

What it is to be in want (Quality: Very good)

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- [0 : 00] And it's upon the Lord's help, for the sake to again draw your attention to the Gospel as recorded by Luke chapter 15 and that last clause in verse 14.
- Fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel, the last clause in verse 14, And he began to be in want. And he began to be in want.
- We tried in the morning service to speak somewhat of the character here that is commonly known as the prodigal.
- What he was, by nature, a prodigal. What he was, by grace, a son.
- And his life, though he had spent it in riotous living, didn't alter his standing with his father.
- [1 : 19] But it was whilst he was spending his substance in riotous living that there arose this mighty famine.
- And he began to be in want. Riotous living went on in the world and does. Riotous living went on in the world.
- The world hasn't changed, but he has. That's the first impression we might have on this character.
- When he has spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land. And he began to be in want. The riotous living continued by others, by the world.
- The wickedness that was in that far country was just the same. But what was different was now he was destitute.
- [2 : 21] He has spent all. And blessed be God when a sinner comes to the state of destitution.
- A painful pathway, but a necessary pathway. And it is only when one's destitute. And that is a comprehensive destitution, if I might put it like that.
- Search as you might, sinner, and you will find nothing good. Nothing to present yourself to your father's house.
- Nothing at all. Destitute of all that's good. And he began to be in want. It is a sad place to be destitute.
- It is a good place. How it follows on, you know. You look through the word of God and they confirm one to another, doesn't it?
- [3 : 26] What does David say in his psalm? He will regard the prayer of the destitute. And not despise their prayer. I wonder how many in this great city, with all its religious gatherings tonight from the cathedral downwards, could true with their hand on their heart sing that hymn.
- I wonder. I truly do. How many sinners, sensible sinners, dwell within this city wall.
- My friends, who can sing such a hymn as that? Because that, as it were, describes the sinner in his right place. And it describes the desire of that sinner also.
- And he began to be in want. But we did say that we would try, as the Lord would help us, to look at some of these things that a poor sinner wants.

What he's brought to want. What he's brought to seek for. We said this morning, the chapter is teaching, is teaching by the Lord Jesus Christ on the grace of repentance.

[4 : 49] And it follows the grace of repentance with that grace of confession. That opening up, as it were, of the very heart of man.

To pour out in supplication and prayer, confession of sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

To cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And I do believe this in gracious teaching, that once the Lord puts a blight on the world, once he stamps death on the world, my friends, you will begin to be in want.

And it will be for better things than this world can give. And as you've sung, there will be no satisfaction to your soul and mine.

Do you know, my friends, sometimes you can go to the Lord's house, and there's no word that we can speak against the Lord's house.

[6 : 07] It's the most blessed place. It's where the people of God gather. And you can come back from the Lord's house also. With nothing, it has pleased the Lord to continue your barrenness, and your emptiness, and your destitution.

You come as you, you go as you've come, in want. I know of those occasions, when I've told you before, I had to read that chapter in the Song of Solomon, where the dear bride of Christ, there, seeks one whom her soul loves.

And we find that she passed by the watchman, and it was only when she passed by the watchman, and I take that to be the ministers of the gospel, and that she found him whom her soul loveth.

Anyway, we're going on too far. And he began to be in want. And there was nothing to satisfy. And poor sinners will find this.

Nothing to satisfy in this time state. Not your soul. Not your soul. Let us keep forever to mind this night that we're talking about spiritual blessings, soul blessings, comforts from heaven, assurances, comforts, blessings, established in your soul that will bring this with it, that you are amongst the people of God.

[7 : 50] And if children, then heirs. Heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ. And it will be a want that only the Lord can satisfy.

You might go here and there. You might find this house of God, that house of God. You might sit under this ministry, that ministry. But the Lord will bring his people to the place of blessing.

And he began to be want. This poor prodigal had known other times.

