



Written by  
Cora Alley

## The Parable of “The Prodigal Son”

**Scripture:** Luke 15: 11-31

**Dramatic Category:** “Fractured Parable”

### What is a “Fractured Parable”?

A “Fractured Parable” is a contemporary, humorous re-telling of one of the parables of Jesus. The narrator, who may, or may not be involved in the action, tells the parable. As the parable is told, the mimes portray the action, occasionally using props and suggested costume pieces. The mimes generally wear black slacks, black turtleneck shirts or black and white striped shirts with black suspenders, and white gloves to accent their hand motions. They do not need to wear the traditional “white-face” of the mime genre. These “Fractured Parables” do not require any specific set.

**Topic:** God's forgiveness

**Performance Time:** 7 minutes

**Number of Players:** 6 players (*men or women*)

### Objective:

This "Fractured Parable" is a testimony to God's faithfulness to forgive those who repent and return to Him with a pure heart.

### Synopsis:

This "Fractured Parable" is a picture of the heart of God as He waits to welcome the "prodigal" children back into the fellowship of His love. The Older Son, those Jews faithful to the law, could not understand God's openness to forgive those who had strayed.

**Cast:**

Narrator: *The one who reads the parable from this script. (It's ideal if this person has "many voices." This adds to the comedy.)*

**Mimes**

The Father: *A dignified-looking man*

The Younger Son: *An energetic young man*

The Older Son: *A stable home-body*

Extra 1: *Pig, sleazy lady, starving person*

Extra 2: *Card shark, wealthy landowner, servant of the Father*

**NOTES:**

1. When the script refers to "mimes," they respond to the Narrator as neutral mimes, not as their assigned characters. When you see character names in the script, the mimes portray those characters; add character props to the standard mime costume, if you desire, such as: hats, neckties, a briefcase, a boa, etc.
2. Change the character names to reflect the gender of the mimes playing the parts.

**Props:**

A sign that reads "ESTATE"

A feather boa for the sleazy lady

A visor for the card shark

A dollar bill

A top hat for the wealthy landowner

1 pig nose with elastic straps to keep it on

**Sound:** A wireless mic for the narrator

**Staging:**

<b>Narrator</b> <i>elevated on platform</i>
--

**Extras**

**Older Son**

**The Father**

**Younger Son**

**NOTE:**

This skit is a narrated mime; this technique requires that the action described by the narrator be acted out in **pantomime** by "mimes" who **perform simultaneously** while the story is being told. The attention of the audience is on both the narrator and the mime action. Block the action of the mimes so that they illustrate the events being described by the narrator. Facial expression and interaction between the narrator and the mimes is suggested to add comedy and energy to the performance. The characters respond to what the narrator says. The action is almost constant.

## The Script:

**NOTE: The narrator lines are in bold.** (*The mime directions are in italic.*)

### **Narrator:**

*(Stands upstage right on some elevated surface, (a riser, a box, etc.) so that he/she looks down on the action as he/she narrates the story from the script. It is critical that the action be syncopated with a little talk, a little action, and so forth. The comedy in this is the synchronized movement between the mimes and the set up lines from the narrator, who, ideally, will use many different voices as he/she becomes the various characters' voices.)*

*(All the mimes stand with their backs to the audience.)*

**There was once a man,**

*(The Father turns around and nods.)*

**who had two sons.**

*(Both sons turn around.)*

**The younger one said to his Father,**

*(The Younger Son mouths these words as the narrator says them.)*

*(In the "Younger Son" voice)* **"Father, give me my share of the estate."**

**So, he divided his estate between them.**

*(The Father takes the folded up ESTATE sign out of his back pocket and tears it in half. He hands half to the Younger Son, and half to the Older Son. The Younger Son is thrilled, folds up his half, and sticks it into his back pocket. The Older Son just looks confused, shakes hands with the Father, walks off to stage right, turns his back to the audience and is "gone.")*

