

HE COULDN'T WAIT

Farm

A certain farmer had two sons. The younger of them **couldn't wait** until his father died so that he could receive his inheritance. He demanded his share so his father divided the estate between his sons. The younger son quickly gathered together all that he had, as he **couldn't wait** to get away from the farm, his father and the family. He **couldn't wait** to get out into the big world, where the grass always seems to be greener. He **couldn't wait** to be free of all responsibility. He **couldn't wait** to be free to do as he pleased. He **couldn't wait** to carouse with his friends, to live life to the full, a life free of all restrictions.

Famine

So, having received his inheritance, he set out to make a new life for himself, far away from home. However, it was not very long before he had squandered his money on reckless, unrestrained, loose living. He soon discovered to his cost that when the finances ran out, so too did his so-called friends. Then the food ran out, as the country to which he had travelled began to be affected by a great famine. In sheer desperation this young man, who was a Jew, approached a man who owned some pigs, and secured a job feeding his animals. Though his religion forbade any contact with pigs, this hungry, homeless, friendless wanderer eventually found himself not just feeding the pigs but sharing their food, eating what they were eating. Life was not so good now.

He now had plenty of time to reflect on his present situation and to bring to mind how good things had been back at home. He must have remembered how, not very long ago, he **couldn't wait** to get away from his father's house. Right now he **couldn't wait** to get out of the pigsty. He **couldn't wait** to go back to his father. There in the pigsty he came to his senses and said, 'I will go home to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant'.¹ As he made his journey home he must have wondered how he would be received. How would his father react when he saw him? What would he say to his foolish son? Would he rebuke or reject him?

Father

However, the father he had walked away from loved him and **couldn't wait** for the day his wayward son would come home. In fact he was constantly watching and waiting for him to return. As the prodigal slowly made his way home, and while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion and tenderness. He **couldn't wait** any longer so he ran to meet him, and lovingly embraced and kissed him. The son **couldn't wait** to confess his wrong-doing, tell his father how sorry he was, and ask his forgiveness. His father did not rebuke him. He did not reject him. He received him with great rejoicing. He **couldn't wait** to assure his wayward son that all was forgiven.

Forgiveness

When Jesus told this parable (Gospel of Luke Ch.15) He was highlighting our heavenly Father's love, compassion and willingness to forgive. According to the Scriptures, all of us are sinners and have strayed away from God – 'For everyone has sinned.'² All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own'.³ Perhaps, dear friend, you **couldn't wait** to walk away from God and live independently of Him? However, you have discovered to your cost that your sins and the things that lured you away from God are the very things that will destroy you.

You now find yourself wallowing in the miry pit of sin, struggling and sinking deeper day by day as you gradually make your way to a lost eternity.

Perhaps today you **can't wait** to get away from the mess your life is in, but don't know what to do? Why not do as the prodigal son did? Why not decide to walk away from the mess and come to a loving Father in sincere repentance, saying, "I have sinned." When you confess your sins and seek His forgiveness, God the Father will forgive you because His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has already paid the penalty for your sins by dying on the cross as your substitute and sin bearer. By paying this penalty on our behalf, Jesus, who rose again from the dead, has secured for us a pardon.

Faith

The pardon that Jesus purchased will be put to the account of all who will come to God in repentance, acknowledging their sin and trusting Him to lovingly receive and save them because of what Jesus has done on their behalf through His death and resurrection. The Scriptures make it clear that we can come to our loving heavenly Father only through the merits of Jesus Christ - 'Our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son'.⁴ There is only one way back to God, and that is through faith in Jesus, who said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me'.⁵

First Step

Friend, if you only knew how much the Lord wants to save you from a life of misery and from spending eternity in Hell, you wouldn't wait any longer to come to Him. You **couldn't wait**.

If ever there was a time when we needed to come to our senses and return to God, it is now, as the world sinks further into crisis. According to the Scriptures, 'The time that remains is very short'.⁶ Now is the time to seek the LORD.⁷ Indeed, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation'.⁸

The prodigal son **couldn't wait** to change direction and make his way home. Today you can change direction and take the first step on your journey to your heavenly home by humbly and sincerely saying to God, "I have sinned".

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Scripture References:

1: Luke 15:18,19

2: Romans 3:23

3: Isaiah 53:6

4: Romans 5:10

5: John 14:6

6: 1 Corinthians 7:29

7: Hosea 10:12

8: 2 Corinthians 6:2