

“Reversing Spiritual Consequences”

Luke 15:11-24

Introduction

When spiritual consequences are addressed, life problems can be reversed. When we reconnect rightly with God, that connection continues and influences the changing of our life’s circumstances. In Luke 15:11-24, the story of the prodigal son illustrates the principle of consequences resulting from disobedience to his father. He didn’t want to be under his father’s authority. He only wanted to use the father’s resources to support his independence. In the same way, believers expose themselves to spiritual consequences when we depart from the instruction of God the Father and seek to make decisions independently of His guidance and authority in our lives.

Spiritual consequences occur when we surrender to the pull of the world. The prodigal son wanted to go to a far country – he wanted more of the world. He wanted to escape the restrictions of his father’s house. Spiritual consequences also occur when we depart for the pleasure of sin. The prodigal son wanted the world so that he could live as he pleased, do whatever seemed right in his own eyes, and choose what gave enjoyment in the moment. Both the pull of the world and the son’s desire for pleasure ultimately separated him from his father.

The problem for both the prodigal son and today’s believer is that spiritual consequences result in a wasted life. When we operate outside of the will of God we waste time and opportunity. The choice not to live in the light of God’s authority also results in an impoverished life. The prodigal son experienced a literal famine in the land in which he lived. The consequences of sin for the believer can result in a famine, dryness or scarcity in their life. The believer who chooses independence from God will experience isolation as they are not able to enjoy true fellowship with the God who loves them.

But just like the prodigal son came to his senses and realized that the life he had is not the life he wanted, the believer can reverse spiritual consequences in their life when they come to their senses and choose to return to God and act in obedience. The prodigal son eventually decided to return home. He decided to confess his sin to his father and his father welcomed him home. When the believer decides to return to the Father, consequences can be reversed and fellowship can be restored. God is always ready to accept us and reinstate us to fellowship with Him. When we choose to turn from our sin, we also open our lives to changes in the nature of the consequences that we are experiencing.

Getting Started

1. Review both the reasons for spiritual consequences and the results of spiritual consequences discussed in today’s sermon.
2. What aspect of the story of the prodigal son impacted you the most?

Let’s Get Personal

1. Why do you think believers who are having a “prodigal son experience” continue in their sin when they are experiencing spiritual consequences?
2. Have you ever continued in your “prodigal experience”? What influenced your decision to continue in broken fellowship with God?
3. What caused you to come to your senses? What did your return to God look like?

Take the Next Step

1. In what areas of your life do you need to confess your sin and return to God? What does turning to God look like?
2. Want to go deeper? Take time in your group discussion to review the following Scriptures: James 4:4-10; 1 John 2:15-17; Hebrews 11:24-26; Isaiah 1:18-20; 55:7.

Renew Your Mind

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” James 4:8