This poor prodigal had known his father's house and all its comforts, its securities. He had known those times when everything was there that he needed.

but as a sinner that seeks a saviour. And I said this morning in trying to contemplate what it was that we should see and under the direction of the Lord's, under the direction of the Spirit of the Lord, we might trace out these things which he would want to be established again in his heart and upon his spirit.

[9 : 13] And there's so many things. I know not where to begin because every one of them is important. You might say, well, now he's in a most dreadful condition.

He joined himself to a citizen of that country and sent him into his fields to feed swine. And that's how he came back to his father's house. We closed this morning.

We said, when a poor sinner comes to a saviour, it's not that he puts on a different garment and he makes himself look respectable and so on and so forth.

We do this as we come to the Lord's house. But, my friends, to find mercy and to find grace and to find restoring blessings and restoring graces, you will be brought here to come just as you are.

That lovely little hymn that's very precious, just as I am without one plea, that that thy blood was shed for me and that thou bidst me come to thee.

[10 : 26] O Lamb of God, I come. You'll come as you are. You'll have to say, I was going to have this night, that lovely hymn that's got those words in it.

Nothing in my hand I bring. Simply, to thy cross-cycling. Naked, come to thee for dress. Helpless, look to thee for grace. Black eye to the fountain fly.

Wash me, saviour, or I die. O, my friends, if you know what it is to be a prodigal, and if you know what it is to be a base, vile, hell-deserving sinner, and the Lord so work in your soul that you begin to want those things that the Lord's people would say they possess.

And every one of these blessings are found in the person of Christ. Oh, if we could come together now and, as it were, draw from these words what it is, because I do believe my friends, in every pathway of the Lord's people, they may differ or they may seem to desire different things than others, but they must all come from Christ, and they must all be by the blessed Spirit revealed to them that otherwise it would not be in want.

It's difficult to see, isn't it, my friends, how a person can be in want and want nothing. If a person was found on the street in an absolute condition of depravity, not a mulch or a food, not a decent garment upon its body, and not any strength or health, I'm sure if you offered to get a word out of his lips, he'd say, well, I don't want anything.

[12 : 24] Because, my friends, when the Lord brings his people into want, he'll show you what they want. He'll show them what they want. It's no good that a person saying, well, I don't want anything, and then talk about being in destitution.

when he brings his people to them, want, a state of want, he'll show them what it is that he has, and what it is then that will make them want, and what it will be that they shall seek for, this good man sought for, what was in his father's house, what he knew to be there, what he had once enjoyed.

Well, you put your feet in his shoes, this night, and what is it that you would want, as a coming sinner unto Christ?

If I ask him to receive me, would he say me nay? Not till heaven, not till earth, pass away. There is a very safe ground, my friends, to the church, though it needs to be established by the Holy Spirit upon their spirit.

This truth, all that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. And the psalmist David, writing in Psalm 34, said, this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles.

[13 : 57] Now, my friends, what is it? Well, you may say, surely, restoring mercies. Restoring mercies.

I said that what he rehearsed, he didn't say. When he rehearsed upon his spirit, that he would come and say to his father, to add this to it, make me as one of thy hired servants.

But when he came in to approach his father's house, and his father, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion on him, ran and fell on his neck and kissed him, and then he went through what he said, but he left out that portion about being a hired servant.

Because what he already received was something that hired servants never receive. This is something that the father will give to a son.

This is what a gracious God will make known to a coming sinner. My friends, this isn't free will, this is the blessings of the gospel. This is according to the grace of God.

[15 : 09] If you've known what it is to be a coming sinner, you know this, that he doesn't reject coming sinners. I know all about these evangelicals who talk about taking up with Jesus Christ and casting yourself on him and all that sort of talk.

My friends, these are the sort that come ready to perish. These characters, these are the ones that come destitute of comfort, hope, or even, as they feel, spiritual life in itself.

When they began to be in want, it's a want for everything that is real and good and right and comfortable assurance, deliverance from their sins, putting away iniquity.

