



Have you been feeling lost? Does God's love seem further away than it once was? Jesus told this story—perfect for you.

COMING HOME

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"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him... But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

Luke 15:20b, 22-24

Have you ever considered what your life would be like if you didn't have God in it?

Some of you might know what that means, never having opened your heart to him. Others might at one time have known but forgotten what the warmth of his presence was like. You may have forgotten God's assurance that you're alright and that he loves you. Because, though you may find it hard to believe, he *does* love you—just the way you are.

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Peace and security become a part of our lives when we know we're God's child—loved in the way good earthly parents love their children. I wonder if this story told by Jesus might help you understand what God is like and what he'd like to be for you?

In the story, a father has two sons. The younger one demands his portion of the family estate as an early inheritance. and leaves home. This was tantamount to disowning his father, an act that must have deeply hurt him. The son sets off on a journey to a distant land and begins to waste his fortune on wild living.

When the money runs out and the son finds himself in dire circumstances he takes a job feeding pigs. Eventually he grows destitute, even longing to eat the food assigned to the pigs. In humility, he recognizes how foolish he had been and decides to return to his father to ask for forgiveness and mercy.

The father has been watching and waiting, longing for his son's return. When he sees him coming, he is overjoyed and runs to meet him, receiving him back with open arms of compassion.

Imagine!! For the father to so lovingly to receive his son back after the way he had turned his back on him. For the father to love his son still—after having been treated so poorly by him.

"Let's have a feast and celebrate" the father cries to his servants. "For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

That's how God loves us. That's how Jesus loves us.

If you've been lost, or if you've never been found, God waits, longing for you to come home to him. He'd like to throw a big party for you like the party the father in the story threw for his son. Are you ready?

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