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FINDING FREEDOM



**LAST WEEK'S MESSAGE:  
YOUR NEW FAMILY TREE  
POWER TO FORGIVE**

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**TODAY'S MESSAGE:**  
**PRODIGAL PROBLEMS**  
**THE PATHWAY HOME**

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# PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

*"In some ways the whole world can be seen in this story.*

*Those who have not come to know God as Father through faith in Jesus Christ fall into these two camps.*

*One camp resembles the younger son*

*living in rebellious immoral and indulgent sin.*

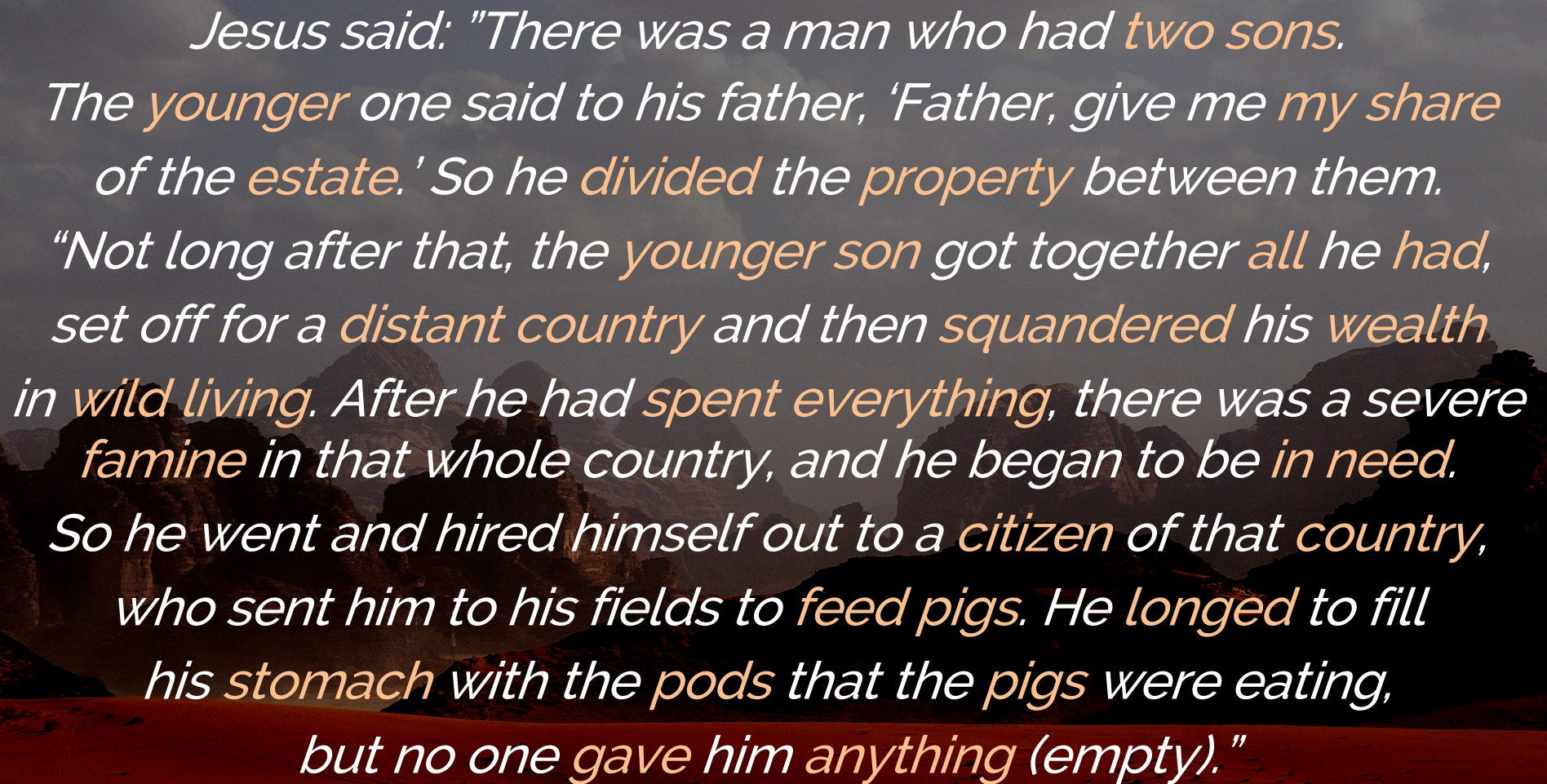
*The other camp puts on the outwardly respectable appearance of the great world religions*

