WHILE HE WAS STILL A LONG WAY OFF, HIS FATHER SAW HIM

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Welcome to this time of learning the life-giving words of our Savior.

Today, we will look at how a heart of true repentance is received by God in a completely unique way. As we know from the story of the prodigal son, he was overtaken by a desire to leave home and pursue a life of pleasure far from his father. But as time passed, his wealth ran out, famine struck, and he became so desperate that he began eating the food meant for pigs.

Yet the Bible tells us that he did not stubbornly remain in that misery until death. Instead, he humbled himself, made up his mind to return to his father with a repentant heart, even willing to be treated as nothing more than a servant. And when he did this—while he was still on the way back—Scripture records something remarkable.

The Bible says “his father saw him while he was still a long way off.” Let’s read it:

> *Luke 15:17–24*
> *17* “When he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, while I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”’
> *20* “So he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, was filled with compassion, ran to him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.”
> *21* “And the son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I’m no longer worthy to be called your son.’
> *22* “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and slaughter it. Let’s feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.”

Now think about this:
Why was it the father who saw him first—while he was still far away? Why not the servants, who were always at the door or moving about the property? Why not the son’s siblings? Why was

the father the first to see him?

It wasn’t because the others lacked eyesight or were distracted. No—the father had another kind of vision, a spiritual sight, like a telescope. He could sense his son’s suffering and inner turmoil from far away. So when the son’s heart turned toward home, the father already felt it. While the son was still miles away, the father somehow knew he was coming. And before the son could even see him—before he reached the house—the father ran out, embraced him, and kissed him warmly.

This is exactly how God is with us.
When a person has a heart of genuine repentance, you don’t need long, complicated prayers to be heard. God sees the change of heart immediately. The very moment you decide to return to your heavenly Father and begin taking even the smallest step, God moves toward you with great speed—healing your heart and filling your soul with peace.

This shows that true repentance is a transformed heart, not simply repeating a special prayer. Yes, prayer is good when it flows from a changed heart. But if you pray a thousand “repentance prayers” and your heart remains the same, you are

only wasting your time.

Consider the sinful woman who came to Jesus. The moment she approached Him, she began to weep and repent, washing His feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair. Jesus looked at her and said, *“Your many sins are forgiven.”* She had not been led in any prayer at all (Luke 7:36–50).

If you want God to reach you quickly, come to Him with true repentance. That is what brings immediate favor from God—not the number of your prayers, but the sincerity of your transformation. And the Lord Himself will meet you even before you reach Him.

May the Lord bless you.

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