

A LITTLE POT • PART TWO

Two Hungry Sons

Esau, the prodigal, and the Father who runs

*For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.
And they began to be merry.*

LUKE 15:24

A seven day devotional. One passage each morning, read slowly and out loud.

LIFE CHURCH OF NEW JERSEY

New Life Starts Here

Two sons. Two pots. Two roads.

Last week Esau traded his birthright for a bowl, got up, and walked away.

This week Jesus tells about another son who traded his inheritance for an appetite
and ended up starving in a field.

Same start. A very different ending.

The difference wasn't how far they fell. It was which way they walked after.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How To Use These Seven Days

Ten or fifteen minutes a morning. That's all this asks.

READ IT OUT LOUD

Every day opens with Scripture printed in full. Read it aloud before anything else on the page. The Word does the work; the rest is commentary.

WATCH BOTH SONS

Every day puts Esau and the prodigal side by side. Notice where they match and where they split. That's the whole week.

DIGGING DEEPER IS OPTIONAL

The boxed section carries the Hebrew and Greek. Skip it on a rushed morning and come back on a slow one.

WRITE IT DOWN

There are lines on every second page for a reason. You'll want to read this back a year from now.

LOOK BACK

Pages 18 and 19 compare the two sons and check in on both weeks of A Little Pot. Don't skip them.

I will arise and go to my father.

Two Sons, One Hunger

"Feed me." "Give me." Same appetite, two thousand years apart.

READ

And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

GENESIS 25:30-31 KJV

And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

LUKE 15:11-12 KJV

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

LUKE 15:13 KJV

REFLECT

Last week we sat at Esau's table. This week Jesus tells a story that starts in almost the same place.

Listen to the first words out of each son. Esau: **"Feed me."** The prodigal: **"Give me."** Neither one wanted to wait. Both wanted what was coming to them, and they wanted it today.

And both had to trade something to get it. Esau traded his birthright for a bowl. The prodigal cashed out his inheritance while his father was still alive, which in that culture was close to saying, "I wish you were dead."

Here's the uncomfortable part. These two aren't villains. They're us. Most of us have said "feed me" or "give me" to God at some point and meant *now*.

This week isn't about which son you are. It's about which **road** you take after the pot.

DIGGING DEEPER

Context. Luke 15 opens with religious leaders complaining that Jesus “receiveth sinners, and eateth with them” (15:2). Jesus answers with three lost things: a sheep, a coin, and a son.

“Give me the portion.” Under the Law the younger son’s share was one third, since the firstborn received a double portion (Deuteronomy 21:17). Kenneth Bailey notes that asking for it early was a shocking break with the father.

Two firstborn questions. Esau was the firstborn who sold his double portion. The prodigal was the younger son who spent his single one. Both ended up with nothing in hand.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- 1. When was the last time you told God “feed me” or “give me” and meant right now?
- 2. What did you have to trade to get it?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Write down one thing you’ve been demanding from God on your timeline. Then pray over it once today, out loud: “Not now if it costs me You.”

PRAY

Father, I see myself in both of these sons. I’ve wanted things now. I’ve traded things that weren’t mine to trade. Slow me down before the pot. In Jesus’ name, amen.

NOTES

When the Pot Runs Out

Every pot is empty eventually.

READ

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

LUKE 15:14-16 KJV

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

GENESIS 25:34 KJV

REFLECT

Esau's bowl was empty in about five minutes. The prodigal's money lasted longer, but not much. **"When he had spent all."**

That's the thing about a pot. It never refills. Whatever you traded the birthright for, you will finish it, and then you'll be hungry again.

Look where both sons end up: **the field**. Esau came in from the field faint. The prodigal got sent into the fields to feed pigs. For a Jewish young man that's as low as it gets.

And then the saddest line in the chapter: **"no man gave unto him."** The friends who helped him spend it were gone. The far country is generous when you're buying. It doesn't give anything back.

Maybe you're in a field right now. Hungry for husks. If so, keep reading. Tomorrow's verse is for you.

DIGGING DEEPER

Swine. Pigs were unclean under the Law (Leviticus 11:7). Feeding them meant he had lost his money, his dignity, and his place among his people.

Husks is Greek *keration* (G2769), the pod of the carob tree (Thayer). It was animal feed, eaten by people only in famine.

“Began to be in want.” The famine didn’t cause his problem. It exposed it. He had already spent everything before the famine came.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

1. What pot did you finish, and how long did it take before you were hungry again?
2. Is there a “field” you’re in right now that you never meant to end up in?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Name your field honestly. Write one sentence: “I’m hungry because ____.”
Don’t fix it yet. Just stop pretending you’re full.

PRAY

Lord, I’ve eaten from pots that didn’t fill me. I’m tired of husks. Show me where I really am. In Jesus’ name, amen.

NOTES

He Came to Himself

The turning point Esau never had.

