

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

Instructor: Joanna Wos **Humanities Discipline:** Art Appreciation ARTH110

World Religion: Christianity **Module 1:** Christian Religious Traditions and Sacred Texts

Teaching Module Goals:

To show how the influence of James Tissot's Roman Catholic background had a dramatic effect on the change in subject matter in his paintings after 1881-1882.

Assigned Readings and Websites:

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke Chapter 15: 11-32

<https://biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+15%3A11-32&version=NRSVCE>

Ash, R. (1992). James Tissot 1836-1902 in *James Tissot*. Harry N. Abrams, Inc. New York.

Dolkart, J.F. (n.d.). James Tissot, Prodigal Son in *James Tissot: The life of Christ, the complete set of 350 watercolors*. Brooklyn Museum. Merrell. London/New York. Pp. 11-15.

Marshall, R.M. and Warner, M. (1999). The Painter of Modern Love (Pp. 9-21) and From Prodigal to Pilgrim (Pp. 163-169) in *James Tissot, Victorian life/modern love*. The American Federation of Arts, Yale Center for British Art. Yale University P London.

Smith.K.S. (August 5, 2010.) The artist as believer. *America: The National Catholic Review*. Issue 2.

<http://americamagazine.org/issue/732/art/artisti-believer>

Study Questions and/or Discussion Prompts for Students:

1. Give a brief synopsis of the story of the Prodigal Son.
2. What was the primary subject matter of Tissot's paintings prior to 1881-1882?
3. In 1881, Tissot was a Roman Catholic living scandalously with a divorced woman in England. How did his circumstances change after 1882?
4. Do you believe this had any influence on his series of four paintings: *The Prodigal Son in Modern Life: The Departure, In Foreign Climes, The Return, The Fatted Calf*? Why?

Write a one-page narrative, discussing how James Tissot's Roman Catholic upbringing and biographical details in 1881-1882 may have influenced the dramatic change in his subject matter from society painter of modern life to painter of biblical scenes.



The Prodigal Son in Modern Life: The Departure



Prodigal Son in Modern Life: In Foreign Climes



Prodigal Son in Modern Life: The Return



Prodigal Son in Modern Life: The Fatted Calf