

# The First Gift of the Father

by Ian Paisley

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*The sermon highlights the significance of the gifts given by fathers, particularly focusing on the transformative power of acceptance and love as illustrated through the stories of Joseph and the prodigal son.*

**Duration:** 34:57

**Scripture:** Genesis 37:1-4, Luke 15:11-22

**Topics:** "Gift"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses two different gifts given by fathers to their sons. The first gift is a coat of many colors given by Jacob to his son Joseph, which symbolizes the planned thought and love of the father. The second gift is a pair of shoes given by the prodigal son's father, which represents the provision and care of the father. The preacher emphasizes the significance of these gifts and how they relate to the father's love and the progression of the sons. The sermon also highlights the importance of dress as a characteristic that marks a person and the joy and celebration that comes from being in the father's house.

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## Transcript

We're going to read three portions from Holy Scripture today. The first you will find in Genesis chapter 37. We're reading that first four verses here.

And then we are going to turn over to Luke's Gospel chapter 15. And in Luke's Gospel chapter 15, we're going to read from the verse 11 to the verse 22. First of all, the 37th chapter of Genesis, and the verses 1 to 4. Let's read it together, taking your time from me please.

And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren.

And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age.

And he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. Then turning over to the New Testament, to the 15th chapter of the Gospel of Luke, and we're reading from verse 11.

And he said, that is our Lord Jesus, a certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that follow to me. And he divided unto them his living.

And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all that there arose a mighty famine, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him in to his feeders to feed swine.

And he would feed and fill his belly with the husks that the swine did eat. And no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, Are many hired servants of my father's? Have bread enough unto spare, and I perish with hunger.

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father.

But when he was yet a greatly off, his father saw him, and had compassion and wrath, and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servant, Bring forth a bathrobe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.

Ending our reading at verse twenty-two. And God will stamp these readings to our heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. Let's turn in our Bibles together to these two portions of the Word of God.

First of all, in Genesis chapter thirty-seven, verses one to five, or one to four rather, we have the indication of a father whose first gift is noted to his son. The gift of the coat of many colors or many pieces, as you will see in the margin of your authorized version. And then we have, in the second portion of Luke's gospel, chapter fifteen, we have the father who said to his servant, Bring the bathrobe, put a ring on his hand, and then the last gift was shoes on his feet.

When you go home many a time, especially from a wedding, the question is asked, How were people dressed? Because dress is a characteristic that marks the person. Dress indicates who we are. Dress distinguishes the person.

One of the most interesting and instructive and intriguing sons in the whole Bible, apart from the blessed Son of God himself, is Joseph, the firstborn son of Jacob, and his beautiful and dearly beloved wife, Rachel. Joseph means fruitful. How fruitful he became.

By his act he saved his whole family, his father, his father's wives, and all his father's offspring. He saved them from famine and from death. His evil brothers meant it for evil, but as Joseph said, God meant it for good, to save much people alive.

If you study the life of Joseph, you'll find it is a series of the act of changing his clothes. Many, many times the clothes of Joseph were changed. There's no doubt when he was born, his beautiful mother, Rachel, dressed him as became the firstborn son of Jacob, the last of the great patriarchs.

There are three great patriarchs in the Bible, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham is the patriarch of salvation, and that is underlined in his great experience of faith that justifies. He learned the truth, that just shall live by faith.

Then the second patriarch was the patriarch Isaac. He was the patriarch of sacrifice. He was willing to obey his father, and he was willing to be put on the altar.

For he cooperated with his father, who laid him on the altar. The third patriarch was Jacob. He was the patriarch of supplication.

He wrestled with God. The day that he entered the prayer meeting to wrestle with God, he was a supplanter, a twister. But God took the twist out of him, and when he limped away from the wrestling arena, he was a prince he had revealed.

Now it was Jacob that made a coat of many colors or pieces. He gave it to Joseph because Joseph was going to be his heir. Joseph was a firstborn son, not of Jacob's first wife.

And of course, the firstborn son of Jacob was Reuben. But Reuben failed, failed miserably, failed disastrously. So he forfeited the heirdom, and so it passed to Joseph.

By no doubt, the clothes that Rachel made for him were nice clothes. But when he came to the age of seventeen, he got a special dress. He was given a coat that was made by the father's hand.

