



Carrying the offenses
myself

TO FORGIVE



Prodigal's Dad



Giving the offenses
to God

*Luke 15:22-32 " **But** his father said to the slaves, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. And a jeweled ring for his finger; and shoes! ²³ And kill the calf we have in the fattening pen. We must celebrate with a feast, ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and has returned to life. He was lost and is found.' So the party began.*

WHENEVER THERE IS A **But** IN A STORY, WE'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK.

Luke 15:12 "Father, give me my money." [I do not want to wait until you die.]

Luke 15:13 [I have been planning & dreaming to get out of here.] "And not many days later, he left."

Luke 15:13 [I want to get as far away from here as possible.] "Journeyed to a far country."

Luke 15:13 [I have absolutely no respect for my father's hard work to get our money.] "Wasted money".

Luke 15:15 [I don't need my father; I can make it on my own.] "Joined himself to a citizen."

1. Pretend you are the father here. If you heard these comments coming from your son, describe the incredible hurt & desperation you would feel?

2. If while growing up, the son heard his father saying these things, how would that have affected the son in his teenage years? _____

3. Yes No Is it possible that, due to the busyness of the family business, the father & the boy did not communicate well?

4. Yes No If the ranch was on the commercial roadway connecting north and south Israel with traffic coming through often, would not the boy hear the news of faraway places and fun living?

5. He might have thought that the inheritance numbers were not enough for him; he might have been angry in his heart. Could that explain "I don't want to wait until you die?" Explain. Discontent builds up. _____

6. Yes No Could it be possible to live in an average family where you are definitely loved, and yet not know you are loved? Explain.

I WAS A PRETTY GOOD KID MOST OF THE TIME; WHEN I THINK OF THE TIMES I DROVE THEM CRAZY WITH SHOP-LIFTING, VANDALISM, LYING, SMART-MOUTH COMMENTS LIKE "GO TO HELL", I FEEL BAD INSIDE, EVEN NOW AS AN ADULT.

7. ___Yes ___No Let's face it. Our parents had no clue about the things that were facing us, scaring us, tempting us, and ruining us.
8. If you were in the middle of a lifestyle at 16 that was definitely bad, and I met you and told you to get out of that life, would you have done it? ___Yes ___No

I HAVE ASKED INMATES ALL OVER THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA THAT QUESTION. ONLY ONE - YOU HEARD ME, "UNO", SAID "YES HE WOULD."

9. Look at Luke 15:17. There is another **But**. Sitting in the pigpen, what did the son realize all of a sudden? _____

He heads for home.

10. Here is what we do to ourselves. See Luke 15:18-19. The son left the home earlier. Does he think he is going back as a ___ son or as a ___ servant?
11. Look in Luke 15:20. When the father saw him coming, did he see a ___son or a ___servant?

In this story, the son is asking forgiveness; the father is doing the forgiving. Both can see the results at the same time. HOWEVER, sometimes, the forgiver does not see the offender (might be far away; might be dead; etc.)

12. How do we know that the father forgave the son? (Luke 15:20) Fill in the words.

- a. The father _____ him.
- b. The father had _____ on him.
- c. The father _____ and _____ on the son's neck.
- d. The father _____ him.

Sometimes, you might try to forgive the offender face to face, but get rejected. You can forgive someone without their permission.

13. Not all forgiving is this demonstrative. When I forgave my brother, I did it first by myself, talking to God; then, I shared the decision with a group of men. When you forgave someone, how did you do it? _____

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14. This is a family drama here. But, no matter what your forgiving story is, when you forgive, you are agreeing with God that this person has value. What did the father give the son that revealed his value? _____, _____, _____, _____
15. Who do you still need to forgive? _____

AFTER YOU TELL GOD YOU FORGIVE SOMEBODY, YOU HAVE TURNED THE PERSON OVER TO GOD. YOU HAVE RELEASED THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THAT PERSON TO GOD. GOD WILL BRING HEALING TO YOU AND HEALING TO THEM.