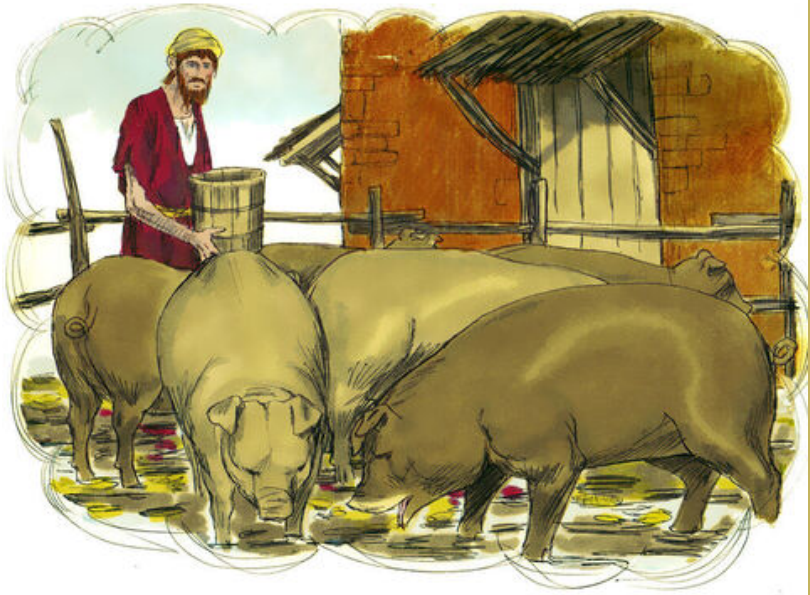

**EDITED AND
ABRIDGED
DRAMATIZED
STORY**

**FROM A SERMON
OF
REV. WILLIAM
BRANHAM**

THE PRODIGAL



PICTURE CREDIT: SWEET PUBLISHING

The Prodigal

*No matter who you are, what environment you're in,
Jesus will come anywhere to receive you.*

There's an old-fashion country home, and I can see, living there, a lovely old couple, who had worked hard all their lives and had two sons.

Let's say they went to church every Sunday, they loved God, and they served God with all their heart. But one day, this younger son, let's say he started going out with a group that he had no business going to.

Listen young man, young lady, just as soon as you get out from under a Christian influence you're in bad hands, you're on your road back, right then. Remember that, just as soon as you get from under the influence of the Holy Spirit. I don't care who the boy is or

who the girl is, if they're not saved keep away from them.

The Bible said, "Shun the very appearance of evil."

Stay off the enemy's ground. The old toboggan slide is so slick, move around and all at once before you know it, down the chute you go.

I can see this young man, he goes out.

His new friend says, "Why don't you tell your mother you're not going to that old church over there. All you do is patter back and forth to church."

Well, you couldn't go to any place better than church.

I can hear him say, "Why don't you come on down to the city and come on down to bright lights and live like a boy should live."

The first thing you know, he's going to ask his daddy - his dad's getting old, and his

mother's getting old. One day when he comes in, he's tired and he gets to sassing his mother and his father.

First thing he said, "Father, I want you to give me my portion. I'm tired of lying around the house here and doing these things. All I see on Sunday is go to church. And the rest of the boys they're all out going, having their own way. I want to do as the rest of them do."

Don't you ever follow the crowd; you follow Jesus. But that's the attitude of young people, isn't it? "I want to do like the rest of them." Don't ever pattern yourself by them; pattern yourself on Jesus.

Then I hear the father say, "Well, Son, this is the only way I have of making a living. This is the only livelihood."

"Well, I have an inheritance, and you give it to me. My rights..."

I can see the poor old father; it bothered him very much.

“Well, what are you going to do, Son?”

He said, “I’m going down to the city, and live like the rest of them.”

“Well, can’t you stay with mother and I? We love you with all of our heart, and we want to be good to you. We’ve done everything we can.”

But that wouldn’t satisfy him. Satan’s got a hold of the boy. So he was going down to the city to live like the rest of the worldly people.

Then I see his father tell the mother, say, “Mother, you know what’s happened? Our— boy has got with the wrong crowd. He’s a young man now, so he’s asked me to sell the farm and take all that I have and divide it amongst him and his brother. I can’t talk him out of it.”

