

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

January 10, 2010

Give me

by David King

"A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. . . . And no one gave him anything" (Lk. 15:11-14, 16).

Jesus used the parable of the prodigal son to teach a lesson about God's love for fallen humanity. But in setting up the story, Jesus also provided a lesson on how humanity got in this mess in the first place.

The younger son in this parable was blessed to live in a well-to-do family, with a father who loved and cared for him. It was a life of privilege, but also one of responsibility. Notice the reference to the older son coming in from the field (v. 25); both sons were expected to pull their weight in running the family business. There were benefits living under his father's roof — food, clothing, shelter, familial love — but the younger son saw it as a life of drudgery and hardship. He chafed under the constraints imposed by his father. Rather than appreciate what he had, he fantasized about life out in the world. While others were traveling to exotic locations, playing and partying, and having fun with their friends, he was stuck on the farm. Clearly, life was just not fair.

So he did what every young person would love to do, but few have the opportunity to do:

He demanded his share of his inheritance money, and left home. (We might question the father's wisdom in granting his son's request, but it's not as foolish as it appears. Sometimes parents have to let their children learn life's lessons the hard way.)

Notice the younger son's demand of his father: "Give me" (v. 12). In those two words, this young man summarized his entire philosophy of life. Everything around him, even his closest relationships, existed only as a means of gratifying his own selfish desires. Life was all about him. Nothing else mattered.

Eventually, of course, this young man learned that the world did not revolve around him. When he blew all his money, his "friends" abandoned him, and the bad times hit, he ended up with nothing. It was only when he had to make a living slopping pigs on starvation wages that he experienced a brutal truth about life: "no one gave him anything" (v. 16).

Indeed, this world does not owe us a living. It does not owe us happiness, contentment, comfort, fun, or any of the other things that we expect to find in it. Whatever good things we gain in this life are the result of self-discipline, hard work, and a generous portion of undeserved divine grace.

Our world is filled with prodigal children who have yet to learn this lesson. They wake up every morning thinking, "what will life give me today?" They never stop to think that maybe their lives have an entirely different purpose, that fulfillment is defined not by what life gives us, but by what we give to others.