



Group Guide

The Prodigal Son

October 27, 2024

Main Passage: Luke 15

Theological Theme

God is the perfect Father who demonstrates His love for us by offering forgiveness, mercy, and grace. He searches for us when we are lost and delights when we are restored to Him.

Introduction

- ❓ When have you experienced being lost? How do you typically respond in these moments?
- ❓ How do you respond when someone else is lost and you are the one searching for him or her?

1. Two Sons (Luke 15:11-13)

Luke 15 records three different parables around a common theme Jesus told to teach a valuable lesson. Each was about something lost. From a lost sheep to a lost coin to a lost son, Jesus described who God is and challenged the religious leaders' attitudes. These three stories give insight into and help paint a picture of God as Father and God as the great Shepherd.

- ❓ What are some ways that you have heard this parable titled? How does that shape the way we understand it?
- ❓ What about the younger son makes it clear that he is separated from his father?
- ❓ Application: Where are you valuing the things God has over God Himself?

2. The Journey Away (Luke 15:14-19)

The younger son could be described as wasteful. This son left home with his inheritance and, according to these verses, wasted it on reckless living. You may have experienced something similar. The younger son gave in to the desire to live according to his own wishes regardless of what his father wanted or expected for him. Although he had a strong family and a place in the world, he was not content with that, and he chose to chase after things of the world.

- ❓ In what ways are we naturally like the younger son?
- ❓ Consider a time when you realized the consequences of poor decisions in your own life. Share with the group as is appropriate and you feel comfortable.
- ❓ Application: What are some ways we are tempted to believe living according to our own wisdom will satisfy? Why is this never ultimately the case?

3. The Return Home (Luke 15:20-32)

Finally, with nowhere to turn, the younger son came to his senses and realized how badly he messed up. He didn't blame anyone else, and he didn't try to rationalize his mistakes. He owned his choices. This is evidence of true contrition over his rebellion. We cannot be restored to the Father and others we have harmed if we refuse to take responsibility for our wrongs.

- ❓ What are some ways we might be sorry for the consequences of our sin but not for our sin itself? Why is important that we reach a place of true sorrow over sin?
- ❓ How have all who are in Christ received restoration like that of the younger son in this parable?
- ❓ Application: In what way are you prone to respond to others like the older son in this story? What did both the older and younger son need to realize about the father?

Conclusion

- ❓ What relationship of yours needs restoration? How will you seek that restoration?
- ❓ Evaluate where in your life you have been like either of the brothers. Confess this before the Father and seek restoration with Him.
- ❓ How does this story affect the way you see God as your Father? Who can you tell about God's love for those who have rejected Him?