I can see the old mother, see her go to her son and say, “Son, mother’s washed over the

board, and ironed to try to do everything she could for you.”

Now, I can hear him say, “Mama, you get on away from that stuff. That’s old time. I don’t want nothing like that. I’m going to have my way. I’m nearly of age now, so I’m going to have my way about this.”

I can see her put her arms around him and hug him. She would hug him; he turned his head. He didn’t want a kiss in public. No affections. The Bible said they would be this way. The child rules the home now instead of the father and mother. They’re the one who does the talking.

I can see the mother pat his cheeks.

“Mother, I don’t want no more to do with this family. All you do is go to church. That’s all I hear.”

I can see the old father put a sale sign up now, sell the old farm, get all the goods together, and divide it up among the boys.

Mother and Dad will just live as long as their portion lasts, maybe, and then it'll be over.

When they divided the portion to the young boy, he got his money in his pocket, and said, "Now, I'll have a good time."

The next morning, I can see him go and say to his mother, "Old lady, pack my clothes now. I'm going to leave in the morning."

Oh, my. How that poor old mother will go away, get the little things that he wore when he was a little boy, tuck them away, look at them. I can see her pick up a little pair of shoes and take these little shoes, set them up on the organ, then get down there and pray, and say, "Oh, God, take care of my boy. He's leaving me now. Take care of my boy. He's gone out with the world, and I don't know what will happen to him; only take care of him, Father."

I can see her crying out to God, "God, take care of my boy." No matter what you ever do, Mother's forgiving. Her heart's always ready

to forgive. Then I can see the old dad. He's just worrying, walking back and forth, up and down on the outside, from the barn up to the house, back and forth.

I can hear Mother go to the door and say, "What's the matter, Dad?"

"Oh, I don't know, Mother."

I notice, this father, weary, walking back and forth, up and down. The next day when it came time for the boy to leave, I can see him pack his little suitcase and get out there. I can see him go round, say, "So long, folks," and start off.

Mother says, "Just a moment, honey. Before you go, let's have prayer one more time."

They kneel down on the floor, I can see the old mother and dad with their arms around one another, praying to God: "God, we've raised him and took him this far. He's gone out from the way from us now, wandering. Please, Father, take care of him."

Oh, but the boy is just restless while they're praying; he didn't want to hear the prayers of mother and dad no more. He had other things on his mind. I can hear them pray and get up, mother tries to hug him, but he turns his head. His dad put his arms around him.

He cries, "Oh, you all go on off," and starts off over the hill.

I can see father and mother standing there, with their hands, arms around one another, waving good-bye to him as he went off over the hill, down into the city to be with the rest of the world. I see them return back into the house again, weeping, crying, praying. He gets with the big crowd down there, and as long as his money lasted, he was a good fellow. That's the way the world treats you. As long as you got money, you got friends. But when your money is gone, your friends are gone. But I know a Friend Who will stick by you if you haven't got a penny: Jesus Christ, the Son of God

I see him in the places with gambling devices, and halls of ill-fame, and so forth, and after a while his money was gone, and his friends were gone. He had been a popular boy. He could have had a date with any of the girls. But when his money was gone, they were gone with the crowd. That's just the way the devil leaves you.

So he had to get himself a job. He went to a citizen of the country, a hog raiser. Look where he's dropped to now: a Jew, they're not even supposed to put their hands on the carcass of a hog. He was in need; he was starving; and he had to take a job. They gave him the worst thing. That's the way the devil does it. Just as soon as he can get you started down the hill, he'll tramp you with everything he's got.

The citizen gave him two big slop buckets to go slop the hogs. Think of the place he'd come to - a Jewish boy out there slopping hogs in the pigpen, away from Mother, away

from religion that he once had, to keep away from hogs, now he was rooting in it.

That's the way the devil will do it. He'll get you to smoke your first cigarette, telling you there's no harm in it, and after a while, you're a cigarette fiend. He'll tell you there's no harm in taking a sociable drink. But only thing the devil wants you to do is to start, and he'll take you on. Get over on his ground one time and watch him. You know what it means to do wrong, but there's an influence of the power of darkness, the prince of the power of the air that leads you trapped into these things. You've got to stand up. Separate yourself from the things of the world and come out and live for Christ.

