

STARVED TO DEATH

Recently I spoke with a local businessman who was visiting churches in our city. He said he was looking for in-depth Bible teaching because he was **STARVED TO DEATH**.

I invited him to DSBC and directed him to our church website (www.doctrinalstudies.com). Later that day, I thought about his statement, “**Starved to Death**” and I remembered saying and doing the same thing in my own Christian life. In fact, it pushed me in the direction of my teaching ministry at DSBC.

As I reflected on the statement “**Starved to Death**,” I remembered the prodigal son of the parable of Luke 15 saying the same thing – “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare and **HERE I AM STARVING TO DEATH!**’” (Lk.15:17)

The one thing that all three of us had in common was the “**HERE I AM**” moment in our lives regarding being spiritually **Starved to Death**.

You can be **starving to death** and not have a **HERE AM I** moment that seeks real change in your life. It is when both of these meet in a moment of reality that Spiritual change and growth is possible.

This lesson will study five aspects of the prodigal son coming to that **HERE I AM moment.**

1. We will examine our lesson text by the following five homiletical points to understand the circumstances that brought about real change in the prodigal son.

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| • Plenty | (Lk.15:11-12) | Wealth | Surplus (food to spare) |
| • Pleasure | (Lk.15:13) | Wanton | Squandered on riotous living |
| • Poverty | (Lk.15:14-17) | World | Starved to death and sick of it |
| • Proposition | (Lk.15:18-19) | Wishful | Servant verses son |
| • Position | (Lk.15:20-24) | Worthiness | Said the father – “ <u>This son of mine</u> was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” (Lk.15:24) |

2. The prodigal son came to a **HERE I AM reality check of his life and concluded, “I am starved to death.”**

The first reality check he made was of the world (1 John 2:16-17). He compared his experience with the world to his experience with the Father. Once he had nothing left to give the world, he discovered a truth – “but no one gave him anything” (Lk.15:16b). It was then that he realized that he was much better off with the Father than he had ever imagined. It was then that he realized that “starving to death” was hitting the bottom.

He tells us what it was like ‘hitting the bottom’ for him:

(Lk.15:16) “Longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.” (2 Tim.2:26; James 4:7)

Hitting Bottom for him was comparing the highs to the lows in his life – “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!’” (Lk.15:17)

He became sick of the bottom of life. He wanted something better than the bottom, but never had the expectation of having it as good as he once had it.

3. Hitting bottom for a believer is the reality of living in the world without God. Jesus calls this “coming to your senses.” (Heb.5:11-14)

Without God, the prodigal son was without hope in the world (1 Thess.4:13; 1 Tim.6:17; Rom.4:17-21).

He was forced to face the reality of his bad decisions that had brought him to the bottom with despair and destitute. There were no longer any illusions of living in the world by its norms and standards (riotous verses righteous) (James 4:2-4).

4. Hitting bottom and coming to his senses meant believing he needed a real life change and it was only possible by returning home to the Father.

He needed to put off the world and Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) thinking and at the same time to put on New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV) thinking. (Eph.4:22-24).

But he was concerned about how the Father would receive him. This is what the world does to the believer’s faith in his relationship to God (Gen.3:8-10). He was convinced that his Father would hold the religious view of his brother – “But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!” (Lk.15:30) **This last part was the shocker.**

5. The prodigal identified his root problem (OMCD) in the words, “I am no longer worthy.” (Lk.15:19, 21)

When was he ever worthy? It was a root problem within both him and his older brother (Lk.15:28-32). Religious legalism was the root problem in both of these Jewish brothers.

He left home with this root problem and returned with it!

What changed is that he now knows that the world has nothing to offer him. Sick of the world has made him home sick for the Father.

What was the prodigal son’s motivation for change? _____

What did he want from the Father that he couldn’t get from the world? _____ (Lk.15:17)?

When he was on the bottom, he was just one decision away from the top!

The truth of the matter is that he became **starved to death** for the food that only his Father could provide.

What change did the Father see that brought out His compassion? _____ (Lk.15:20; Rom.12:2; John 6:26-29)

(Luke 15:22-24) “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put the 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 they began to celebrate.”