My friends, restoring grace, it is without God. It surely must be. David would not have roped that 51st Psalm if it wasn't.

Restoring grace. But then, my friends, we must come to this. When a sinner is in want, my friends, he will find himself, well, we've read it in that 14th verse, when he spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land.

[16 : 29] It is spiritual food that he takes for. As this man was destitute of the comforts of life, nothing for his stomach, only those things which the swine would relish.

Not for him, though, he couldn't feed on what the swine fed. And we said this morning that a sinner that is delivered out of the kingdom of Satan won't live on what the world live on.

It's their soul now of hunger, not their stomach. It's their spiritual condition that wants reviving, strengthening, and lifting up food for his soul.

Do you know what it is to hunger for food? Spiritual. And what a blessed character you are if you do. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave, unworthy to be fed with dainties such as angels have, or with their children's bread. I might have said this as we begun this night.

[17 : 39] This man was in no place to rest on, anything short of mercy. He distosed of his union to his father in this respect, not literally of course.

What was he going to go back on? What on what grounds would he hope to be received? Was it on promises to do better? Was it on promises that well I'm his son, so you should?

My friends, what will he be received on what grounds? Grounds of love, grounds of love. That is where it will be, my friends.

That is where this union between Christ and his churches rests upon, grounds of love. Coming sinners, those who know what it is to be in a far country.

That is the ground I'll come back on. But it's not they'll come back as if it's some method, way or means that they have connived together and cobbled together as it were.

[18 : 59] They'll be drawn back. You read in the word of God, words of the Lord Jesus, none come except the father draw.

And that's what drew this man, this prodigal, the remembrance of his father's house. It drew him back.

My friends, that is what, that these are the blessings that will bring a sinner back to these truths, these blessings that he seeks for. no work of his own, no motion within himself, no persuasion, this is the right way to walk.

He will be drawn back and it will be drawn by cords of love. What will he find? Well, my friends, if he went to Moses' law, we'll find despair.

If he turned to Moses, the law that was given to Moses, he wouldn't find any hope there, no comfort. You could cast yourself on the law, my friends.

[20 : 15] You try and work the law for your own salvation, you'll find you're short of the greatest blessing that you want, and that's forgiveness. But, oh, this blessed truth here for sinners that we have in these words, my friends, is the possessions of what the sinners have in Jesus Christ they seek for.

They want to feel again the love of the Father. They want to see, and I tell you this without any shadow of a doubt, my friends, without any shadow of a doubt, they want to see him.

They want to see him. Do you know there's something more blessed than seeing the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and that's hearing his voice. They want communion with him again.

Do you know what David wrote in, or spoke, prayed, in the psalm that we read, where he desires that communion again?

First he seeks forgiveness, purge me with hisop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow, make me to hear joy and gladness.

[21 : 38] What would the Lord Jesus, what has the Lord Jesus Christ said to sinners? What is it recorded in the Gospels? What is it, what is recorded in the epistles that would bring joy and gladness to a poor sinner?

you know what, that familiar word which everyone knows of course, who wrote to the Romans, and he said, there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, words of mercy, but go back a line or two, there is therefore now, why is it so?

What made the man say, there is now no condemnation? make me to hear joy and gladness. Let there be that communion from Christ into my soul that will bring joy and gladness once more, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

What is it, my friends, that a sinner longs to hear? Communion or condemnation, a drawing together of the people of God and Christ Jesus, or a total condemnation as the law will have you.

Make me to hear joy and gladness. I believe my friends, a coming sinner longs to hear his voice, thy pardoning voice, so let me hear. And then David went on to say this, hide thy face from my sins and blot out all mine iniquity.

[23 : 16] I do believe this, my friends, indeed. And I dare not try to put words in the gospel that's not there, but I do believe this, that when that man was in preparation of returning to his father's house, he would have accepted anything to be in his father's house.

