

Your Father Called

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Years ago I saw a clever TV ad by a religious group: "Your Father called, and He wants you to come home." God, our Heavenly Father, has, indeed, called us. He did this through the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14), not through human traditions. As the parable of the lost son teaches us, the Father wants his wayward children to come home (Luke 15).

Primarily, the lost son in Luke 15 stands for the child of God who has fallen away. There is a sense, however, in which all people are children of God, having been made in His image (Acts 17:28, 29). Either way, God desires that sinners come home. He is *"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9).

Why won't children come home? Sometimes it is because they don't like the rules of the house. "Nobody's going to tell me what to do!" Rebellion prompted the young son in Jesus' parable to leave the Father's house; and it kept him away until he came to his senses. Only when he was willing to submit to his father did he return home.

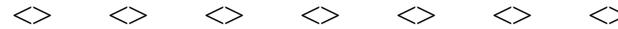
God our Father has some rules for His family, too. They are contained in the New Testament. Self-willed people leave when they don't like the rules. Tragically, they stay away until and unless they come to their senses and submit to the Father's authority.

Sometimes children won't come home because they don't appreciate the blessings of their father's house. The young son in the parable obviously thought he would be much happier on his own, doing as he pleased, spending his inheritance on whatever tickled his fancy. For a time, it appeared that he was right. Why would he come home when he was having so much fun?

Then the famine struck; finally, the boy realized how foolish he had been. He was impoverished while his father's servants enjoyed plenty. Now he understood how blessed he had been as a son in his father's house; he was willing to return, even to a lesser station.

Few people comprehend the blessedness of being a faithful child of God. The world pulls at us, tempting us with the deceitful pleasures of sin. We foolishly allow ourselves to believe we'll be better off doing the works of the flesh than bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Eventually, we discover that Satan makes big promises, but doesn't deliver. We find ourselves starving in the barren wasteland of sin. Why, oh why, did we ever leave the Father's house?

Are you away from God? Do you see the tragic mistake you made? Why not change your mind and change your ways? Your Father called, and He wants you to come home.



TAKE UP GOD'S CUP

Because Jesus drank the cup of sorrow and sacrifice (Matt. 26:39, 42)...

...I have the opportunity to have the cup of salvation (Psa. 116:134).

Because I have taken up the cup of salvation...

...My cup of blessings continually overflows (Psa. 23:5)

...I no longer need to fear the cup of the Lord's fury (Isa. 51:17).

...I should give cups of cold water to those who need it (Matt. 10:42).

...I am expected to keep my cup clean inside and out (Matt. 23:26).

...I can partake of the cup of communion with the Lord (1 Cor. 10:16).

"O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup..." (Psa. 16:5)

- Edd Sterchi (Campbellsville, KY)

In Praise Of Fathers

Fathers are wonderful people,
Too little understood;
And we do not sing their praises
As often as we should.

Somehow Father seems to be
The man who pays the bills,
While Mother binds up little hurts
And nurses all our ills.

Father struggles every day
To live up to his image
As protector and provider
And "hero of the scrimmage."

And perhaps that is the reason
We sometimes get the notion
That fathers are not subject
To the thing we call emotion.

But if you look inside Dad's heart
Where no one else can see,
You'll find he's sentimental
And as soft as he can be.

And like our Heavenly Father,
He's a guardian and a guide -
Someone whom you can count on
To walk close by your side.

--Author Unknown