

Ad - 20890101 [77]: The Prodigal Son

W. Kivengere
Luke 15:11-16

Author: Festo Kivengere

Place:

Date:

Event:

Theme: The Prodigal Son or Seeking Fulfillment

Text: Luke 15:11-16; Gal. 1:11-24 ✓

Comment: Taken from Tape No. 207 - Michael brings the Prodigal Home

Index:

p. 1 Life is exciting

p. 2 The Younger son

p. 4 Distance in relationship
Props for life

p. 5 Empty Human bank

p. 7 Resented his humanity

p. 9 Paschal on emptiness
Emptiness nothing can fill

Michael d Jests

Luke 15:11-32
Gal. 1:11-24

Speaker: Bishop Festo

#207

1. Theme: The Prodigal Son — Luke 15:11-16
Seeking fulfillment

We want to invite you all before the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we want to H----- our souls, in fact as we were reading the chapters in Marks book, you heard one of the chapters search for meaning, search for meaning. I'm going to read to you few verses in Luke chapter 15, because that is where we are going to base our _____. I'll take the first part and then my brother would come in and conclude this passage.

This is the story given by our Lord Jesus Christ. And you know many times when he gave a parable. He used to take an incident or something which actually happened in life. And he would use that as a teaching parable, in life. So today, or this evening, here is one of them, and it is a parable of life itself, bound in the center of humanity. and he was addressing men and women, young people particularly because the parable is about a young person. When life is really warm, when life is still exciting, when the possibilities of life are calling, when one anticipates success, prosperity, real happiness, fulfillment, meaning direction, this is to what this is to this. That particular group, that particular bracket, this parable was addressed and pointed. The Lord Jesus did not come to save people who are tired of life. He came to save people who still value life. But to whom life is playing a game as we said the other night. So he gave the parable and it couldn't be simpler. Listen to this.

Life is exciting

that
And he said, there was a man and that man could be in Salinas, you know. There was a man, and the man had two sons, and those two sons could be sitting right here. Those two daughters could be sitting right in this hall very human, very straight forward. Two sons and the younger of them

Speaker: Bishop Festo Kivengere

Theme: The Prodigal Son

the younger son

so this speak just exactly to the young. The younger of them not the old one. And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the share of property. And I want you particularly if you've got a New Testament and you are a young person, put a round little circle round those two words, give me. A very, very important, give me. And put a little circle round those. Give me, the share of property that falls to me. And the Father divided his living, property, between the two young men. Not many days later, the younger son got all that he had and took his journey into a far country. Then he squandered, wasted his property in loose living. Or careless. And when he had spent everything. When he had gone through all that he had, a great famine arose in that country and he began to be in want. So he went enjoying himself. In another translation it says, so he went and blewed himself. He went and blewed himself...to one of the citizens of that country who sent him to his field to feed swines. And he was glad to have fed on the p_____ that the swine ate. And no one gave him anything better. I'll stop this story in the middle. For that's where I want to stop so that Mike may take it up. Now, this passage is very straightforward. It is the Lord Jesus addressing Himself to humanity. And he chooses a young man, you see, a young person, one of the two sons of the Father. And in the morning this young man came. He stood before the Father, he said, Good morning Daddy, Good morning my son. Please, Daddy, give me the share that I would have taken as you would have died. That's exactly what it means, Give me the share that would have been mine after

The Prodigal Son
Bishop Festo

you have died. And Oh, the Father looked him in the eye. And the eyes of the young man spoke volumes. And what did they say, my life in the home has completely become a boredom. I have come to the conclusion that I can never be fulfilled as long as I remain here. Your presence, instead of making me complete is making me more and more bored. I am thoroughly tired. I am thoroughly bored. I simply can't live this way. My life is so empty. I will have to find meaning to it. I am not the kind of young man ^{cause} I should be and I believe the emptiness, the ~~loss~~ of the emptiness in this home is you, your rules, your regulations, your limitations, I have to find myself. Daddy, give me what would have been mine when I've died, when you die. And the father looked at him. And do you know this is talking about God? / ^{And he said,} ~~And~~ of course you can never be my son by force. A forced son is not son at all. So therefore, you have chosen things, you presented things to me. You have a feeling that things are going to fulfill you, they are going to make you the man you want to be. Therefore my dear Son, here are the things, divided his property, tears are running down his cheeks, and he gave the man, the young man his share. Few days later the young man in excitement, _____ the whole tremendous possibilities, he is looking with anticipation to the things which are going to make him complete. Now it is going to be different. I am going to be a fulfilled man. Complete. Oh, I am going to be free. Excitement. So he gathered everything. Few days later, bye-bye, Daddy, and he goes to what the Bible calls, and he went to a far country. Don't make the mistake that that does not mean distance. This is not a distance business. This is a far