READ

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

LUKE 15:17 KJV

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

LUKE 15:18 KJV

REFLECT

Yesterday the two sons were in the same place: empty, in the field. Today the stories split.

Esau ate, drank, "rose up, and went his way." The prodigal "came to himself" and said **"I will arise and go to my father."**

Same verb. *Rose up. Arise.* Opposite direction. One got up and walked away from what he lost. The other got up and walked back toward the one he hurt.

"He came to himself" means he'd been out of his mind. Sin is a kind of insanity. You traded a birthright for soup and call it a good deal.

And notice what woke him up. He remembered his **father's house**. Even the servants there ate better than he did. Remembering home is the first step home.

DIGGING DEEPER

“Came to himself.” The Greek is *eis heauton elthon*, literally “he came into himself.” Guzik (Enduring Word) notes the idea that the far country was a kind of madness, and repentance is coming back to your senses.

Despised in Genesis 25:34 is Hebrew *bazah* (H959): to treat as worthless. Esau never came to himself about the birthright. He shrugged it off.

“Bread enough and to spare.” The prodigal’s hunger made him think about bread. Esau’s hunger made him sell for it. Hunger can drive you away from the Father or back to Him.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- 1. What would “coming to yourself” look like in your life right now?
- 2. What do you remember about the Father’s house that you’ve been missing?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Write your own “I will arise” sentence. Be specific: what you’ll do, and when. Keep it where you’ll see it today.

PRAY

Father, I’m coming to myself. I remember Your house. I remember what it was like to be fed there. I will arise. In Jesus’ name, amen.

NOTES

Sorry for What?

Esau cried for the blessing. The prodigal came for the Father.

READ

And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

GENESIS 27:38 KJV

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

LUKE 15:21 KJV

REFLECT

Both sons cried out to a father. Listen to what each one said.

Esau: “**Bless me.**” He wanted the stuff back. Scripture never shows him grieving that he despised the birthright. Only that he lost the blessing.

The prodigal: “**I have sinned.**” He didn’t ask for his money back. He didn’t even ask to be a son. He just wanted to be home.

That’s the dividing line between these two men. Esau was sorry about the **result**. The prodigal was sorry about the **choice**.

It’s easy to cry over what sin cost you. It’s harder to cry over who it hurt. One kind of tears asks God for the blessing. The other kind comes for the Father.

DIGGING DEEPER

Two kinds of sorry. 2 Corinthians 7:10: *“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”*

Hebrews 12:17 says Esau “found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” The KJV margin reads “or, way to change his mind”: Isaac would not reverse the blessing (Genesis 27:33).

Repentance is *metanoia* (G3341), a change of mind. Esau wanted Isaac’s mind changed. The prodigal changed his own.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- 1. When you pray about your failures, are you asking for the blessing back, or coming for the Father?
- 2. Is there a sin you’re sorry about only because of what it cost you?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Pray one prayer today that asks for nothing. No blessing, no fix. Just “Father, I have sinned,” and name it.

PRAY

Father, I don’t want to be sorry only for what I lost. I’m sorry for what I did to You. I’m not here for the blessing. I’m here for You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

NOTES

While He Was Yet a Great Way Off

The father saw him first. Then he ran.

READ

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

LUKE 15:20 KJV

And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

GENESIS 33:4 KJV

REFLECT

The son had a speech ready. He never got to finish it.

“When he was yet a **great way off**, his father saw him.” That means the father had been looking. Every day. Watching the road.

And then he **ran**. Old men in that culture didn’t run. You’d have to hike up your robe and make a scene. He didn’t care.

Now look at the second verse. Twenty years after the stolen blessing, Jacob comes home afraid Esau will kill him. And **Esau ran**. Fell on his neck. Kissed him. Almost word for word what the father does in Luke 15.

The man who lost the blessing ended up showing grace. Even Esau’s story didn’t end at the bowl. Neither does yours.

DIGGING DEEPER

Had compassion is *splagchnizomai* (G4697): moved in the inward parts, the gut (Thayer; Vine's). In the Gospels it's used almost only of Jesus. The father felt it before the son said a word.

The echo. Kenneth Bailey (*Jacob and the Prodigal*) argues Jesus was deliberately retelling the Jacob story, with the running embrace of Genesis 33:4 placed in the father's arms.

A great way off. The same distance Peter uses in Acts 2:39: the promise is "to all that are afar off."

SEARCH YOUR HEART

1. How far off do you feel from God right now?
2. Who in your life has run toward you when you didn't deserve it?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Take one step toward God that He can see from far off: show up somewhere, pray out loud, open the Word. He's watching the road.

PRAY

Father, thank You for watching the road. Thank You for running when I was still far away. I'm coming home. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

Robe, Ring, Shoes, and a Feast

Esau sold his future for one meal. The father threw a feast.