**Not long after that,**

*(The Younger Son opens his imaginary suitcase and starts packing. The Father looks on in wonder. The son takes a picture frame of the Father with him. He pulls a dollar bill out of his pocket and sticks it in his shirt pocket, so a portion of it is sticking out.)*

**the Younger Son got together all he had, and set off for a distant country,**

*(The son waves to his Father, or does some kind of a goofy handshake. He walks over to the left side of the stage.)*

**and there he squandered his wealth in wild living.**

*(The two extras turn around to face the audience, one is a sleazy lady, wearing a feather boa around her neck, who flirts with the son. She slips her arm in his and looks on in anticipation as the other extra, a card shark who wears a visor, rolls imaginary dice. When the son loses the roll of the dice, the card shark takes his dollar bill, and the sleazy lady pushes him away; then, she takes the arm of the card shark as they exit to upstage left, together.)*

**After he had spent everything,**

*(The son turns his pockets inside out to show that he has nothing left.)*

**there was a severe famine in that whole country,**

*(One extra reenters holding his/her stomach as though starving; then falls over. The son glances down at him/her in pity as he, also, holds his stomach with hunger pains.)*

**and he began to feel the pinch.**

*(The starving extra reaches up and pinches him on the side of his thigh.)*

**Son:** *(jumping out of the way of the pinch)* Ouch!

**So, he went and attached himself to a wealthy citizen**

*(The other extra puts on the top hat, turns around and steps up to the son.)*

**of that country,**

*(The son attaches himself by making a "suction cup" sound.)*

**who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.**

*(The landowner points at the pig, who used to be the starving person. The starving person pulls the piggie nose out of his/her pocket and puts it on while he/she is on the floor dying of starvation. This way, the nose is a surprise for the audience when he/she gets up on all fours and plays the role of the pig.)*

**Son:** *(looking at the narrator in disgust)* The pigs?

**Narrator:** The pigs!

*(The son looks down at the pig, and begins to pull imaginary pods out of an imaginary bag. The land owner returns to upstage left and turn his/her back to the audience.)*

**He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating,**

*(He looks longingly at the pods, tries to bring one to his mouth, but the pig sees him try and bites him in the calf. He screams in pain.)*

**Son:** Ahhhh!

**Narrator:** **but no one gave him anything.  
When he came to his senses, he said,**

*(The son slaps his head and mouths these words and acts out going back to the Father with gestures as the narrator delivers these lines.)*

*(In the "Younger Son" voice)*

**"How many of my Father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my Father and say to him:  
"Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men."**

*(From downstage left the son turns to stage right and begins a very slow "mime walk" toward downstage right, where the Father is. The Father turns and walks downstage right and turns to face left. He begins a slow "mime walk" in the direction of his son. The two make a comical sight as they advance toward one another in slow motion.)*

**But while he was still a long way off, his Father saw him  
and was filled with compassion for him;**

*(The Father pretends to take his heart out of his chest, pretends to hold a beating heart and tosses it to his son, who catches it in mid-air and places it into his own chest.)*

**he ran to his son,**

*(They meet downstage, center.)*

**threw his arms around him,**

*(The Father throws his arms around his son.)*

**and kissed him!**

*(Both men stop dead in their tracks, and sharply fire a disapproving look at the narrator.)*

**Okay, he hugged him.**

*(The two give each other a "manly" hug.)*

**The son said to his Father,**

*(in the Younger Son voice)* **"Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you."**

*(The Younger Son kneels before the Father.)*

**I am no longer worthy to be called your son."**

**But the Father shouted to his servants,**

*(in a thick Jewish accent)* **Kvick!**

*(The two extras run over at the Father's bidding.)*

*(in the Jewish accent)* **Bring the best robe and put it on him.**

*(One extra grabs an imaginary robe; the son is impressed with it as he puts it on.)*

**Put a ring on his finger**

*(The other extra puts a ring on his finger.)*

**and sandals on his feet.**

*(The other extra grabs some imaginary sandals and puts them on the son's feet.)*

