

You'll probably know this story but it does us good to revisit stories we already know.



This story is one Jesus told to people who judged his kind behaviour as wrong.

The people judging him, and making their comments. were the Scribes and the Pharisees.

I think, in our lives today, we would probably recognise Scribes and Pharisees as

'The Perfect And Bossy Ones Who Tell You Off All The Time And Point Out Every Single Mistake That You Make And Won't Let You Forget Them.'

(They are so annoying!)

The background of the story is that Jesus had dinner with people who had done some things that were wrong.



The Scribes and the Pharisees thought that Jesus shouldn't be spending time with these people because they were 'sinners'.

Their understanding was "Don't mix with bad people - they don't deserve your company and God hates them because they are bad! If you mix with them, you don't know God!"

Jesus's messages to them was "God loves us all regardless of what we have done." And then he told this story:

In the name of the
Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy
Spirit,

Amen

Once upon a time, there was a farmer who had two sons. His two sons worked hard for him on the farm.

The farmer was very rich. He had lots of servants and a really nice house. The farmer was really happy with his farm and his children.



One day, the youngest son said to his Dad (the farmer),
"Dad, I'm fed up here. All this work I am doing for you is too hard. I want to get away and have some fun. I want my share of the money we have made so I can get out and enjoy myself!"



His Dad was really upset to hear this but he wanted his boy to be happy. He sadly gave him a big bag of money, and his son left home to enjoy himself.



As you can see
in the picture,
his Dad was
upset when his
youngest son
left.

I think he was going to miss him a lot.

Even though his son had hurt his feelings, the Dad
still loved him and he hoped he would come back.



The son went away and had a lot of fun spending his Dad's money. He had parties, got loads of girlfriends and bought some really nice stuff.



But one day he realised that he had spent all the money and he couldn't pay his bills.

He couldn't even buy food to eat!

He had to get a job, but the only job he could get was a horrible one - feeding someone's stinky old pigs!



Oh, my days - the smell those pigs made!

The son remembered how lovely his Dad was.

He remembered everything his dad had given him: not just money



but a whole lot of love!



I love you, son. You've made me sad but I'll never stop loving you.

He decided to go home and his Dad rushed out of the house to meet him.

"I've been so mean and selfish, Dad!" he said, "I deserve to get done, but just let me come home!"





But his Dad was chuffed to bits to see him.

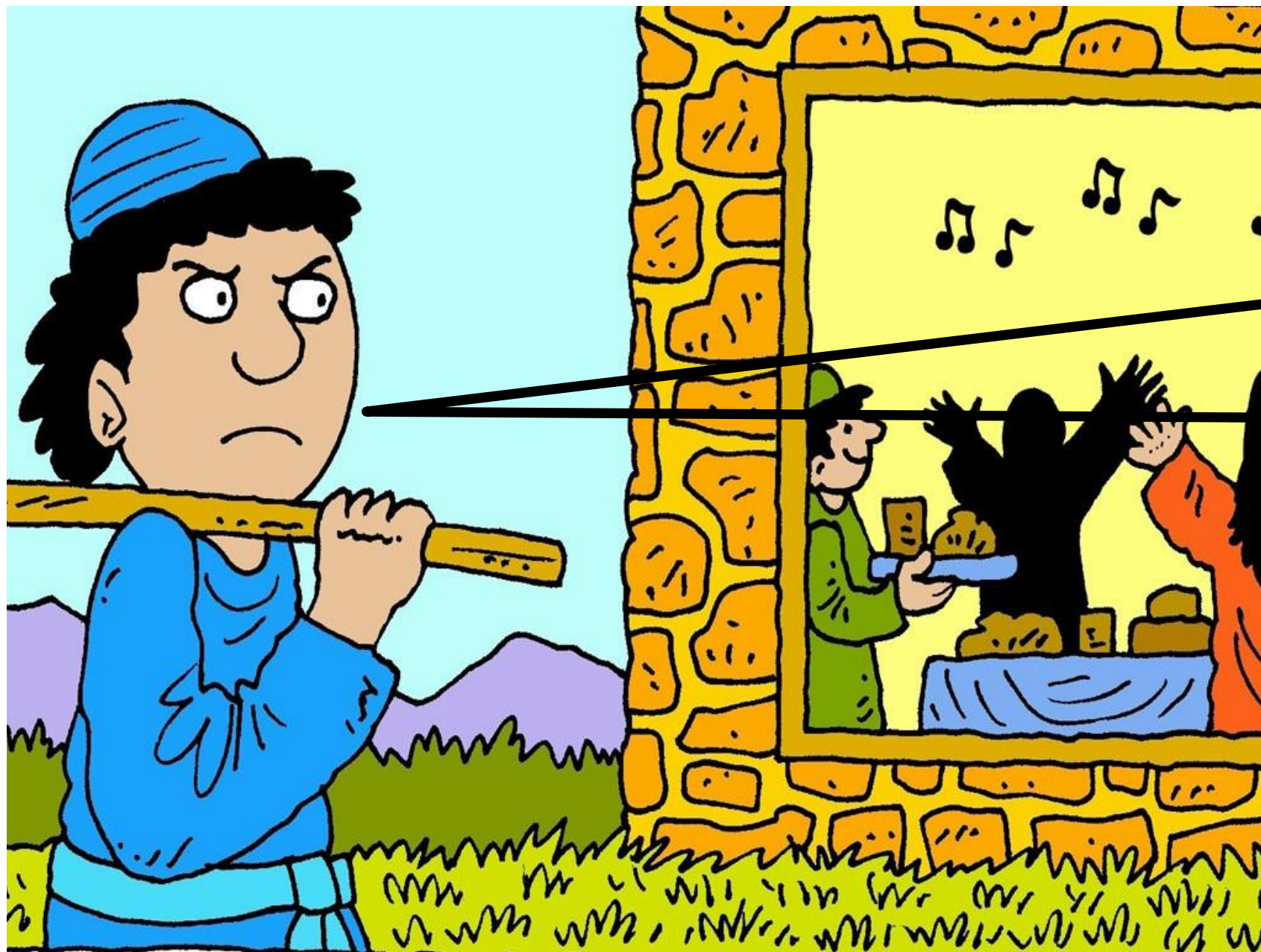
"Forget it, lad!" he said.

