

Luke 15:11-30 **“Why We Backslide”** August 29, 2009
Subtitled: 10 Steps to Destruction

Lets talk about some things that make up our “Walk”. Col 1:9-14

1. Our speech - **Col. 4:6; Matt. 12:36-37; Luke 12:11-12;**
2. Our dress - **Titus 2:7**
3. Our thoughts - **Prov. 23:7;**
4. Our relationships - **Col. 3:12-15**

So our walk is everything that we are involved in on a daily basis. Those things that matter most to us. We “walk” in a manner that cares about the things we consider most important. Priorities. But what about when we allow those things that we shouldn’t creep into our lives. How does that happen and how do we stop it.

Luke 15:11-20 is a familiar story. It is about a man who had two sons, and one wanted to get away. Let’s read it.

1. vs. 12 Desire - he saw his father’s wealth and wanted it. He said to himself, “I think I know what’s best for me”. God promises to give us the desires of our hearts, but we must remember that the desires mentioned in Psalms are those godly desires and those things based on Godly principles. Here the son is actually lusting after things he really didn’t need and really shouldn’t have. He was wanting to do things his own way. In fact, it was a case of his wanting what was rightfully his, but before it was time. Sometimes we get into trouble because we won’t wait on God to do things His way. How many times do we tell God, “I want what I want when I want it?”

2. vs. 12 Deception - he convinced himself that this would make him happy. He knew that it was not the time to receive his portion, but he deceived himself. After all it was his inheritance, and he deceives his father by convincing him that he had the good sense and ability to use his wealth wisely. we all deceive ourselves with the devil’s lie that we are wise enough to live our lives without God’s help. We are told every day that we don’t need anyone telling us what to do or how to do it. Society would love for us to believe that we are so good naturally, that we can make it on our own. One more step down the road to destruction.

3. vs. 13 Decision - he made up his mind to go. It is a natural progression that when we want something real badly, we will try to figure out how it get it, by any means, convince ourselves that we can’t live without it, and then go for it. But once the decision is made, our minds are made up, it’s all downhill from there. Remember David, he was still not guilty of producing a son out of wedlock or murder, until he actually made the decision to sleep with Bathsheba. When we are faced with temptation in our walk with God, we have the choice to obey or not to obey. There comes a point beyond which most of us cannot resist

any more. We deceive ourselves so well we can't help it. The decision was made.

4. vs. 13 Departure - he left his father's care and protection. When we backslide or sin, we are leaving God's fellowship. Our relationship never changes, but the fellowship can't stay the same. You can't have intimate one on one fellowship with someone who isn't there. When Adam sinned, he broke fellowship with God. He wanted to get as far away from God as he could. So did the son. Think about it. Don't we do the same thing? When we are going to do something wrong, don't we try to go as far away from those we love and those who might see and say something to us? Don't we do things in secret and in the dark? Sin will always take you away from God. 1 John 1:7

5. vs. 13 Delight - I have always disagreed with those who paint sin as a bad, unpleasant experience. Oh to be sure, it ultimately will be as we will see later. But in the beginning, it is the most exhilarating thing we can do. If it were not, only fools and stupid people would sin. It excites us in ways never before. It thrills us into believing that we are invincible and that even God will leave us alone. And he will, after a while. God says He will not "strive with us forever". That is His Holy Spirit will not be able to convict us if we continue in our sin. But the consequences of sin are far worse than the pleasure we get. And in our minds we convince ourselves that the pain is not that bad and we must sin more to make the pain go away. It is a viscous cycle. DOWN.

6. vs. 14 Disappointment - Now here is where the rubber meets the road. Here is where the truth about sin comes out. No matter how wonderful the experience, no matter how great the thrill, no matter how good the feeling, it all comes to an end if God isn't in it. Disappointment always follows the delight we get from sin. Christians must have Christ in their activities, or else there is an emptiness pleasure just can't fill. This son found out that his friends left him when his money did, and that he no longer was the center of attention, and that he was nothing without his money. He was disappointed. Still going down hill.

7. Vs. 14 Disguise - Let's see where we are. We desired, we deceived, we departed, we were delighted (for a while), and we were disappointed. So how do we deal with all that? We disguise our disappointment and our hurt and our misery with lies and more deception. We allow our pride to continue to carry us further away from the things of God. Don't we tell ourselves, "it is only a small problem or none at all", or "it's not as bad as it seems", or "I can handle it". Imagine this fellow spending all this money and having all these friends, and then the money runs out. It's tragic what we do to keep friends and look good in front of others.

8. vs. 15 Despair - Here is the real sad part. Now for a Jew, feeding pigs was about as bad as you could get. He had come from a very wealthy family and now he lived with pigs. He really didn't have any place else to go. I wonder if he had, in the process of living the fast life, made enough enemies that no one would give him a job. He must have thought to himself that he had gone so far over the edge that he couldn't be saved, even from himself. He had been away from his father's love so long; he had forgotten what it was

like. He felt hopeless. When we get away from God, we can forget what His love is like, and that is a hopeless feeling. Are we at the bottom yet?

9. vs. 16 Disaster - If that wasn't bad enough, he really began to be in want. No job and no food. He had to eat what the pigs left. Think of it. From all the food and drink you could want to eating with pigs. Sin will always end in disaster if not repented. Remember the decision earlier. He could have avoided all this way back then. Now he's at the bottom.

10. vs. 17 Deliverance - With God, no story is complete without His supernatural deliverance, His undeserved Grace, and His unconditional Love. The son "came to his senses". His conscience was still able to hear God's voice. The truth is, God never stops trying to get us to come back into fellowship with him, until we shut the door. Verse 20 is an example of one of the greatest love stories ever told. The father saw him while he was still far off, and ran to meet him. Isn't that just like God?