**Bring the fatted calf and kill it.**

*(Both extras look shocked at the thought of having to kill the calf.)*

**Come on, already!**

*(One extra points the gun and kills the imaginary calf, and the other extra slices out a chunk of meat out of the dead animal and hands it to the Father, who tears it in half and hands half of it to the son.)*

**Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead**

*(The son grabs his chest and falls over, stiffly. The extras catch him and set him back upright.)*

**and is alive again;**

*(The extras pat him on the back for coming back to life.)*

**he was lost**

*(The son looks around stupidly, peering around the stage as though he doesn't know where he is.)*

**and is found.**

*(The extras tap him on the shoulder and point him in the direction of the Father.)*

**So they began to celebrate.**

*(The extras, the Father, and the son, begin a line dance across the back of the stage, or form a circle and begin a Jewish folkdance. It is effective if you have a musician who plays synthesized Jewish folk music at this moment. It adds to the comedy.)*

**Meanwhile, the Older Son was in the field.**

*(The Older Son turns around from upstage right, where he has been since the distribution of the wealth scene, earlier. He walks downstage right and leans his ear over to the dancing, while facing the audience.)*

**When he came near the house,  
he heard music and dancing.  
So he called one of the servants**

*(The narrator lets out a shrill whistle, as though he were calling a dog. The older brother mimes the whistle. One of the extras approaches the older brother, the rest of them keep dancing. If they get tired of dancing, they can stand around and mime a conversation, eat and drink.)*

**and asked him what was going on.**

*(The extra mouths these words as the narrator speaks in a new voice.)*

*(in a new voice)* **Your brother has come home!  
Can ya' believe it?  
We though he was a gonner, but nope!  
He came showed up,  
Just like death and taxes.  
At any rate; he's home!**

*(The servant slaps the older brother on the shoulder, but the brother is not the least bit happy)*

*(continuing in the brothers' voice)* **Your Father has killed the fatted calf because  
he has him back safe and sound.**

*(The servant tries to pull the brother into the party, but the brother is stiff-legged and refuses to move, like a mule.)*

**The older brother became angry and refused to go in.**

*(The brother folds his arms and pretends to spit on the ground. The servant shrugs his shoulders and goes to get the Father. He points to the brother, who is facing downstage, pouting. The Father leaves the party and approaches the brother.)*

**So his Father went out and pleaded with him.**

*(The Father makes pleading gestures, asking the brother to come and join the party.)*

**But he answered his Father saying,**

*(In the same brother voice)* **"Look!**

*(The brother mimes these words and acts them out in gestures as the narrator delivers these lines.)*

**All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders.  
Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.  
But when this son of yours, who has squandered your property with prostitutes,  
comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!**

*(returning to the "Father's voice")* **My son,**

*(back to the narrator voice)* **said the Father,**

*(returning to the "Father's voice")* **you are always with me, and everything I have  
is yours.**

*(The son and the extras cautiously approach the brother and the Father.)*

**But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours**

*(The Father points to the Younger Son, and the Younger Son waves with a hesitant expression on his face.)*

**was dead**

*(The Younger Son repeats the death gag by clutching his heart and falling over. The extras catch him and set him upright again.)*

**and is alive;**

**he was lost**



*(The Younger Son repeats the lost gag and peers around the stage. The extras point him to the Father.)*

**and is found."**

*(The older brother turns away from the rest of the group and folds his arms in defiance. The Younger Son, taps him on the shoulders. When the older brother turns around, the Younger Son extends his hand in friendship. With hesitation, but finally with enthusiasm, the older brother shakes his hand. The Father steps behind the two sons and poses for a "family picture." taken by one of the other extras, who quickly runs to get a camera. The scene ends with a flash going off from the imaginary camera. The son, Father, and brother, rub their eyes from the flash, then hug each other.)*

**The End**