*and goes hard to work at earning the favor of God.*

*Both are lost and need forgiveness and the loving touch of the Father found through Jesus."*

Ed Piorek

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*Jesus said: "There was a man who had **two sons**. The **younger** one said to his father, 'Father, give me **my share of the estate**.' So he **divided the property** between them. "Not long after that, the **younger son** got together **all he had**, set off for a **distant country** and then **squandered his wealth in wild living**. After he had **spent everything**, there was a severe **famine** in that whole country, and he began to be **in need**. So he went and hired himself out to a **citizen of that country**, who sent him to his fields to **feed pigs**. He **longed to fill his stomach with the pods** that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything (empty)."*

Luke 15: 11-16 NIV

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A dramatic landscape featuring a vast, flat, reddish-brown desert floor in the foreground. In the middle ground, there are dark, jagged mountains and hills. The sky is filled with heavy, grey clouds, creating a somber and atmospheric mood. The overall color palette is dominated by earthy reds, browns, and greys.

**THE YOUNGER SON'S "WILD LIVING"  
WAS HIS ATTEMPT TO "LOOK FOR LOVE"  
IN SEXUAL & SENSUAL INDULGENCES.**

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## “ADDICTED” FOR LOVE

*“Addiction” might be the best word to explain the lostness that so deeply permeates contemporary society. Our addictions make us cling to what the world proclaims as the keys to self-fulfillment: accumulation of wealth and power; attainment of status and admiration; lavish consumption of food and drink; and sexual gratification without distinguishing between lust and love. ... The addicted life can aptly be designated a life in a “distant country”.*

Henri Nouwen

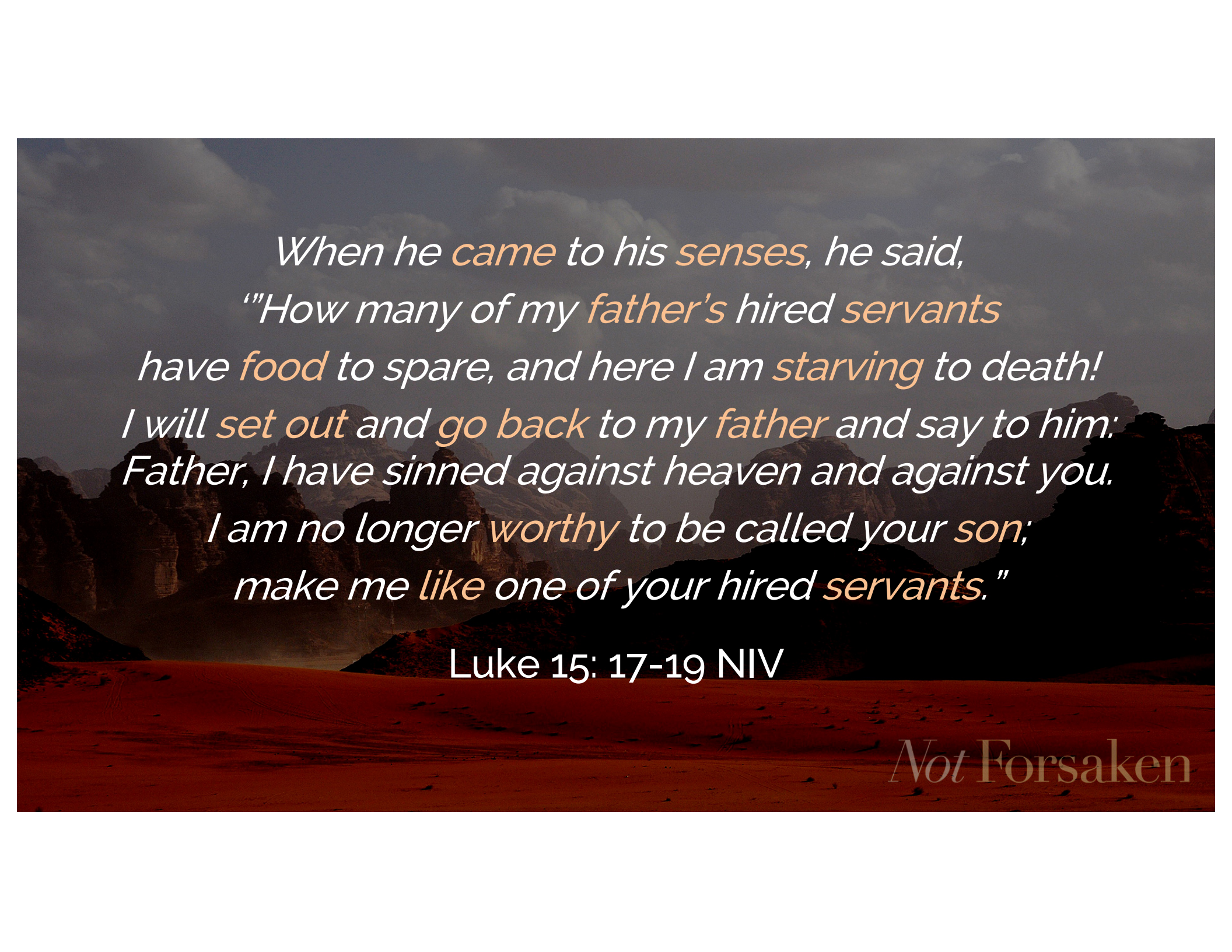
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A dramatic landscape featuring a vast, flat, reddish-brown desert floor in the foreground. In the middle ground, there are dark, jagged mountains and hills. The sky is filled with heavy, grey clouds, suggesting an overcast or stormy atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by dark tones and the red of the desert.

