

# The Prodigal Son

**Storyteller (picks up the Parable Box):** I wonder what this is? It is the colour gold. Something inside must be precious like gold. Perhaps there is a parable inside. Parables are even more precious than gold.

## Luke 15:1-32

Jesus also told them another story:

Once a man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, "Give me my share of the property." So the father divided his property between his two sons.

Not long after that, the younger son packed up everything he owned and left for a foreign country, where he wasted all his money in wild living. He had spent everything, when a bad famine spread through that whole land. Soon he had nothing to eat.

He went to work for a man in that country, and the man sent him out to take care of his pigs. He would have been glad to eat what the pigs were eating, but no one gave him a thing. Finally, he came to his senses and said, "My father's workers have plenty to eat, and here I am, starving to death! I will go to my father and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son. Treat me like one of your workers.'"

The younger son got up and started back to his father. But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. He ran to his son and hugged and kissed him.

The son said, "Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son."

But his father said to the servants, "Hurry and bring the best clothes and put them on him. Give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. Get the best calf and prepare it, so we can eat and celebrate. This son of mine was dead, but has now come back to life. He was lost and has now been found." And they began to celebrate.

It is closed. *Knock on the lid.* It has a lid. Perhaps there is a parable inside. Parables are closed; they need to be opened up so we can see what is in them.

The box looks like a present. Parables were given to us long ago as presents. Even if you don't know what a parable is, the parable is already yours. Shall we open it? Let's look inside.

*Put the father and the two sons on the right side of the felt-board.* Once a man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, "Give me my share of the property." So the father divided his property between his two sons. *Put the bag of money next to the second son.*

*Move the second son, with his moneybag, over to the left side of the board.* Not long after that, the younger son packed up everything he owned and left for a foreign country, where he wasted all his money in wild living. *Take the money bag away.*

He had spent everything, when a bad famine spread through that whole land. Soon he had nothing to eat.

*Put the pigs up next to the younger son, and put the pigstye walls around them all.* He went to work for a man in that country, and the man sent him out to take care of his pigs. He would have been glad to eat what the pigs were eating, but no one gave him a thing.

*Move the younger son out of the pigsty.* Finally, he came to his senses and said, "My father's workers have plenty to eat, and

## Story Materials

- Parable box
- Felt figures:
  - Father
  - Elder son
  - Younger son
  - Moneybag
  - pigs
  - pigstye
  - ring and sandals
  - feast

Tray, basket or shallow open box to hold the story

here I am, starving to death! I will go to my father and say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son. Treat me like one of your workers.’”

The older son had been out in the field. But when he came near the house, he heard the music and dancing. So he called one of the servants over and asked, “What’s going on here?”

The servant answered, “Your brother has come home safe and sound, and your father ordered us to kill the best calf.” The older brother got so angry that he would not even go into the house.

His father came out and begged him to go in. But he said to his father, “For years I have worked for you like a slave and have always obeyed you. But you have never even given me a little goat, so that I could give a dinner for my friends. This other son of yours wasted your money on prostitutes. And now that he has come home, you ordered the best calf to be killed for a feast.”

His father replied, “My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we should be glad and celebrate! Your brother was dead, but he is now alive. He was lost and has now been found.”

*Move the son a few steps at a time toward the middle of the board. The younger son got up and started back to his father.*

*Move the father quickly to the middle of the board.* But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. He ran to his son and hugged and kissed him.

The son said, “Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son.”

*Put a couple of servants up on the board.* But his father said to the servants, “Hurry and bring the best clothes and put them on him.

*Put the ring and sandals up on the whiteboard.* Give him a ring for his finger and sandals[d] for his feet. Put the party food up on the whiteboard. Get the best calf and prepare it, so we can eat and celebrate. This son of mine was dead, but has now come back to life. He was lost and has now been found.” And they began to celebrate.

*Move the older son over toward the centre.* The older son had been out in the field. But when he came near the house, he heard the music and dancing.

*Move one of the servants over to the older brother.* So he called one of the servants over and asked, “What’s going on here?” The servant answered, “Your brother has come home safe and sound, and your father ordered us to kill the best calf.” The older brother got so angry that he would not even go into the house.

*Move the father over to the older brother.* His father came out and begged him to go in. But he said to his father, “For years I have worked for you like a slave and have always obeyed you. But you have never even given me a little goat, so that I could give a dinner for my friends. This other son of yours wasted your money. And now that he has come home, you ordered the best calf to be killed for a feast.”

His father replied, “My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we should be glad and celebrate! Your brother was dead, but he is now alive. He was lost and has now been found.”