Bishop Festo: The Prodigal Son

*Distance:
no relationship*

country of relationship. It is a far country, Africa, America, Europe. It is a far country of relationship. It is not a distance in miles. It is a distance in relationship. What do I mean? The Son decided the father was as good as dead. He treated the father as...were dead, was dead. And therefore, as there is a big difference between you and the person you love when they die, so there was a big difference between the son and the father, at this particular moment. The father couldn't be farther away. The distance was almost unlimited. He took his things, went far away. That is where the father was unknown. Far country. Where he was going to live his life completely apart from the father, where he was going to enjoy himself, apart from the father. Where he was going to enjoy his gifts apart from the father. Where he was going to enjoy his money apart from the father. The father was out and the son was in. So he went into a far country. And so what do we read here? And scripture has told you what happened. As soon as he got there, he started living. he started living. Young people, he started to search for meaning. I am going to get it this time. I am going to find it. It is going to clique. So he started living, use the money as a prop. He used loud music as a prop. He used friendship as a prop. He needed his props all this time. Because life somehow was refusing to be exactly what he wanted it to be. Instead of fulfilment, he increasingly, increasingly failed that life was a little bit more empty. And so he had to seek meanings and ways of filling it. That's why he spent, overspent money. Why did he overspend? It was because he was seeking fulfilment. He was not seeking to be bad. He was not seeking to be evil. All he wanted was life full of meaning, life

*props
for life*

Bishop Festo: The Prodigal Son

full of reality, life full of joy. Life with a direction. And therefore he was going to use everything he had in order to get what he wanted. So he went through the accounts. He spent every gift he had. And he spent all the love he had. And he spent all the emotions he had. And he spent all the friendships he had. Everything that made him a man, he spent. And he ran through the entire account of a human life. He emptied his human bank. Completely. And when he had run through everything that makes a young man, when he had emptied sex, when he had emptied the desire, when he had emptied appetites, when he run completely through everything that makes the man a man, what does the scripture say, And there was famine in that country. Oh, what a terrible timing that at that time, when you needed to call upon your gifts, to call upon your controls, to call upon yourself, to hold yourself back, you have done wrong and all you find that is coming in every department of your life. Nothing in the account, nothing at all. Nothing of control. It's empty. What about the desire? They've ...they are gone. They run wild. How did I empty myself? I emptied myself? I never intended to make my life empty. I came to fulfill myself. And here I am empty. O the misery of an empty life. It's terrible, too heavy to carry. What did the young man. He looks this side. He looks the other side. He tried to make things work again and they look used to it. Has he found himself? Far from it. The further away he goes from the father, the further away he goes from himself. The further away he got from home, the further away he got from meaning. The distance between him and his father was the same distance between himself.

*empty
human
bank*

Bishop Fest; The Prodigal Son

And his own person. He became confused. Hungry, tired, starving, lonely, shattered. And when every prop had completely been exhausted, Oh don't I, don't you know that? Don't you know that there are many people who are like that young man? Wasn't I like that thirty three years ago? When I tried bottles, and buckets of cigars in order that I may at least make my life, at least somehow a little happier, and every prop left me hanging in suspense. No wonder many people take away their lives. No wonder. When loneliness enters in, and he looked to this side and that. No more friendship. No more money. No other props. Life became very heavy, very wicked, very guilty, and the distance of the gap was simply unbridgeable. Then he went as we all do, the citizens of the country, somehow perhaps they danced together, who knows when he was still very well off. Perhaps he had shared some lovely things when he was still a respectable young man. So he went to the city seeking for a job or employment. That's what you would do. When things fall apart, we try another one and another one, and another one like a drowning non-swimmer. We hold on anything possible, every straw drops, and it leaves us ^{still hanging} in suspense. So he tried. /We all try. It's not bad to try. Human beings are always trying. We are not blaming the young man for training, for trying, to find something to do. To earn a living. So he went to the man. And what did the man do? We read in the Scriptures, Our Lord says, Got this man, the man did not meet him. No qualification. He had forgotten his study. What job can you do? Please help me. I am hungry. I am skeleton of a man. Help me, you, I'm pathetic. And the man looked at him, and said, poor thing, what can