**THREE STEPS ON THE  
THE PATHWAY HOME**

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*When he **came** to his **senses**, he said,  
"How many of my **father's** hired **servants**  
have **food** to spare, and here I am **starving** to death!  
I will **set out** and **go back** to my **father** and say to him:  
**Father**, I have sinned against heaven and against you.  
I am no longer **worthy** to be called your **son**;  
make me **like** one of your hired **servants**."*

Luke 15: 17-19 NIV

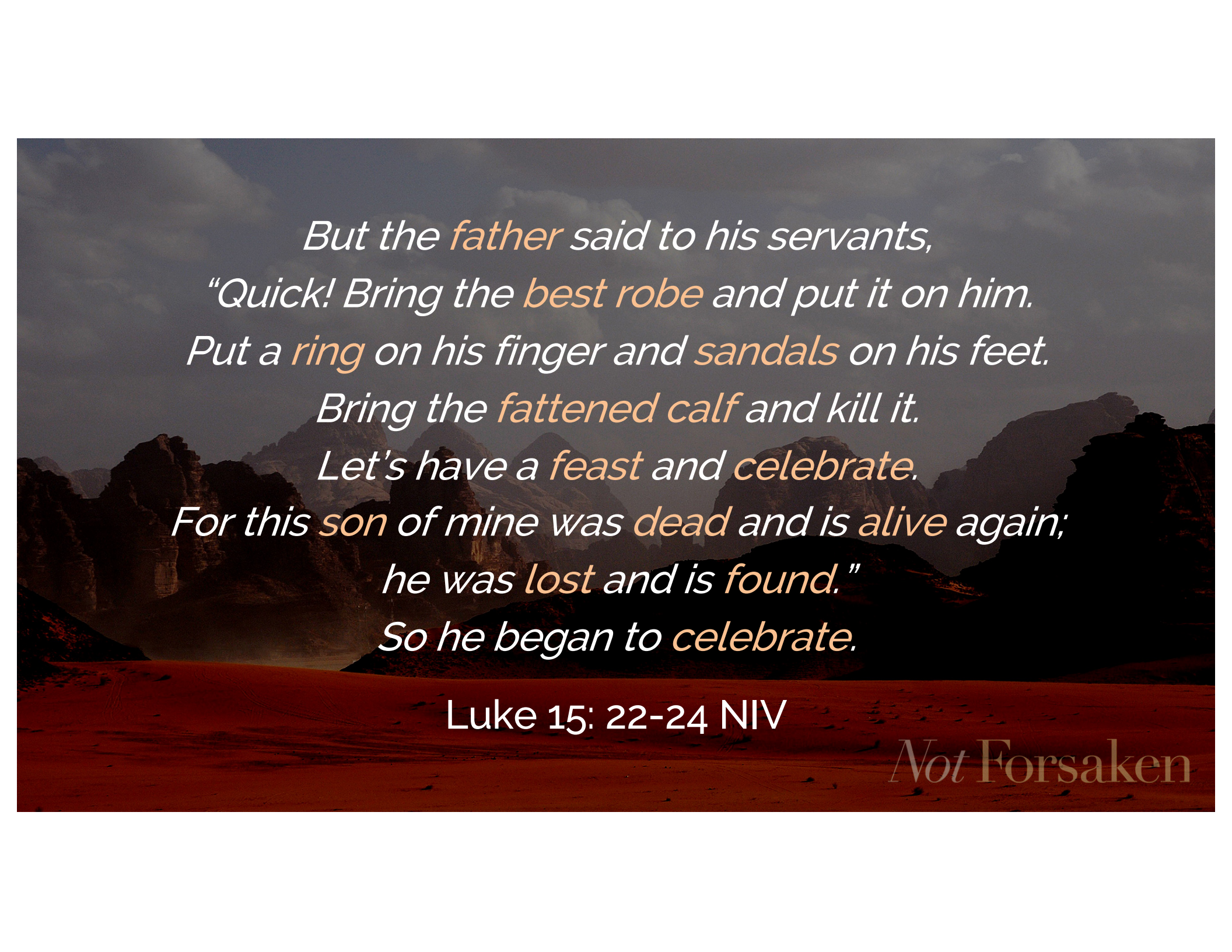
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*So he **got up** and **went** to his **father**.  
But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him  
and was **filled** with **compassion** for him;  
he **ran** to his son,  
threw his **arms** around **him** and **kissed** him.  
The son said to him,  
"Father, I have **sinned** against **heaven** and against **you**.  
I am no longer **worthy** to be called your **son**."*