READ

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

LUKE 15:22-24 KJV

REFLECT

The son asked to be a hired servant. The father wouldn't even let him finish.

Bring the best robe. Cover him. **Put a ring on his hand.** Give him authority again. **Shoes on his feet.** Servants went barefoot. Sons wore shoes.

Then the meal. Last week the whole story turned on a bowl of stew. Esau gave away everything for one plate. Here the father kills the fatted calf and throws a party.

Whatever pot you traded for, it's nothing next to the table the Father sets when you come home.

And look at His words: **“was dead, and is alive again.”** He doesn't say “he messed up.” He says “he's alive.” That's how the Father sees you walking back.

DIGGING DEEPER

Robe, ring, shoes. Guzik (Enduring Word) notes the robe meant honor, the ring meant authority in the family, and shoes meant sonship, because slaves went barefoot.

The fattened calf was kept for a special celebration. One calf could feed a whole village. Bailey suggests the whole community would have been invited.

Sonship restored. Galatians 4:7: *“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”*

SEARCH YOUR HEART

1. Which do you struggle more to believe: that God forgives you, or that He restores you as a son or daughter?
2. What has God put back on you that you didn't think you'd ever wear again?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Celebrate something God has restored. Tell one person this week what He brought back to life in you.

PRAY

Father, I came asking to be a servant and You called me a son. Put the robe on me. Put the ring back. I receive Your table. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

The Son Who Stayed Outside

There's one more son in the story, and he came in from the field.

READ

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

LUKE 15:25 KJV

And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

LUKE 15:28 KJV

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

LUKE 15:31-32 KJV

REFLECT

The story doesn't end with the feast. The **elder son** comes in from the field, just like Esau did. And he won't go in.

He never left home. He never wasted a dime. But he's angry, and he stands outside the party. That's Esau's other pot: **offense**. After he lost the blessing, Esau hated his brother (Genesis 27:41).

You can lose the joy of the birthright without ever leaving the house. Just let bitterness keep you on the porch.

And the father came out again. He ran to one son and walked out to the other. **"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."**

The birthright was never the problem. It was his the whole time. He just wouldn't come in and enjoy it.

DIGGING DEEPER

Root of bitterness. Hebrews 12:15 warns about it one verse before naming Esau: “lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

“All that I have is thine.” Romans 8:15: *“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”*

The Spirit of adoption. Acts 2:4: *“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* The Holy Ghost is how sons and daughters get in the house.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- 1. Are you inside the Father’s house but standing on the porch because of an offense?
- 2. Who came home that you’ve had a hard time celebrating?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Go in. If there’s a brother or sister you’ve been bitter toward, reach out this week. If you haven’t received the Holy Ghost, talk to Pastor this week.

PRAY

Father, I don’t want to stand outside the party. Pull up every root of bitterness. Fill me with Your Spirit. I’m coming in. In Jesus’ name, amen.

NOTES

Two Sons, Side by Side

Same hunger. Same field. Two different roads.

	ESAU	THE PRODIGAL
Wanted it	"Feed me ... this day"	"Give me the portion"
Traded	The birthright	The inheritance
Ended up	Faint, from the field	Feeding swine in the field
Then	"Rose up, and went his way"	"Came to himself ... arose"
Cried	"Bless me"	"I have sinned"
Sorry about	The result	The choice
Came for	The blessing	The Father
Ending	Rejected	Robe, ring, shoes, a feast

And don't forget the third son. The elder brother never left home, but he stood outside the feast, angry. You can lose the joy of the birthright without ever leaving the house.

WHICH ROAD ARE YOU ON TODAY?

- ☐ Still at the table, eating from the pot
- ☐ In the field, hungry, but not yet turned around
- ☐ On the road home
- ☐ Home, but standing on the porch
- ☐ Inside, at the Father's table

A Little Pot So Far

Read both weeks before you answer anything.

WEEK ONE • THE POT

The pot shows up when you're tired. Shortsighted decisions cost long-range destinies. It's never just a little pot. The pots never ask you to quit, just to wait.

WEEK TWO • THE ROAD HOME

Both sons got hungry. One went his way. One came to himself. Esau cried for the blessing; the prodigal came for the Father. The Father ran. And the son who stayed still had to choose to go in.

YOUR CARDS FROM WEEK ONE

FAITH ☐ still by a pot ☐ back in the birthright

RELATIONSHIP ☐ still by a pot ☐ back in the birthright

DESTINY ☐ still by a pot ☐ back in the birthright

SEARCH YOUR HEART

1. Which card did you put back since last week? Which one is still by a pot?
2. Which day this week did you most see yourself in?
3. What's your next step on the road home?

The Father is still watching the road.

A LITTLE POT • PART TWO

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

GENESIS 25:34

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

LUKE 15:20

Same hunger. Same field. Two different roads.

Esau cried for the blessing. The prodigal came for the Father.

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