That is why he said, make me as one of thy higher servants, so long as I was in my father's house again, so long as I was under his protection and provision, it was as if he was, well he would have regained the comforts and security of his father's house by some means, but he went away as a son and he came back as a son.

Hide thy face from my sins. Would you say that he would have expected some condemnation against his sins? Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all mine iniquity.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence. My friends, sinners who know what it is to suffer under the sense of guilt and shame, under the sense of sin within and sin without as well.

Brought back by the drawings of his love, pleading for mercy, for that's what the man pleaded, that prodigal, pleading for mercy, looking for recovering graces, looking to be found once more under his father's care.

[25 : 09] cast me not away from thy presence. Do you know that's something, my friends, that a sinner will never know, a sensible sinner, a covenant blessed sinner will never know from Christ.

He cannot. It is beyond the covenant, my friends, that a sinner under grace, fallen that he might be, a prodigal that he might be, restoring graces that he seeks for, praying that he will not be cast away from his presence.

The Lord Jesus Christ died for his people in their room and place and stead. They are secure in that sealed covenant. Once in him, in him forever.

What did Christ say in the tenth chapter of John, I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, not although they may fall, though they may slip, whilst they walk in this veil of tears, they may add sin to sin, but they will never perish, because they are bought with a price.

Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me, and then this, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, uphold me with thy free spirit, restoration.

[26 : 49] He began to feel a need of restoration. He wanted once more to know that communion with his father.

Oh, how a sinner longs for those times. Let's just say this about this prodigal, and about the church of Christ, there are those times, seasons, sad seasons, dark seasons, where it seems to a poor sinner that has known the blessings of the gospel, and the mercies that are in Christ Jesus, have enjoyed the smile of their God, felt the cleansing power of the shed blood, brought into a felt union and fellowship with the Lord's people, to speak freely of what the Lord has done for them.

And then there are times when they've backslidden, gone into thy path meadow, turned from the truth, or despised the truth, got into a lukewarm condition, and Satan has made havoc with their soul.

But then the mercy of God has appeared in this. He began to be what? It was the first steps back, as you might say, towards those blessings and mercies that he had once enjoyed from the hand of his gracious God.

He began to be in want. Oh, I do pray sometimes, my friends, that if the Lord should bless us with increases in our calls in the church or in the congregation, that there might be real sinners brought in.

[28 : 50] those who know this side as well as the other side, this shall speak of mercy in restoring and reviving.

There were many things that this man were blessed with, but I was well going to say this morning, and it faded away from my memory, how the Lord is so pleased to restore his people into communion with him.

And what is so amazing at times, and you can trace to the Gospels, these amazing things, is the simplicity of the restoration.

It doesn't set you to work, if you may put it like that. God. When there is communion between a person, my friends, between the poor sinner and Christ, between the poor sinner and his gracious God, my friends, it happens sometimes in such simplicity, and yet it is the way the Lord works through his spirit.

God. And how tenderly he deals with these coming sinners. And how compassionate. My friends, I know this of a truth.

[30 : 23] You can be as hard-hearted as it is possible to old nature to be. You can rise up against God in your old spirit, as it were, in a rebellious heart.

You can almost feel there is no love nor mercy in God for your poor soul. But my friends, he doesn't lay the whip upon your back.

He drops a word into the heart. And it sweeps away all that rebellion, all that hardness of heart. It melts the sinner down.

in the presence of the Lord. Or when he says, like he did to Lazarus, Lazarus came out of the tomb, bound hand and foot in grave clothes, and Christ said, loose him, and let him go.

Went through the blessed, gracious operation of the spirit in one's own soul. My friends, he does it sometimes in such simplicity, such simple ways.

[31 : 42] You think, and this is perhaps a different occasion, but you think of that dear woman, Mary, the tomb, the empty tomb where Christ had laid.

