

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over our compulsive, self-destructive behaviors, and our lives had become unmanageable.

“To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: “A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now before you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. “A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.” (Luke 15:11–16, NLT)

Truth #1: Sin drives us away from our families. When the younger son asks his father for his share of the inheritance, he is telling his father, *“You are dead to me.”* The younger son then quickly leaves and goes far away from his home, where he “wasted all his money on wild living.” In a Jewish community, the acts of the younger son would be considered a great insult, and his father would be disgraced in front of friends and family.

Question #1: How have your compulsive, self-destructive behaviors driven you away from your family? Has your family ever been insulted or disgraced by your behavior?

Truth #2: Our sin eventually leads to isolation and despair. The younger son eventually runs out of money and is left starving, looking desperately for help or work from his community. Jesus tells us, *“But no one gave him anything.”* Once his money ran out, no one seems interested in the younger son’s plight anymore. The younger son is experiencing *despair*, an emotion of helplessness, and a fear that things will never get any better.

Question #2: Have you ever felt like the younger son? Have you ever experienced despair?

Next week: Good news, the son comes home to his father!

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