



# Shepherd's Path

## A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

### Greatest Stories Ever Told Series, Lesson 12

**Lesson Title:** The Lost Son

**Take Home Point:** We once were lost, but now are found.

#### **Warm-Up:**

When my son was a little boy, he had a small stuffed dog named "Doggy" as his constant companion. You could not find him without Doggy nearby or in his arms. We all got to know Doggy's character (and he could be a character!), and it was fun for the whole family. Doggy and my son were inseparable. But one time on a family vacation trip, somehow Doggy got left behind where we spent the night. We had driven several miles before my son realized Doggy was not with us. He was extremely upset, fearful he would never see his little friend again. I told him not to worry; we would go back for him. So we did, and sure enough, Doggy was still there. What a happy reunion that was! My son's special friend was back, and, oh, was he happy.

**Read:** Luke 15:11-32, Ephesians 2:4-10

#### **Observation (What happened?):**

What was the lost son's attitude when he realized how foolish he was?

Why did God rescue us from being dead in sin?

#### **Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

Why do you think the younger son wanted his inheritance right away?

What does it mean to be seated with Christ in the heavenly realm?

#### **Insight:**

Occasionally we miss a significant point in the Bible because we read it from a different cultural perspective. For example, a missionary friend once told me of his experience with a middle eastern man who had just read this story. "What do you find most interesting in this story?" my friend asked. The man replied, "The father running to meet his son! That is not done in our culture. For a father to run like that is to humiliate himself in front of family and friends. He must have loved his son very much!" How like God this is! The Bible tells us in Philippians 2:6-8 that Jesus humbled himself to become a man. Consider how humiliating it was for him to be tried and executed as a criminal, mocked and scorned on the cross, and for his resurrection to be doubted by his own disciples. But the God revealed in the Bible is loving, merciful, gracious, and kind. In today's Bible account, the father is hopeful of the son's return. For us, God does even more, preparing our rescue even before we know we are lost. In Romans 5:8, Paul tells us that "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

#### **Application (What does it mean to me?):**

As a Christian, what do you learn from the older son's attitude and his father's response?

Take some time to thank God for his incomparable grace that saves you from a life of sin and eternal death.