

**‘ACTING THE BIBLE’**

**at**

**Beckley School**

**THE LOST YOUNGER SON**

**(Luke 15: 11-32)**

**19 October 2023**

**Joint Benefice of**

**The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley St. Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover  
St. Barnabas, Horton-cum-Studley St. John the Baptist, Stanton St. John**

The Four Parishes 'Acting the Bible' team (previously known as 'Open the Book') leads assembly once a fortnight in Beckley School. The team take stories fresh from the pages of the Bible, and make them into mini dramas, to be acted out by themselves, together with Beckley schoolchildren. Through this, it is hoped that the Bible stories are brought alive, and remembered by the children, especially as they too are involved in the acting.

The team is led by Betty Dye, a Licensed Lay Reader, and includes members from Forest Hill, Stanton St John and Beckley. They meet once a fortnight to write the scripts, with the aim of adhering as closely as possible to the original Bible texts. This often involves comparing different Bible translations and even reading the New Testament in the original Greek!

## **The Lost Younger Son (The Prodigal Son)**

Luke 15:11-end

**Cast:** JESUS; FATHER; YOUNGER SON; OLDER BROTHER  
FOLLOWER 1; FOLLOWERS 2,3,4 and 5

FOLLOWERS SIT AROUND JESUS TO ONE SIDE

**FOLLOWER 1: Jesus, I cannot understand why you go and eat meals with those bad people and tax collectors.**

**JESUS:** Alright, you know that when I have something important to teach you, I often use parables which are stories that have 2 layers. The top layer is just the story as you hear it and the bottom layer is the real meaning behind the words of the story. I will tell you a few parables that will help you to understand why I make friends with bad people.

There was once a shepherd who had 100 sheep in his flock. One day one of the sheep went missing. The shepherd loved his sheep so much that he immediately went out to look for the one that had strayed. When he found it he put it on his shoulders, carried it back to the flock and gathered his friends and neighbours. 'Celebrate with me!' he cried, 'because I have found my lost sheep!'

My second parable is about a lady who had 10 very precious silver coins. One day she realised that she had lost one of her expensive coins! She hunted high and low all over her house until she had found it. Then she gathered her friends and neighbours - 'Celebrate with me!' she cried, 'because I have found my lost coin!'

My final parable is about a young man who got lost. The story starts like this:

There was a father. (FATHER SHUFFLES ON FROM BEHIND CURTAIN AND SITS DOWN) who had two boys.

An older son (OLDER SON WALKS SLOWLY AND FIRMLY BEHIND FATHER THEN GOES TOWARDS MAIN DOOR)

And a younger son (YOUNGER SON STRIDES JAUNTILY ACROSS AND GOES BEHIND CURTAIN))

When they grew up the younger son had a bright idea (YOUNGER SON TURN, NOD, THUMBS UP)

**YOUNGER SON:** Father, father. Oh, there you are! I've had a good idea.

**FATHER:** Oh dear, what is he up to now?

**YOUNGER SON:** When you die?

**FATHER:** When I die?

**YOUNGER SON:** Yes, when you die, I will inherit half of everything you own won't I? The house, the land...your money?

**FATHER:** Of course, yes of course you will.

**YOUNGER SON:** Well I don't want to wait all that long time before you die. Please can I have ALL OF IT NOW, as cash.....now?

**FOLLOWER 2:** Oh dear! Was that a good idea?

**JESUS:** Good idea or not, the father agreed. (FATHER PASS OVER BAG OF CASH) So the younger son grabbed all the money and dashed off. (SON RUNS OFF. FATHER PACES UP AND DOWN LOOKING DISTRAUGHT, SHAKING HIS HEAD AND WALKS OFF BEHIND CURTAIN).

**FOLLOWER 3:** Was the son ok? Did it work out alright for him?

**JESUS:** Well, this is what happened: The young man travelled far away to a distant country and eventually came to a big city where he made a lot of bad friends.

**FOLLOWER 4:** Oh dear!

**JESUS:** These so-called friends persuaded him to spend all his money on getting things that weren't good for him and doing things he should not do. When all his money was gone, the friends deserted him and left him

completely on his own. The man was left with nothing, not even enough to eat.

**YOUNGER SON:** (WEARING NO SHOES, NO BELT, NO SCARF, STUMBLES ON AND WANDERS ROUND HEAD DOWN)

What CAN I do? I have no friends and no money. I have got this job feeding a herd of pigs. If only I could eat some of the pigs' food. I'm starving!

**FOLLOWER 5: He should go home! He should go home!**

**YOUNGER SON:** (STAND UP). My father's servants have a better life than this! But if I go home what will my father say? Will he be angry with me? Will he throw me out of the house? Will he say 'it serves you right!' I have spent all his money and I feel so ashamed! What should I do?

**FOLLOWER 6: He should go home! He should go home!**

**YOUNGER SON:** I think I WILL go back to my father and say sorry and offer to be one of his servants. (SON WALKS OFF HEAD BOWED. FATHER HEAD BOWED WALKS ON TO CENTRE LEANING ON STICK AND PEERS OUT INTENTLY, SHADING EYES)

**JESUS:** Amazingly, when he got near to his home, his father was out looking for him.

(SON STUMBLES IN FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN)

**FATHER:** Look! Is it possible? Could that be my son? Oh, it IS!

**JESUS:** When the father realised who it was he felt such love for his son and ran to meet him and hugged him and kissed him.

**YOUNGER SON:** Father, I am so sorry, I've sinned against heaven and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son any more.

**FATHER:** I forgive you son. It's so wonderful to see you again. Servants, quickly, run a bath for him, give him a ring and my best clothes and make a feast with the finest food. We must celebrate because I thought my son was dead, but he's alive. (FATHER WITH ARM ROUND SON WALK BEHIND CURTAIN OLDER SON COMES IN FROM OPPOSITE SIDE)

**JESUS:** That sounds like the end of the story doesn't it, and a very happy ending it would have been, but there is a bit more. Soon the elder son, who had been outside in the fields, heard the news about his brother.

**OLDER BROTHER:** Can you hear all that chatter and music and dancing? Can you believe it?! One of the servants told me that my father has put on a feast, a party for that terrible brother of mine just because that waste of space, that spoiled brat, that selfish so and so has finally come to his senses and crawled home! I had to get out, I couldn't bear it. I'm so angry!

(FATHER COMES RUSHING OUT)

**FATHER:** What are you doing out here on your own, son? Please, come and join in the party.

**OLDER BROTHER:** Why are you throwing a party for HIM? All these years I have served you faithfully and done what you have told me, but you have never thrown even a little party for ME! But when this son of yours comes home after wasting all your money you have the biggest celebration ever!

**FATHER:** Oh, my son, you are **always** with me and **everything** I have is yours. It was right for me to be so happy because I thought your brother was dead, but he's alive. He was completely lost, but now he's found.

**JESUS:** So you must understand that my Father in heaven is very sad when someone turns away from Him and is bad, but it gives Him incredible joy when that person turns back to Him and says sorry so that He can forgive them.