



You Are Welcome

The Lost Son
Luke 15:11-24

"Haw! I wonder what it could be," Delbert remarked, as he and Lello hurried toward the campfire. Earlier, Ranger Ryan told them he had some important news to share tonight.

"Baa, I don't know. I hope he tells us another story. I love Ranger Ryan's stories," Lello said excitedly.

"Me, too. Oh look...I see the campfire. Pops and Granny B are there. Come on!" Delbert called as he began to run.

Soon, everyone was gathered around the campfire looking at Ranger Ryan. They were all waiting for his big news.

"Next week is going to be my last week here," Ranger Ryan shared.

"Haw! Your last week?" Delbert exclaimed.

"I've been invited to visit a forest I've never been to before. It will be a great time to learn more about nature," Ranger Ryan said excitedly.

"That sounds wonderful, Ranger Ryan," Granny B said with a smile.

"Yes, baa, Ranger Ryan, will you come visit us again?" Lello asked nervously.

Pops laughed gently and said, "Ranger Ryan is welcome to come back any time he likes. Now, I think we'd like to hear a story."

"Of course I will, Lello," Ranger Ryan said. "I do have a story for you. It's about how God always welcomes us back to Himself."

Everyone waited patiently for Ranger Ryan to begin. He looked around the campfire and smiled at his friends. "Jesus told a story about a man whose son packed up his things and traveled far away. There he spent his money on foolish things."

"Baa, I bet the dad was sad when his son left," Lello remarked.

"Haw! Did the son ever come back?" Delbert asked.

Ranger Ryan nodded and said, "After a while he did; that's my favorite part of the story. When the son spent all his money, he knew he must go home and tell his father he was sorry for leaving."

"I bet his father was happy to see him!" Delbert shouted jumping up.

"Yes! The father was very excited to see his son coming home. He ran to him and hugged and kissed him. He gave his son the best robe, a ring, and sandals," Ranger Ryan finished.

"And then the father celebrated by giving his son a special meal," Granny B added with a grin.

"Oh, what a wonderful father," Lello quietly added.

Pops reached over and rubbed behind Lello's ears. "That's right, Lello," he said. "It's just like that with God. God always forgives us and welcomes us back just like the father in the story."

Everyone sat around the fire a little longer talking with Ranger Ryan and asking him questions about the new forest he was going to visit. It was getting late, so Granny B invited everyone back to the farmhouse for an evening feast with Ranger Ryan. She had baked that afternoon and had fresh bread and pies waiting. Delbert led the way, jumping and dancing as he went.