

- In a far country he squanders everything
- Comes to his senses
- Having forfeited the right to be a Son, he will ask to become a hired hand.
- Servants worked on the estate and lived there.
- Hired men were various kinds of tradesmen who lived in local villages and earned a wage'

- As a rule distinguished Middle Eastern Patriarchs did not run. Showed his emotion openly.
- Gave him the best robe—the best robe was usually the fathers
- The father wasn't going to wait until the son had paid his debt or grovelled—he simply takes him BACK
- This is the startling message of God's love and forgiveness
- THIS IS A PICTURE OF DIVINE GRACE

## **The Parish of Cannock and Huntington** *Creating Community with Christ at the Centre*

### **Lent Course — The Prodigal Son**

#### **Session One—The Younger Son**

Luke: "Give me the share of the property that will belong to me".

- The hearers would have been amazed at such a request
  - The eldest son received a double portion when his father died. The rest was divided among the remaining family
  - In this case the eldest would have received two thirds of the estate and the youngest son one third.
  - This division only occurred when the father died
  - To make such a request was akin to wishing the father dead.
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- In an intensely patriarchal society the father's response is also startling,
  - A traditional Middle Eastern father would be expected to drive his son out. But not this Father He divides his property between them.
  - The Greek word translated 'property '(Bios) means life. A more concrete word to denote capital could have been used—why not?
  - In that culture the very identity of a person was tied up in their place. To lose a part of the land was to lose part of yourself.
  - The younger son is asking the father to tear his life apart.