

An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for March 30, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Lectionary Year C

Scripture: [Luke 15:11-32](#) [**Summary:** *The Prodigal Son*]

Supplies Needed: Print out the picture at end of this file or use fake money from *Monopoly*

ASK (a.k.a. *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- [*Hold up picture / fake dollar bill*] I have a question for you - can you tell me what this is? (a dollar bill)
- That's right - and what does a dollar bill do? (it buys things)
- So if I bought something for a dollar - we'd say, "it's worth a dollar," right? (right)
- Now, let's say you and I are good friends. And let's say I asked you to give me a lot of these dollars. And let's say you said, "OK, here you go."
- After I said, "Thank you," I then did this to those dollars you just gave me [*rip up the picture of the dollar*]
- And then I said, "Hey friend, can you give me more dollars?" What do you think -- would you give me more dollars? (Yes! No!)
- *Optional:* If they say "yes" - say, "You are **very** generous – let's continue talking after the worship service about loans. But in the meantime, let's say you *did* say no to me..." [*then go to next bullet point*]
- What would be your reasons for not giving me any more dollars? (because you are wasting them and not using the dollars correctly)
- OK - fair enough. Now, even though you won't give me anymore dollars - would you still be my friend? [*answers could be pretty interesting here*]

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- I wanted us to talk about wasting money because in some ways that's what today's scripture story is about.

- In today's scripture story, Jesus tells a story of a child, of a son, who asks for a lot of his father's money.
- The father gives his son the money. The son then leaves home and wastes *all* of the money – just like I ripped up the dollar a few moments ago.
- For awhile, then, the son stays away from his dad because he thinks his dad will not love him because of all the money that he's wasted.
- But eventually the son decides to return home.
- When he returned home, did you hear how the father greeted the son?
- That's right! The father was very happy to see his son. He ran to greet him. He hugged him. He even threw a party for the son.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- One of the reasons Jesus tells this story is because we often think like the son does.
- We often think that *things* are just as important to God as we are.
- We think God won't be friends with us if we ripped up some of the things that that God gave us.
- But Jesus wants us to know that this isn't true. In today's story, Jesus is reminding us that we are more important to God than the things we have or don't have.
- Just like the father welcomed the son with open arms and a party, so too does God welcome us whenever we turn to God.
- In other words, God loves us more than the things that are or are not in our lives.
- And that's the good news for today, that no thing – *nothing* – will stop God from loving us and we should not let any *thing* stop us from inviting God's love into our lives.
- Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who reminds us...

...who reminds us...

...that you love us...

...that you love us...

...more than any *thing* in this world.

...more than any *thing* in this world.

Thank you and Amen

