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## **Backstory**

Broken people drew near to hear Jesus.

Religious leaders grumbled because Jesus welcomed the wrong crowd.

Table fellowship meant belonging, so their complaint was about closeness. Jesus tells one story with two sons to expose two kinds of lostness.

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## **Point 1: The Far Country Starts in the Heart**

The first departure is desire detaching from the Father's presence.

Sin begins when relationship becomes transactional.

Independence feels like freedom, but it's the loss of covering.

The far country is a life arranged without correction.



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## **Point 2: Exposure Shows Up When the Party Runs Out.**

Pleasure can mask fragility until resources dry up.

Pressure reveals what you've been built on when conditions change.

Unrepented patterns leave you open to forces you can't manage.

What looked like freedom becomes need, vulnerability, and control by circumstances.



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### **Point 3: Repentance Is Not Tears, It's Turning.**

“He came to himself” is clarity, not just regret.

Repentance is ownership without excuses.

Turning is leaving the pigpen in direction, not just emotion.

The first step of healing is getting up and returning.

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### **Point 4: The Father Restores, He Doesn't Put You on Probation**

The Father runs first because love moves toward return.

Restoration is identity before improvement.

Robe, ring, shoes declare covering, belonging, sonship.

A repentant house restores people without making them earn dignity back.

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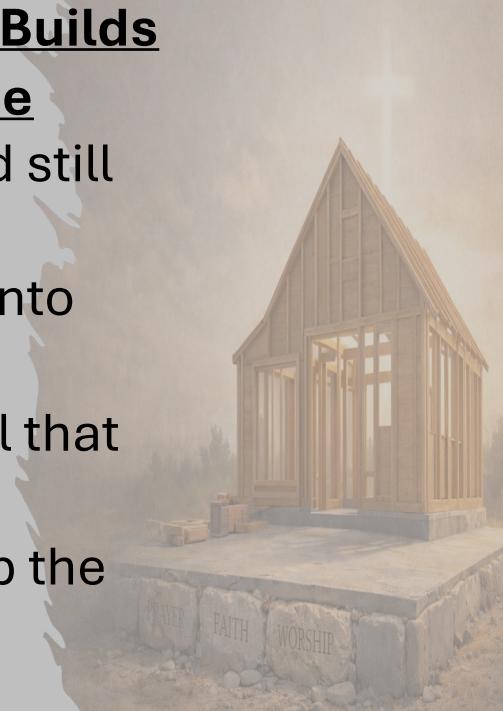
## **Point 5: Unrepented Religion Builds Barriers Inside the House**

You can stay near the house and still live outside the Father's joy.

Scorekeeping turns obedience into bitterness and entitlement.

Resentment builds an inner wall that blocks celebration and mercy.

Repentance here is simple: drop the ledger and come in.



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## **Conclusion**

Repentance builds walls as security, not prison.

Without repentance, rooms become places where things are hidden, not healed.

**The Father invites both:** come home and come in.

**Today is the turn:** return to the Father and reenter joy.



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