

# Guest of Honor

## Bible Story

parable of the Prodigal Son

## Scripture

Luke 15:11-32

**The Scene:** a barnyard

**The Simple Setup:** You will need no furniture on the stage; an open area where it's easy for your "animals" to move around is best.

**For Extra Impact:** Provide oversize bib overalls and hats to children playing human roles.

## The Characters

**narrator:** a friendly storyteller

**Fatted Calf:** a guy or girl

**Father:** a guy

**Oldest Son:** a guy or girl

**Youngest Son:** a guy or girl

**Barnyard Animals:** children willing to impersonate chickens, cats, sheep, or goats

## The Skit

After assigning the roles of Fatted Calf, Father, Oldest Son, and Youngest Son, form the rest of the children into four groups: chickens, cats, sheep, and goats. Consider working with the class on their animal imitations before the skit begins. If you have just a few children, let the same children play all the barnyard animal parts.

As the skit begins, the Youngest Son and Father are stage left. The animals are center stage. The Oldest Son is offstage, stage right. The Narrator may be offstage or at the edge of the stage.



Start the "Parable of the Prodigal Son" track on *The Humorous Book of Bible Skits for Children's Ministry CD* (track 34). Set your CD player on "repeat" so the track repeats.

**narrator:** Our skit opens in a barnyard. Maybe you haven't BEEN in a barnyard lately, so let me describe it. The FIRST thing you need to know is that THIS barnyard isn't like the ones you see in picture books. It's DIRTY, with LOTS of animals wandering around bumping into each other and looking for food. See the animals wandering around? They all

get along pretty well, even the CATS (*pause for cats to meow*) and the CHICKENS (*pause for chickens to cluck*). The sheep (*pause for sheep to bleat*) and goats (*pause for goats to bleat*) smile at each other, too. And that's the SECOND thing you should know about this barnyard: It's a very FRIENDLY place. EVERYONE here is happy. Well...ALMOST everyone. The FATTED CALF is a little NERVOUS.

**Fatted Calf:** I got a BAD feeling about this...My job as a fatted calf is pretty sweet. I do whatever I want. Eat, sleep, and be merry—that's MY deal. The only hard part of the job is having everyone call me "FATTED." I think of myself as the "Pleasantly PLUMP Calf," but that name hasn't caught on yet. Usually everything is CALM, but it feels like SOMETHING is up. Everyone has been coming around LOOKING at me, and I don't know WHY.

**narrator:** It's been an EXCITING few days around the farm. The farmer's YOUNGEST SON, who left town MONTHS ago, has come home. The cats (*pause*) were glad to see him—he always petted them. The sheep (*pause*) think he's a great guy, too. The Fatted Calf...

**Fatted Calf:** Hey—Pleasantly PLUMP Calf!

**narrator:** Sorry. The Pleasantly PLUMP Calf doesn't care one way or the other. But the goats (*pause*) aren't so sure—he always ignored them. And all the animals remember how horrible the scene was when the Youngest Son LEFT. All the animals watched as the Farmer and his Youngest Son talked...

**Youngest Son:** (*Walking back and forth, arguing with Father*) But Dad, it's just not FAIR! I slave and SLAVE for you on this farm, and what do I get in return? NOTHING! I need room to grow into the person I was MEANT to be! I need some FREEDOM.

**Father:** (*Concerned for his son*) Freedom? You want FREEDOM? You HAVE it! Because we work the land, you've got freedom from HUNGER! You've got freedom from the WEATHER here in our nice house! You've got RESPONSIBILITY, and pride in a job well done. And ONE of these days, this whole FARM will be split between you and your older brother. What more could you ASK?

**Youngest Son:** I could ask for THIS: Give me MY share of the farm NOW!

**Father:** But, Son...that's like wishing I was DEAD.

**Youngest Son:** Dad, I need to go find myself. And I won't find myself on this STINKING FARM! If you love me, give me the cash and I'm OUTTA here!

**Narrator:** They argued back and forth until the Father finally let his Youngest Son go. The kid was whistling as he packed up his donkey and headed out. He had BIG plans in BIG places. The animals didn't know where he was going, but they knew the Father was worried. So they said their goodbyes in their own special ways. The sheep bleated. (Pause.) The GOATS bleated. (Pause.) The CATS meowed. (Pause.) And the Pleasantly Plump CALF hardly noticed.

**Fatted Calf:** Yeah, WHATEVER. Send a postcard.

(*Youngest Son exits stage right.*)

**Narrator:** Every day, the Father stood outside his house and looked down the road. He just STARED. He'd say things like:

**Father:** My SON, my son.

**Narrator:** Then he'd hang his head.

That Youngest Son just about broke his Father's HEART. Then one morning—the Youngest Son was BACK.

**Fatted Calf:** So did he strike it RICH? Did he come back to BRAG to his big brother?

**Narrator:** Not exactly. He'd lost every penny of his inheritance. He'd partied like there was no tomorrow, and one day he woke up and there WAS no tomorrow—at least as far as his MONEY went. He was FLAT BROKE. He'd been working at a PIG farm for food and a place to sleep. He was STARVING to death!

**Fatted Calf:** A PIG farm? A nice Jewish boy doesn't belong in a job like THAT.

**Narrator:** That's what he finally decided. THAT'S why he came home.

**Fatted Calf:** Wow... Did his Father take him back? There's no way I'D do that!

**Narrator:** Good thing you aren't the Father, then. He gave his Youngest Son a new ring and a new robe, and they're going to have a PARTY, too.

**Fatted Calf:** A PARTY? Cool! You want to have a PARTY, chickens? (Pause.) How about YOU, sheep? (Pause.) And YOU, goats? (Pause.) And I KNOW you're party ANIMALS, you kitties! (Pause.)

**Narrator:** Everyone seems happy about the Youngest Son except for the Oldest Son. He found his Father and said...

**Oldest Son:** I can't BELIEVE this! He takes your MONEY...he THROWS the money away on loose living...and you WELCOME HIM BACK? I hate to say it, but my little brother is a BUM!

**Father:** Son, I understand you're angry...

**Oldest Son:** Angry? I'm FURIOUS! I work on this farm my entire LIFE, and what do I get? NOTHING! My little brother gets a PARTY! What's with THAT?

**Father:** Your brother isn't getting a party because of what he did. He's getting a party because he's ALIVE. It was like he was DEAD to me, and now he's BACK. You've ALWAYS been with me, Son. Everything I HAVE is yours. Can't you just be happy your brother is HOME?

**Fatted Calf:** The Oldest Son should just lighten up, you know? Have the party. Relax. Have a good time. Eat up. You know what? I'VE been invited!

**Narrator:** You? Yeah, I've heard that...

**Fatted Calf:** In fact, I'm gonna be the GUEST OF HONOR! Isn't THAT cool?



## To Talk About

- ◆ Which character in our skit do you feel is most like you?
- ◆ The father in our skit forgave his son. How does it feel to think that God is willing to forgive you of your sins, too?
- ◆ Describe a time that your actions affected others in ways you didn't expect. What happened?

**Topical Tie-Ins:** Family, Forgiveness, How Your Actions Affect Others