

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1 Have you ever felt far from God, like the prodigal son? What made you feel that way, and how did you experience God's response?
- 2 What does this story teach us about the kind of relationship God wants with His children?
- 3 Who in your life might need the kind of love, grace, or forgiveness the father showed? How can you reflect the Father's heart to them this week?

WE DO LIFE TOGETHER!



SCAN QR

If you haven't been involved in a LIFE Group yet, send us a message thru Fb, and we will get you connected to a small group.

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SUNDAY WORD

06 • 15 • 2025

EYES TO SEE, EARS TO HEAR

PART 6 - THE HEART OF A FATHER

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 15:11-32

Luke 15 begins with this setting: Luke 15:1-2 - "1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.'"(NIV)

Jesus was surrounded by two very different groups of people: On one side, the "tax collectors and sinners", people who were considered moral and spiritual failures, and yet they were drawn to Jesus. On the other side are the Pharisees and teachers of the law, religious leaders who prided themselves in obedience, knowledge, and tradition. They couldn't understand why Jesus would welcome people beneath them.

So Jesus tells three parables in Luke 15, and in each one, something is lost: A sheep (1 out of 100), a coin (1 out of 10), and finally, a son (1 out of 2). Each parable ends with a party, a celebration. Because when what was lost is found, heaven rejoices. But when Jesus tells the third parable, about the lost son, He breaks the pattern. He adds an unexpected twist: another son. A son who never left home, but still doesn't join the celebration. Why? Because Jesus wasn't just speaking to broken sinners, He was confronting the self-righteous hearts of the Pharisees. The younger son represented the "sinners" who knew they were lost. The older son represented the religious people who didn't think they needed saving.

WORD

Luke 15:11-12 - "11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. (NIV)

1. THE PRODIGAL SON

In Luke 15:12, he goes to his father and says, "Father, give me my share of the estate." Now, to us today, that might sound like just a financial request. But in their culture? That was shocking. It was like saying, "I don't care if you're alive or dead. I just want what's mine." He wasn't just asking for money; he was rejecting the relationship. He wanted to leave not just the house, but his father's presence, his authority, and his values.

Haven't we all been there at some point? That moment when we say in our hearts, "If I could just do life my own way, I'd be happier." It's that quiet rebellion where we want God's blessings, but not His boundaries. We want God's favor, but not His authority.

Luke 15:13-15 - "13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs." Now, the son gathers everything, moves to a far-off place, and starts spending like there's no tomorrow. He lives wildly and wastes it all. And then a famine comes, the money is gone, the friends disappear, and he ends up in the worst possible place: in the pig pen, feeding pigs.

This is a Jewish boy. Feeding pigs would've been unthinkable. This wasn't just a low moment; this was rock bottom. That's where sin always takes us. Sin promises us freedom, but gives us chains. Sin promises us pleasure, but leaves us empty. Sin looks good at first, but in the end, it costs more than we ever wanted to pay. Sometimes, it's in the pigpen where God starts to whisper. Because it takes getting to the end of ourselves before we finally start to look up.

Luke 15:17 says, "When he came to his senses..." That's more than just regret. That's an awakening. That's when the heart begins to realize, "What am I doing here? What have I become? What have I walked away from?" That's where real repentance starts, not when we have it all figured out, but when we realize how far we've fallen and how much we've been missing.

And what does he do? He remembers his father, not as someone harsh or cruel, but as someone good. He says to himself, "Maybe I can go back. Not as a son but at least maybe as a servant." And now here's where it gets even more powerful. Luke 15:20 says, "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him..." The only way the father could see him from far away is if he'd been watching, waiting, hoping. And what does the father do? He runs. In that culture, men of honor didn't run. That was undignified. But when love sees its child coming home, dignity goes out the window. He doesn't wait for a speech. He doesn't wait for an apology. He wraps him in an embrace, pig smell and all, and restores him, not reluctantly, but joyfully. That's what grace looks like. That's how God receives us. Not with crossed arms and conditions, but with open arms and compassion.

2. THE OLDER SON

There's another character, and honestly, many of us in church can relate to him more than we'd like to admit. The older son never left home. He stayed. He worked. He obeyed. From the outside, he did everything "right." But when the prodigal returns and the party begins, the older son gets angry.

Luke 15:29 - "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. That's a big word: slaving. He didn't see himself as a son, but as a servant trying to earn something. He obeyed, but it wasn't out of love. It was out of duty. And when grace was given to someone else, it felt unfair.

The older son wasn't lost in rebellion, but he was still lost. Lost in bitterness and hatred. Lost in self-righteousness. He couldn't celebrate the grace shown to his brother because he didn't believe he needed it himself. And this is the danger for us in the church. We can serve God, read the Bible, and show up every Sunday, but still miss the heart of the Heavenly Father. We can be in the house, but far from His heart. The older son's problem wasn't his behavior; it was his perspective. He didn't realize that everything the Father had was already his. He didn't need to earn it. It was already his by relationship.

3. THE FATHER

We often talk about the rebellious son who ran away, or the older son who stayed but grew bitter. But the heart of this parable isn't just about two broken sons, it's about a Father who never stopped loving either of them. This is a Father who sees the younger son "while he is still a long way off."

What does that tell us? It means that the Father was watching, waiting, not giving up. And when He finally sees him, dirty, ashamed, rehearsing an apology, He doesn't wait for an explanation. He runs. He doesn't lecture or hold back. He wraps him in love, restores his identity, and throws a celebration, not because the son earned it, but because he came home.

Many of us have a distorted view of our Heavenly Father. Some think of Him as distant, uninvolved, watching from afar. Others see Him as demanding, always expecting more, never quite satisfied. But Jesus tells this story to shatter those lies. Our Heavenly Father's love breaks every idea we've wrongly believed about God. Our Heavenly Father is a Father who longs, watches, and waits for you. And when He sees even the smallest move of a wayward son or daughter toward home, He runs to welcome you, mess, mistakes, and all.

And yet, how often have we taken Him for granted? Often, we want God's blessings but ignore His heart. We live life on our terms and forget that every breath we breathe comes from God. We drift away, not just in rebellion, but in indifference. We've forgotten the Father.

The truth is, even when we forget God, He has never forgotten us. Even when we wander far, His eyes never leave the road. Even when our hearts grow cold, God's heart stays warm with compassion. He still runs. He still reaches out. And He still wants you, whether you're a runaway or a rule-follower. This is the kind of Father we have. This is the God Jesus came to reveal.