Luke 15: 20-21 NIV

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*But the **father** said to his servants,  
“Quick! Bring the **best robe** and put it on him.  
Put a **ring** on his finger and **sandals** on his feet.  
Bring the **fattened calf** and kill it.  
Let’s have a **feast** and **celebrate**.  
For this **son** of mine was **dead** and is **alive** again;  
he was **lost** and is **found**.”  
So he began to **celebrate**.*

Luke 15: 22-24 NIV

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# THE PRODIGAL'S PATHWAY HOME

1. Remembering: *"When he came to his senses ..."*
  2. Repenting: *"I will set out and go back to my father ..."*
  3. Receiving: *"So they began to celebrate."*
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*"This is a portrait of the Father's love.  
It is exactly what **philia** love looks like  
- demonstrated natural affection.*

*In our Father's arms we find our emptiness filled.  
We are home."*

Ed Piorek

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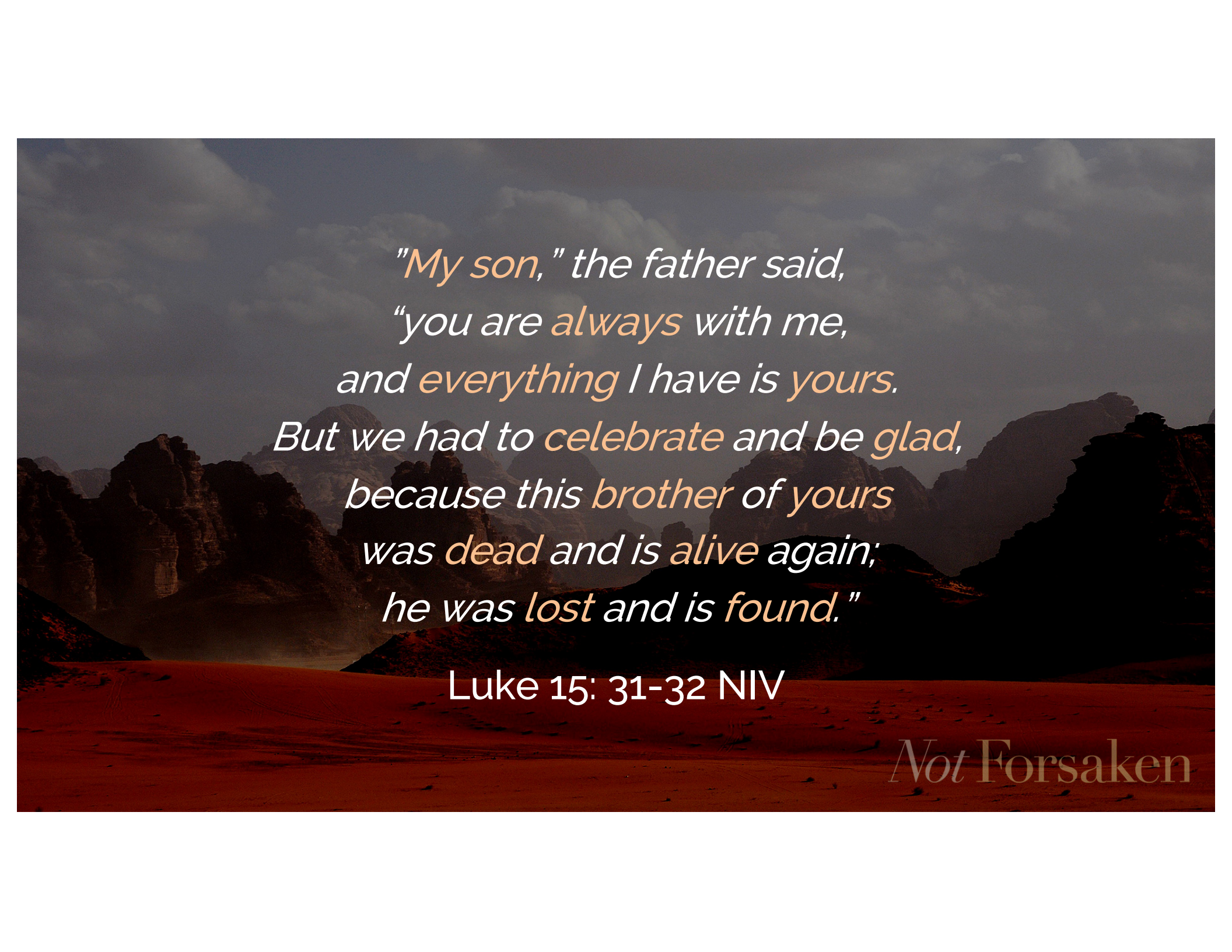
Meanwhile, the *older son* was in the *field*.

When he came near the house, he heard *music* and *dancing*.  
So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.  
“*Your brother* has *come* (home),” he replied, “and your *father* has  
killed the *fattened calf* because he has him *back* safe and sound.”

The older brother became *angry* and refused to *go in*.  
His *father* went out and *pleaded* with him. “Look! *All these years*  
*I’ve been slaving* for you and never *disobeyed* your orders.  
*Yet you never* gave me even a *young goat* so I could *celebrate ...*  
*But when this son of yours* who has *squandered* your property  
*with prostitutes* comes home, you *kill the fattened calf* for him!”

Luke 15: 25-30 NIV

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*"My son," the father said,  
"you are **always** with me,  
and **everything** I have is **yours**.  
But we had to **celebrate** and be **glad**,  
because this **brother** of yours  
was **dead** and is **alive** again;  
he was **lost** and is **found**."*

Luke 15: 31-32 NIV

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# COMING IN FROM THE FIELDS

1. Invitation: *"So his father went out and pleaded ..."*
2. Intervention: *"... you killed the fattened calf for him."*
3. Repentance: *"... with me, everything I have is yours."*

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*"The lostness of the elder son is harder to identify. After all, he did all the right things. ... Outwardly, the elder son was faultless. But when confronted by his father's joy at the return of the younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface."*

Henri Nouwen

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# THE PATHWAY HOME

*“Both lust and cold obedience  
can prevent us from being true children of God.  
Whether we are like the younger son or the older son,  
we have to come home to the place  
where we can rest  
in the embrace of God's unconditional love.”*

Henri Nouwen

*“This is and has been the Father's work from the beginning  
- to bring us into the home of his heart. This is our destiny.*

George MacDonald

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