

The Lost Son – Guided Reflection

Find a comfortable position where you sit
and let your thoughts be guided by my meditation...

Be aware of the floor beneath you...
supporting you...
try and relax,
let the tension go...
try and empty your mind...
let your mind rest
and let go of any thoughts or worries...

Be aware of your breathing...
take a long deep breath in...
and then breathe out slowly...
do that a couple more times...

So breathe peace and stillness with every breath.

Be open,
be curious,
expect something...

Let God touch you in the next few moments...

Trust that God wants to talk to you and will in this time if you listen.
As we open ourselves up to thinking about God's love and our place in his family,
let's ask his spirit to be here to guide us...

I would like you to imagine you are sitting in a large field on a farm.
It is the middle of the day.
You can see clearly across the whole field.
Where are you in the field?
Look around you, slowly.
What can you see?
Are there any animals?
What is the weather like?
You are holding a bag of money.
The money you have just demanded from your father.
How does it feel in your hands?
You look behind you.
The father is standing there.

He is silent.

What does his expression look like?

Before he can say anything to you, you turn around and head out of the field, down the road.

The road branches off in a long and winding manner.

There is plenty of time to walk slowly in the heat of the day.

What do you see as you walk?

How do you feel?

Have you started to think of what to spend your money on when you get to the nearest city?

A lot further down the road you turn your head and look back.

How does it feel to be this far away from home?

Are you excited once you reach the heart of the city?

You have so much money and there is so much to do there.

This is a city where you can have EVERYTHING and ANYTHING your heart desires. Anything you can think of it is there!

Have a look around.

You feel your bag of money by your side.

What will you spend your money on?

What do you go to first?

Decide what you want to do and go and do it!

Remember, anything you can dream of is in this city!

After you have filled yourself with everything you want, you find the most expensive most lavish and beautiful hotel to stay in.

What does it look like?

You enter in and buy the most expensive, biggest room!

You settle down to sleep.

When you awake, you jump out of bed.

Refreshed.

You grab your bag of money but realise that it is almost empty.

You can't pay the bill for your stay at the hotel.

The manager is far from pleased.

He throws you out into the street and tells you never to come back.

How did you spend all your money?

You try and remember what you spent it on as you wander the streets.

You wander all day trying to find somewhere to stay.

You beg people to let you stay in their house just for one night.

You are so tired.

No one will let you stay.

You eventually come to a small farm at the end of the city.

The owner is there.

You beg him to let you stay, just for one night.

He tells you he has no space for you
but the best he can offer is one of the animal sheds.

He says he can also give you a small wage if you help on the farm.

It's not much, but you are so desperate and exhausted you can't refuse.

You start to work.

How do you feel at this moment?

You work for as long as you can.

Do you think of home?

You come to your senses!

You thought that there were better things in the big city.

Things that could make you happier.

You think over all that has happened.

Why did you want to leave the fathers house?

You slowly get up and head back home,
back down the long dusty road.

The farmland comes up ahead in the distance.

It gets nearer and nearer.

As you get close

you catch sight of a figure standing at the end of the road.

It is a man.

As you get closer you realise it is your father!

Suddenly, your father spots you,

and he runs towards you.

How do you feel as you see him running to you?

He looks happy and is shouting something.

What is he saying?

He reaches you.

He throws his arms around you.

How does it feel, to be held so lovingly?

What do you say to him?

The father now turns to you and says...

“Quick, bring out the best robe for him and put it on him...

We will have a feast...

because my child has come back to life.

She was lost and now she is found!”

Silence

Can you feel the love?

There is so much love in this story.

It is the love of God for you.

For us.

For each of us here and everywhere.

God just can't stop loving us.

He will always do it.

Will never stop.

And never give up on us.

Let this sink in.

Let this fill you.

Embrace you.

Heal you...

...and make you whole.

Silence

Now become aware of being here in church.

Think back over the meditation and see which part stood out the most for you.

Perhaps it was working in the fields

or was it when you took the inheritance from the father

or maybe it was when you left.

Perhaps the moment that stood out for you was when you returned

or it was when the father asked all to come and join the party.

Or when you understood the depth and intensity of the father's love.

Take the part of the meditation which means most to you,

keep it in your memory now and when you leave the church.

Take it with you when you enter the new week.

And never forget the love of the father in the story –

this love which is always there waiting for you - no matter what you do.

Amen.