

# THE LOST SON

**Speaker: Resource**

**Time: Saturday evening, approximately 7:30 p.m.**

**Length: 15 minutes maximum**

**Purpose:**

1. To focus on the change of heart in confession-repentance and on its joy.
2. To touch on the father, who gives over generously and then waits; the younger son, who squanders and needs to receive forgiveness; and the older son, who doesn't understand repentance or love.
3. To overcome our reluctance to repent by highlighting the expected love and forgiveness of the Father; as well as to recognize our anger and misunderstanding of mercy when we see someone else treated better than we think we should be treated.
4. To have a "new beginning" and a return "home" to God.
5. To help prepare TECites for personal confession.

*Outline (Begin your talk here.)*

**Introduction:**

*(Introduce your talk by reading the parable as written here.)*

A man had two sons. The younger son asks his father for the portion of the family estate as an early inheritance. The son quickly sets off on a long journey and begins to waste his fortune on wild living, eventually getting caught up in sinful ways. When the money runs out, a severe famine hits the country and the son finds himself in horrible circumstances. He takes a job feeding pigs. Eventually, he grows so poor that he even hungers to eat the food given to pigs. The young man comes to his senses, remembering his father. He felt the powerfully painful results of sin: physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual disaster. *(Perhaps here you can share some personal experience.)*

Realizing his situation, the younger son recognizes his foolishness and decides to return to his father. Before the son even arrives home, the father doesn't wait for him to do the right thing or say the right thing, he runs to meet his son on the road. In the embrace of his father, the son repents and speaks clearly to his father about what he had done. Yet, before the son can even finish speaking, his father—full of mercy and love, who had been watching for his son and waiting for his son—asks his servants to prepare a feast.

Meanwhile, the older son becomes angry when he comes in from working the fields and discovers a party with music and dancing being celebrated for his younger brother's return. The father tries to turn the older brother from his jealous temper explaining, "You are always with me, and everything I have is yours.

Your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found."

*(Perhaps here you can share a personal example.)*

Some points in this story are important:

1. Typically, a son would receive his inheritance at the time of his father's death. The fact that the younger brother instigated the early dividing of the family estate showed a rebellious heart and disrespect for his father's authority, not to mention a selfish and immature attitude.
2. Pigs were unclean animals. Jewish people were not even allowed to touch pigs. When the son took a job feeding pigs, even longing for their food, it reveals that he had fallen as low as he could possibly go. This son represents a person living in rebellion to God. Sometimes we have to hit 'rock-bottom' before we come to our senses and recognize our sin.
3. The father is a picture of the Heavenly Father. God waits patiently, with loving compassion to restore us when we return to Him with humble hearts. He offers us everything in His kingdom, restoring a full relationship with joyful celebration.
4. The older son is clearly a picture of unforgiving stubbornness. Bitterness and resentment keep the older son from forgiving his younger brother. It blinds him to the treasure he freely enjoys through constant relationship with the father.
5. The lost son is a picture of any of us who are sinners, willful, neglectful, indifferent to the teachings of Jesus and the love of God.

### My Story . . . Your Story:

Remember, repentance means to have a transformed and changed heart—to turn away from something and go toward God, which can be challenging. Sometimes we need to hear God's Law (His Commandments) to get us on the right path, as the Law shows us our sin. Sometimes we need to hear the Gospel—God's great, extravagant love through Jesus—a love stronger than anything we've done or haven't done. The Gospel shows our Savior.

We can go through some of the same things that the younger and the older sons went through. Yet, the father loves and forgives us all. He welcomes us all with open arms. *(You may use a personal example here.)*

### Conclusion:

*(Use these or similar words in your conclusion):*

Personal repentance can be humbling and sometimes a hard thing because it involves speaking openly and honestly of our sin, something that we would much rather hide. I've been there, too. But in all honesty, when I attended TEC and private confession with a pastor was available to me, it was one of the most powerful and meaningful moments for me. Tonight, private confession will be made available for you, and I know it may be something that's new for you. I encourage you to participate in visiting with one of the pastors who are here with us tonight. In fact, I assure you I want to go see one of the pastors. Probably the first one to go!

God is waiting this evening for each of you, just as the father in this story waited for his son to return home. God is reaching out to you, just as the father reached out to his oldest son in hope for a change of heart. We desire to hear God's Word of forgiveness in our lives. This is an invitation to come home to God.

No discussion question follows this talk.