No doubt his mother made his other clothes, but Jacob himself made this special coat for his heir. He didn't wear it too long. His evil brethren tore it from him.

And he became a slave and was sold as a slave when this coat was removed from him. He went down into Egypt. He was sold and was put in the garment of a servant.

And one day, that evil woman, the wife of Potiphar, she laid hands upon him and attempted to seduce him. And he left his garment in her hand and hastened away from her temptation. As a result, he was put into prison clothes.

And for many, many years, from seventeen to thirty, he was imprisoned, wearing prison. Pharaoh had a dream. He wanted to know the interpretation of the dream, and no man could tell him.

And then the butler, who had been incarcerated in the same prison as Joseph, was reminded that Joseph was a man who interpreted his dream for him. And so the butler told the king, and the king sent for Joseph. And we read that Joseph shaved himself and changed his ribbon.

He put on the ribbon of a subject of the king. But after he had interpreted the king's dream, the king dressed him with the garments of the ruler of Egypt. And you can read about those special garments that he got when he was exalted to be the ruler of Egypt.

And then later on, he had another change of garment. He was clothed in the garment of the bridegroom and was given a bride. Every look at Joseph, in the rapid changing of his garments, reflects the Lord Jesus Christ and his life of humiliation.

And you can work that out for yourself. What did Christ's mother do? She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. What did his heavenly father do? The heavenly father attired him in the coat of our humanity.

We read, a body hast thou, the father prepared a body for his son. That was the coat of many pieces which the Savior was going to wear, not only in time, but for all eternity. I'll come back to that, for that is the

substance of the first part of this sermon.

But Christ also wore the garment of the slave and servant. Joseph's brothers ate it by Judah got twenty pieces of silver for him. Judah's got thirty pieces of silver for Christ.

Judah and Judas. And Judah in the Hebrew is Judas in the Greek. Mark the semblance of the name.

The garment of the servant was also worn by Christ. He said, I am among you as one of that servant. And in the upper room where no one would wash the disciples' feet, the Lord Jesus laid aside his garment.

And he put a towel around himself. And he knelt down before all the disciples, even Judas. But he had to say, of course, I have washed your feet, but not all of you are clean.

Because Judas could not be cleansed by water. And could not be cleansed by anything. Jesus Christ wrapped up those garments.

They were all found wrapped up and were never to be used again. For Christ who lives never dies again. And does not need to die again.

He says, I am he that liveth and was dead. And behold, I am alive forevermore. And I have the keys.

And when he rose from the dead, like Joseph, he put on the garments of the King of kings and Lord of lords. And now he has put on the bridegroom's garment. And he is waiting.

He is waiting for the great marriage. When his whole church shall be married to the bride. When his whole church, the bride, shall be married to the Savior.

O Christ, he is the fountain. The deep sweet well of love. Streams on earth I've tasted.

More deep I'll drink above. There to an ocean fullness, his mercy doth expand. And glory deathless.

Now there's a very sharp contrast between the first gift of the father, Jacob's coat of many colors. And the last gift of another father, the prodigal's father, a pair of shoes. There is a consideration of comparison and a consideration of contrast.

And you would do well to spend some time thinking of the comparison and the contrast. Joseph's coat was of the planned thought of the father's love. His father, under the constraint of God, designed the coat.

It was diverse, but one perfect whole. It had many pieces in its making. And there were also many colors of material.

The coat which Jacob made was mysterious. Only his father and himself really knew what it was like. Only the father, only the son, and only the Holy Ghost knew exactly what the human body of Christ was.

A body has now prepared us. That body was different from every other human body. The blood of that body was different from any other human.

The making of that body was different from the making of any other human body. You know what the Lord Jesus said? He said, he that has seen me has seen the fire. Did you ever think of the significance of those words? That in human flesh, God was a body has now prepared.

Oh, that we might behold the Son of the Father, the only begotten, full of grace and truth. Oh, to see the body prepared for Christ that was wrought mysteriously and miraculously in the virgin's womb. Oh, to gaze upon the Father's created flesh for that body.