Bitterness of spirit, distress of spirit, tears flowing from her eyes, she had lost sight of her saviour, and wondered what it all meant.

All was confused, all was in darkness, all was in distress, and then came along this stranger, and this stranger said unto her, Mary.

My friends, it took all the want away. It dissolved all the bitterness of her tears. It removed in a moment her sadness.

Communication from the Lord is a wonderful blessing to the soul. When the Lord speaks, my friends, he speaks with power, and he speaks with divine authority, but he speaks to his poor people in compassion, and in love.

[32 : 56] He began to be in want. No, one of those most trying times to a child of God is when the Lord withholds communion with him.

I've said enough times what David said in his Psalms, be not silent to me, lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

My friends, you'll want to hear his voice. You'll long for that communion, access to the mercy seat, that liberty, that freedom, which grace alone gives, which the Holy Spirit brings a sinner and a saviour together, and there's communion, and the Lord speaks, and he breaks down all this hardness of heart, takes away the darkness, and brings that restoration to bear.

Just look then again at this word, of what was provided for this poor sinner, what was there provided for his restoration.

I just want to read this, God's love. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants.

[34 : 28] sinners, and he arose and came to his father, and when he was yet a great while, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

How often do we have to prove, my friends, that we said it of late, because of the year change, and the time has changed, the century has changed, and the thousand years has closed.

we've said it enough times now, my friends, that what we've proved in our little lifetime, and in our spiritual lifetime in particular, is that he remains the same, and his years shall not fail.

And these souls that are brought into want, melted down into nothingness, brought into repentance and confession, before the mercy sake, and the experience of their soul is this, to be proved, that instead of condemnation, my friends, there was mercy.

Oh, how he said all this, and yet, when he got to, in that distance from his father's house, the love of the father has not changed.

[35 : 53] Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them to the end, read again the last few verses of the eighth of Romans, who can separate us from the love of Christ?

Not these slips and falls. Now, there's your mercy and mine, my friends, not that I would encourage slips and falls, the Lord deliver us from them, the Lord keep us from slipping and falling.

love of him. But not even the slips and the falls will separate a child of God from the love of Christ. So it was with his prodigal.

His father still loved him. Though he was in a far country, though he spent his substance in rioters living, though there was a mighty famine, though he began to be in want, he still loved him.

What a love, my friends, is the heart in his heart. But then we read this, and the son said, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight are no more worthy to be called thy son.

[37 : 08] And what was this unrighteous son dressed in? Rags, rags. I did love that verse sin at him that we sung as we commenced the service.

What treatment since he came, love tenderly expressed, what robe is brought to hide his shame, the best, the very best.

This unrighteous son, this poor sinner that was self-righteous, that turned away from the truth and the ways of God, this hard-hearted sinner that had no more to do with those blessings that he once knew.

What did he find when he returned, when he was drawn back, this blessed robe of righteousness? But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him.

You find a professor, my friends, they would say, well, would you really do that to a coming sinner? Would that really be so?

[38 : 29] there is no righteousness acceptable to the Holy Father, my friends, but the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, no other righteousness.

The poet, using the poet's words only, once put on, tis always on. And how did he procure this righteousness?

he went to the end of the law for them. He made the law honourable on their behalf, and they were dressed in a righteousness which was imputed.

And this is the mercy, my friends, about this righteousness. There are many poets that get it wrong. this righteousness doesn't cover sin, because sin isn't there to cover.

They are dressed in this righteousness, their sins are all forgiven. They are found in Christ Jesus and covered in his righteousness.

[39 : 48] The robe, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him. And then this, put a ring on his hand. You know, my friends, what that did as well as I do.

When a bride is married to a bridegroom, and they do it, I believe, contrary wise to, they both are given a ring.

They both give a ring. And there's no beginning or end to that ring. And it is a public expression of one's love to another.

And put a ring on his hand, a ring on his hand, denotes that love, minds and unchanging love, higher than the heights above, deeper than the depths beneath, full and faithful, strong as death.