"I'm just glad to have you home!"

His Dad was so happy he threw a great big party to welcome his youngest son home.

He found some smashing new clothes for his son, and invited everyone to celebrate.

But the oldest son was mad as a wasp when he came home to a great big party for his selfish brother who had done so much to hurt their Dad.



This isn't right!
That brother
of mine has
done a terrible
thing to our
Dad!

He stayed outside and refused to join the party.

The Dad was confused as to why his oldest son would not come in and welcome his brother home. He went out to see what was the matter. Oh, boy - did his other son yell at him!!!

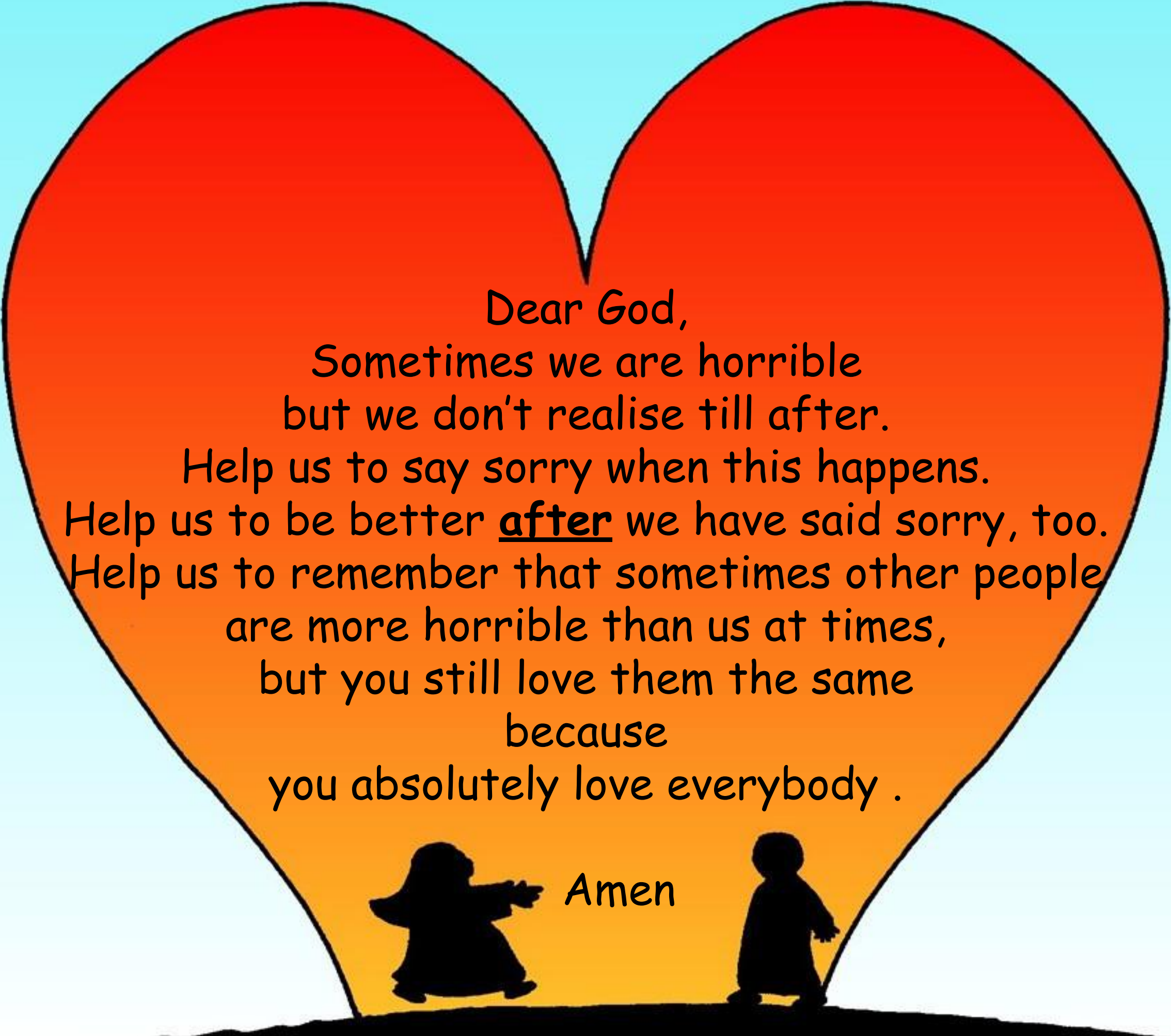


**"My brother is bad, Dad!
He hurt you!
You should punish him,
not give him a party!"**

"But I love you both!" said their Dad. "He's been bad, you've been good! But you are BOTH my children and I love you both, whatever it is that you do!"



"Let me love you both in my own way."



Dear God,
Sometimes we are horrible
but we don't realise till after.
Help us to say sorry when this happens.
Help us to be better after we have said sorry, too.
Help us to remember that sometimes other people
are more horrible than us at times,
but you still love them the same
because
you absolutely love everybody .

Amen