

Matters of the Heart

Orthodox reflections on faith and life



62 A Joyous Return

The parable of the prodigal son is conveyed chiefly to reveal the joy of our Lord over the return of a sinner. The son, in youthful foolishness, took his share of the inheritance and parted ways with his father. Before long, we are told, he would squander all his living and find himself worse off than the swine for which he cared. And upon coming to the realisation of his dire state, the son makes his journey back home if only to be accepted as a hired servant.

The compassionate father sees his son from afar and runs out to receive him with exceeding joy. His filthy garment is immediately replaced with a new robe of honour. A signet ring is placed upon his finger as a testimony of his reinstated sonship, and his hunger satisfied by a banquet in his name. Although not worthy of this love, the son is made anew on account of his father's graciousness. This same reception is offered to any sinner upon his repentant return to God.

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✦ “Father, I have sinned against
✦ heaven and before you, and I
✦ am no longer worthy to be
✦ called your son. Make me like
✦ one of your hired servants.”’

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Luke 15:18

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See Also:

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Luke 15:7

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*My Lord accept me as Your
prodigal son and restore my
honour by the grace of Your
compassion and abundant
mercies.*