Oh, like John the Apostle, to handle it and see that it is real flesh and blood. To put our finger into the print of the nails and thrust our hand into the side and be not faithless but believing. But what of the shoes which enabled the prodigal to dance in the Father's home? I hope you understand that and read it all.

Those shoes were the shoes that he danced with when the music broke out and the dancing took place. You see, he had travelled home and he had nothing. He walked on bare feet as a vagabond.

But now, the sackcloth and ashes were still on his soul, but he had the shoes. And when he looked down, every time he looked down and saw those shoes, joy filled his heart. The shoes had a special place and a special message for this returned prodigal.

These shoes given to him by his father brought home to him as nothing else, the joy of his acceptance. The shoes made him jump for joy. It was an end of a very long and very hard road.

But now, he had the shoes of comfort and of temptation. Mercy always embraces the sinner who comes to God for mercy. Mercy endures forever.

The body of flesh and blood which the Father created for us is one of the most wonderful things which God the Father ever set His loving and omnipotent hand to perform. We are not told how many pieces or how many colours were in that coat that he made. That was the secret of the Holy Trinity of God.

Joseph's coat was mentioned by the name of its maker. It was Jacob who made this coat. Only the Father and His Son knew the number of the pieces.

You say, but I could look at Joseph's coat and I could see. No, you could not. You could only see the outside of the coat.

You never saw the lining of Joseph's coat. Nobody saw that but Joseph himself. What touched his heart was the inside of that coat.

And I'm glad something has touched my heart. It's the inside of the humanity of the Son of God who gave His life, a ransom for my soul. That's a secret between the soul that's saved and the God who has saved them.

No one can impart to you the assurance of salvation. After I was converted, I had no assurance that I was saved. I talked to the greatest preachers in the world and they were no good to me.

And they talked this way and that way and the other way. And then one day I was returning from school with a broken heart and anxiety of soul. And God spoke to me and said, will you not believe me? Don't go around believing preachers.

Come to me. I could take you to the very place on the street and the very stone on the street in Ballymena where I stood. And suddenly and gloriously and everlastingly I got the assurance of my heart.

Oh, He touched me and oh, my heart is filled with joy. Yes, I can dance with joy. I've got the shoes and you need to know from God that you're a born again person.

It's the inner lining that covers the heart. The only one who handled Joseph's coat were those murderous brothers who stripped it from off his body. The only time Christ's body was handled by those wicked men who stripped him and hung him up stark naked on the cross.

But what a wonderful coat was that of. The father had seen it on his son as he left that day to do his father's bidding. But the next time the father saw it, it was stained.

For those men killed a kid and they put the blood on the coat. I am glad that the father has seen the body of Christ stained with the Lamb's blood. For that's our only hope for heaven for all eternity.

Stained with the Lamb's blood. The coat of Joseph stained with the Lamb's blood was used by those evil men to spread a great big lie that Joseph was killed by an evil beast. The body of Christ was claimed to have been stolen by His disciples.

This was a big lie to try and prove that Christ did not rise from the dead. But Christ is alive forevermore and has the keys of hell. And I am sure that poor stricken Jacob often looked at that coat and groaned and cried over what he thought.

But you know I was reading and studying this message and I discovered that Christ's coat appeared again. I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true. And in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

His eyes were as a flame of fire and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed, clothed with a virtue, with a vesture dipped in blood.

And his name is called the Word. And he had on that vesture and on his thigh a name written King of Kings. Please remember that only godly hands ever touched the body of my Lord.

It was Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus with that special burial. But let me take a quick look in closing at another father's last gift to his returned son. It was the best robe for his person.

It was the best ring for his finger. He had been barefooted but now he had been promoted. He was given the shoes.

His feet had been unprotected but now they were protected. He had safe feet. His position had been challenged but now he was not unheartened.

And God says, this man had peace in his heart. But that promotion, that protection, that position, that peace led to progression. This man walked the way back.

He walked the way in. He walked the way up. He walked the way through.

And he walked the way to the end. Which included the music. He could not have done it without God.

God's gifts are perfect. He provides for every need of the son that comes home. May God bless his word to our heart.

Heavenly Father, we thank thee for the sweetness of thy word. Write it on our hearts. And oh God, may everyone here have the experience of seeing that vesture dipped in blood.

Hear this, our prayer, for Christ's sake. Amen and Amen.

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