

The Prodigal ...

A story about three men?

Or is this wonderful story; **our** story, of life and of our journey to love?

Youngest Son: Does everything he could to earn the loathing of his father.

- Asks for inheritance – asking to be let go – to be disinherited. To turn his back on his ‘duty’
- Goes far away – to a foreign country, a gentile land – for the Jew – despicable.
- Spends all the hard earned money of the family on reckless living; on wine and women – on debauchery – a sinner. Loses everything – poverty – reliant – shame, guilt, loss.
- Gets to such a low point that he hires himself out to a foreigner. Sent to feed the pigs – unclean. So hungry he eats the scraps that they are given – imagery of total loss and shame.



Choice

The Father:

- Waits lovingly. Longingly. “While he was still a long way off his Father saw him ...!”
- Always in his heart. Never rejected.
- Always open – always heart centred and not legalistic.



Youngest Son:

- I am sinner.
- Treat me as servant – no longer worthy.
- BUT – courage to return – courage to come home. How many of us would have run further away? Courage beyond ego.
- Kneels at his feet – begs forgiveness – to be open to the journey of true forgiveness is indeed a spiritual journey.

The Father:

- Runs – something a Jewish father would never have done.
- Hugs – total acceptance



Cloths – ring – symbol of sonship. Sandals – back as a member of the household.

- Celebration – but more than this – “kill the fatted calf” – total celebration – total reunion – the ultimate feast.
- Total focus on the relationship – on the sonship.



The Older Brother:

- Works hard
- Obedient to the law
- Little sense of empathy for his younger brother?
- Motivation?
- If today you hear God’s voice – harden not your hearts.
- Has been keeping count – his day will come!
- Unable to rejoice in the love journey of the other.

- Sees the other – sees not his brother but his competitor for his father’s love and inheritance.
- Vengeful, resentful.

The Father:

- Comes to him.
- Invites him in.
- Longs for him just as much for the other.
- “All I have is yours!”
- Come in – into relationship – and celebrate.
- Invites ...allows – just as he did for the younger son.
- Free – to come to his heart, to his own heart – just as the younger son was.



Journey

Choice

We are all the younger

We are all the older

***We are called to the heart of the
Father Mother God.***