On such love, my soul, still bonder, love so great, so rich, so free, so well, lost in holy wonder, why, oh Lord, such love to me?

[41 : 02] All these things, my friends, all these mercies, let's just go back to the content of this word, all these mercies and blessings were unmerited.

if he got what he deserved, he wouldn't have none of these things. If you and I got what he deserved, my friends, would be no mercy, no hope.

But all these blessings are free and full from a faithful, gracious God to a poor, coming sinner. Oh, there's a looking, you know, for these truths and blessings to be known, isn't that?

But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, bring hither the fatted calf and kill it that has eaten, be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again.

He was lost and he's found and they began to be merry. Now this, my friends, follows then what we have had this day as by way of text, he began to be the want.

[42 : 23] And those that have known the love of Christ, long for the love of Christ. Those who have known what it is to be free from sin, free from sin.

you know, there's only one way a sinner will be free from the condemnation of sin. And that's when they shall be, by faith, able to see that cross at Calvary, and that glorious person in their room and place instead, who became their sin bearer.

sin. And when the gracious spirit of truth takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto you, and you see that your sins, though it be many, like we said of Christian in the pilgrim's progress, when he got to the foot of the cross, his burden rolled away.

that is, my friends, the blessings which are known by coming sinners, the putting away of iniquity, forever forgiven and pardoned, and by his precious blood washed, he began to be in want.

I said as I began, I say it as I end, my friends, the Church of Christ are a people under divine grace, poor and needy.

[44 : 00] They will little or much be in want all the days of their life. They know times of blessing and speak of them and they'll come back to times of need, times of want.

They've known times when their prayers their supplications have been answered and they've sat under the sunshine of his love and felt his presence with them, they've heard his voice and they've known and sensed his comfort there, they'll come again into times of want, times of need.

It doesn't mean that the Lord has changed. My friends, it means that you're still in this veil of tears and you're still carry about with you a body of sin and death.

But those blessed places where the church of Christ come into for all eternity, they shall not know these changes. They that know no change fear not God, but those that fear God know these changes.

But when they get to their eternal home and have the person of Christ to worship with not a veil between, when it's forever night, when there is no night there, when there is no tears to be wiped away, when there's no sin nor Satan to distress nor trouble, they'll find these blessings, my friends, which are known in this time's day to be their comfort forever.

[45 : 45] And he began to be in want. Well, my friends, it's a poor attempt to preach. I have to own that. But may the Lord make it a blessing.

May it enter into someone's path. May it please the Lord that in these things there shall be approving of them. And that there may be those times and seasons when you shall rejoice in the knowledge of and under the comfort of these mercies that are laid up in Christ Jesus.

And he began to be in want. Amen. As we said this morning, God will, it was a prayer meeting Wednesday, and I hope to be here next Lord's Day.

we close with him 106. Let us pray.

To hear his great command I have a sinner to renew. And lo, this charge I give to you. Pull his polluted garments off.

[47 : 25] Hear soul, hear his raiment rich enough. Clothe thee with righteousness divine, not creatures righteousness, but mine.

Hymn 106. Let us pray.

And the action This place come.

I am painless. I am painless and standing.

I do. To be British To be God bless you.

[49 : 25] God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

[51 : 19] God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. The End Lord, may we ask this one request, that thou wilt indeed do these things in our experience, Lord, in these thy people here, that they may know, Lord, that thine is indeed an unchanging love, that restoration to thy people is indeed.

Oh, draw them by the cords of love to thee. Grant them, Lord, another token, another blessing. Lord, heal those backslidings in Zion.

Restore thy people, Lord, to those blessings and mercies that are in the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

[53 : 30] Oh, bless the word and pardon everything of this. Wash these services today from all that's wrong, Lord. Now take us to our homes in peace.

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, the Father, and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit have died with us, both now and forever.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.