I can see this child. Now, he's feeding hogs. Here he is down in the pigpen, slopping the hogs and eating from the same slop bucket. Feeding the hogs - think of it, what he had left and what he had then. The portion that he'd spent was really his father's that he'd

earned. But here he was in the pigpen and all he could hear was the grunting of hogs.

That's the way it is, today. There's a many a mother's boy, now, out in the roadhouses, drunk, out in hall places of ill-fame. Why? Because they got away from home, got away from God, got away from the Bible, got away from Its teachings, and went out to live with the rest of the world.

You stay away from the world. The Bible said if you love the world or the things of the world, the love of the Father is not even in you. Stay away from it. As long as that desire is in your heart to do that, come back to the altar. Stay there until it's all gone.

Now, I can see the chap down there now, lying in a hog pen. Night time, that old place would stink, so I suppose he was left in the hog pen, to lay down by the side of the hogs in the trough.

One night, I see a restless mother and dad begin speak about their boy. I hear Mother

say, “I’m just so restless, Dad, I don’t know what to do. I just keep thinking about our boy. I wonder where he’s at? Wonder if he’s got something to eat.”

I hear Dad say, “Well, we’ve always been taught that all things work together for good to them love God. Let’s pray.”

I can see them get down on the floor and begin praying about little Johnny. I can hear them pray, “O God, take care of our boy. Wherever he is, whatever state he’s in, take care of him, Father, and send him home.”

Where’s he at? Down in the hog pen, going to the hog pen.

The Angel of God come to him, “Boy, wake up.” He talked to him, and said, “Oh, what about you just get back home to them.”

“Think of my father that has all the wealth that he has and all the things that he has given to me. Here I am lying here, dying of hunger, lying in a hog pen.”

The Bible said he came to himself. Oh, I can see him as he begins to come to himself and say, “Oh, if I could just go home. But I’ve sinned, and I’m not worthy to go home. So what can I do?”

I can think of the time when he was a little boy, when he was sick, his mother rocked the cradle to take him back-and-forth, up and down in the room and love him and care for him. Now there’s nobody to love and care for him. He’s out in the cold world to shift for himself. All he hears is grunting.

I can hear him begin to sing an old song, maybe that his mother knew. I believe it goes something like this:

*If I could hear my mother pray again,
If I could hear her tender voice again,
How glad I would be, would mean so much to
me,
If I could hear my mother pray again.*

Oh, if he could hear his mother pray. The Angels of God look down from Heaven.

Then I notice down there again, father gets real restless, gets up and pulls on his coat and walks out through the gate, a moonlight night, looks down across the path, wondering, "Where is my boy?"

Oh, my, he's looking down the road to his boy who is far away. I can see the boy come to himself, look back and it sounds like he hear his mother praying. The Angels of God are waiting to take the message. I could hear him raise and sing and say:

"Tell Mother I'll be there in answer to her prayer.

This message guardian angel to her bear.

Tell Mother I'll be there Heaven's joys with her to share.

Yes, tell my darling mother I'll be there."

I can hear him say, "I'll arise, and go to my father."

Here he comes; the rising of the sun across the fields. Shoes off his feet, clothes tattered and torn, he comes staggering home.

I can hear his mother say, “There he’s comes, Dad.”

And his dad says, “That’s my boy.”

I can hear him say, “Oh, Father, I’m not worthy to be your son, make me one of your hired servants.”

The father and mother, down through the gates they went. No matter what he’d done, he’s coming home now.

They ran, threw their arms around him and said, “Go, kill the fatted calf. Let’s make merry; this is my son that was dead and is alive again. He was lost and now he’s found. Put a ring on his finger, shoes on his feet. Put the best robe you got in the house on him.”

That’s the attitude of the Father to every sinner here this afternoon.

There are many prodigals in the world today. God calls for all to come to repentance. He wants us to come. He wants you to come, all prodigals everywhere.

Source:

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Rev. William Marrion Branham