

# The Parable of the Lost Daughter

by Peggy Harris W.A.S.H. Board Chair

*Luke 15:20 paraphrased*

So then she got up and started back to her parents. She was still a long way from home when her parents saw her, their hearts filled with pity, and they hurried, hugging their daughter and kissing her. There was once a daughter who having received her education and was making her way in life, decided to move into a relationship that was not held in approval by either her church or her parents. Her parents pointed out future difficulties with her decision and suggested other options open to her, but to no avail. Upon her insistence to follow her own plan they helped her move, though they were burdened with heavy hearts.

After a period of time she came to the rude awakening that her freedom was on a short string, both financially and emotionally. She was not even able to go places with her friends. Her parents had continued to keep in touch with her regularly. As they saw signs of her deteriorating relationship, they let her know they would always be there to help. Her mother told her that if at any time she felt unsafe or fearful to call day or night and help would be provided.

Finally one Friday evening after her mother had gone to bed the "call" came. Her mother arose, dressed, loaded up the family car with empty boxes and suitcases and went out to meet the daughter where they loaded up the car and returned her to their home temporarily. The parents prayers had been answered and there was great rejoicing in their household.

There are some who would say that a daughter such as this should not be fully restored in the household because she is a daughter of Eve. The parents, knowing a God who came to show us how to live, chose to love her unconditionally and they never considered their relationship with her broken by these events. The next Sunday morning at breakfast, the mother served pecan waffles with blueberries and whipped cream. She leaned over to her daughter and lovingly said, "This is the fatted calf."

\*\*\*\*\*

*This is a true story to encourage parents to keep their hearts open to their children and to those children who long for "home". October 1, 1990.*