Bishop Festo: The Prodigal Son

he do. Any qualifications? None at all. What, what can we do for him? And the servant _____, Sir I know what we still have. You know those swines down there in the valley, they haven't got a shepherd, let him go and look up to them. So the once respectable gentleman walks down the hill to the valley and stands by the pig. He have not learned agriculture. He was not a good farmer. However, he looked at this animals. They were wallowing the mud. They were enjoying ones. They wer eating pads. And he stood there and all around him were untter silent. No music, no comfort, no friendship, no prosperity, no home, no father, no life. Utterly lonely. Utterly empty. And yet you remember, he left his father in order to fulfill himself. He left home in order that he may enjoy life and now life is enjoying him. He left home in order to find freedom and now he is an absolute slave of circumstances. And so he looks. He stands there. And he looks at the pigs, and the pigs were having a feast. Absolutely, warmed, pads and all. Oh they were just feasting. And the man looked on and hunger was really biting him. And he was just almost fainting. And you know as he looked at those animals having a good time, he began to hate the fact that he was made a human being. He began to resent his humanity. Oh, I wish I were not a human being. Eee, I would have been better as a swine. There they are, they are having a wonderful time and here I am starving and dying. Do you know that life can be like that? Do you know why we hate life? Apart from the Father, life can simply become such a burden that you hate it. I wish I were a pig. Has he found himself? Has he now found himself? He wanted to find who he was. Do you mean that that confession

*Resents his
humanity*

Bishop Fest: The Prodigal Son

is a confession that he has now found exactly who he is? He left home to look for meaning. Is this the meaning. I wish I were a pig. Is that humanity? Is he complete? Complete seeking the swine's food. He is utterly incomplete, utterly empty. Completely lost to himself because he lost his father. And what remains, just right on time, my dear young people, life can simply become so empty that you grope in darkness, and the more you grope, and the more you get props, the emptier you become. That was my lot. I nearly committed suicide when I was nineteen. And ask me the reason, all was well outside. A good job, a fair amount of education. I was full of my job as a teacher, a good community, some property to keep me happy, and I considered, one night to commit suicide. At the age of 18. What had happened to me? I was not sick. I was healthy. And in a good job, according to our standard, and a little ed...better education than the rest of the villager. Looked, looked up to. Why am I considering this committing suicide. Because I was all the time feeding on puds and husks. Away from home, life simply becomes a boredom. No living at all. This man thought he was living when he was playing around. When he was living on props and crutches and like a lame man. He never lived. He simply existed and he was going round in circles. And circles were very empty and there was no more meaning. And there was no meaning left. And more meaninglessness all the time, everyday. Oh what a terrible thing to empty your accounts when famine has come. There are many young people who empty life of its meaning. Do you know that is what Jesus said in another portion. He who loves his life like the prodigal son, loses it, which

Bishop Festo: The Prodigal Son

means empties it. He empties it of its meaning. How many young people, how many people in America live along the young people, all ages have loved money so much that money has become their grave. How many people have loved things give me, give me, give me, give me. And the more you are given and the more you want and the more empty you become. Simply because things can never make a person. A person is created in the image of the father. And things, as Michael puts it last night, the emptiness as Pascal put it is that God is that shut emptiness, no dollars can fill it. No pleasure can fill it. No prosperity can fill it. A Cadillac can not fill it. A better home cannot fill it, a better truth cannot fill it, only, at this juncture, only one person can fill that empty life giving its bearings as you see this young man in the parable of Jesus and it is a parable about you and me, sitting standing there, his heart fainting, his body all in pieces full of guilt and shame, looking at the animals and hating the fact that he was a human being. Maybe tonite I'm speaking to somebody who hate the fact that you are alive. If you feel like that is simply because you are far away from home. You are far away from home but if tonite a miracle happens and I'm going to leave it here and ask Michael to take over. He must bring this son back home.

Pascal

emptiness
nothing
can fill