* and the *responsibility* to go back to the father—who continued to love him, but was *not* able to help him, due to his son’s willful decision to stay in the world.

Luke 15:25-28 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.”

The Prodigal’s brother should be rejoicing with the family over his brother’s decision to return; Luke 15:29-30 “But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’”

The brother is upset because his father showed mercy. He is angry about getting no recognition for doing what is right, when his brother is rewarded for doing everything wrong. He deliberately left the home, and chose to live in sin with immoral people—and now everyone is glad and holds a party for him!

Luke 15:31-32 “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’” It was right to celebrate, he meant, because this son was spiritually *dead*—due to *wrong* choices, but is now spiritually *alive*—due to *right* choices.

The father and family *had* to rejoice, because this son decided to repent of his immoral life of sin with unbelievers, and to return to a life of trust with the family of true believers. This brother was spiritually alive *in Christ* before he left, but he became spiritually dead *in sin* after he left. Now that he has returned to a

position of trust on the father, he is spiritually alive again.

Satan could *not* have snatched him away from his father, had the son chose to remain with the father, but the pleasures of the world enticed him. James 1:14 “When a man is tempted, it is his own passions [lust] that carry him away and serve as a bait.”

Even though the devil could not have taken him away against his own will, Satan was able to *tempt* him to leave a safe position of trust on the father, and to live in sin with the lost. The prodigal became another spiritual *casualty* in the serious spiritual *battle* that is raging for eternal souls.

At the moment of temptation, the son should have *resisted* the devil, by trusting God for His help James 4:7. God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability, and will give *a way of escape* 1 Corinthians 10:13—if we *want* to escape. It is always our choice to *give in* to temptation and die, or to *resist* temptation and live—forever!

The story proves that if we decide to turn away from trusting God in faith, we will die spiritually. We can, however, still decide to return to God’s Truth and be saved. Luke 15:7 “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.” If anyone repents and returns to Christ, everyone else should praise and glorify God!



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