

Here are some talking points to start using to get your group talking to each other and to start generating meaningful conversations. You want others to do most of the talking.

Start Talking. Find a conversation starter for your group. Ask a question to get your group thinking. Which part of the message was most impactful to you and why?

Start Sharing & Talking About the message. NOTE: Pastor may not cover all points in all services.

Setting/Open: Lost people know pain and hurt. We can all understand rebellion, regret, family tensions and the feeling of being far from home.

1. V12 **Younger Son – lost in rebellion.** When the younger brother asks for his inheritance before his father died, what was he saying? **A.** “I want what you can give me, but I don’t want you.” Do we ever have that attitude with our Heavenly Father?
2. V17 What is the important first step to reconciliation that the young man takes? **A.** He came to himself. NIV – When he came to his senses. He hit rock bottom.
3. **The older son – lost in religion.** Contrast the younger and older sons. **A.** The younger was lost far from his father; the older was lost while near the father. One is lost through rebellion; the other through resentment. One wasted the father’s resources; the other wasted his father’s relationship. What does this make both sons? **A.** They are both prodigals.
4. What does prodigal mean? **A.** It is not always rebellion but extravagant or wasteful. Both sons wasted something.
5. One son wanted his father’s possessions; the other the father’s approval. But what did neither of them understand? **A.** The father’s heart – he wanted a relationship with his sons.
6. What was the real tragedy in the two sons’ approaches? **A.** They both looked at their father transactionally. The younger said give me what belongs to me; the older, give me what I deserve.
7. V20 **The father runs.** What do we learn about grace from the father’s reaction to his young son returning home? **A.** The father doesn’t negotiate. He accepts the son freely. Grace isn’t merely forgiveness of the past; grace restores our relationship with the Father. Secondly, grace is not earned but received. We can’t clean ourselves up enough to be worthy of God’s free gift of grace. **Romans 8:1 App:** No one is too far gone past the grace of Jesus. And **everyone** is in need of His grace. There is not a hierarchy of sin. God has a restoration plan for each of us. **Phil 2:6-8 & Rom 5:8**
8. What is the danger in becoming like the older brother? **A.** We receive our forgiveness but are unwilling to extend it to others. What was the older brother angry about? **A.** That the father celebrated the return of his lost son. (Think Jonah) **Matt 21:31 App:** Don’t become so familiar with the Father’s house, that you forget the Father’s heart. **App:** Distance creates distortion – we are unable to see things the way God does. Don’t be more interested in what a person deserves than the desire of the Father. The closer we are to the Father the more clearly we see His perspective.
9. **How to Guard Our Hearts:** 1) Stay with the Father; abide in Him; 2) Keep Watch – be looking to the horizon for those coming home; 3) Pray for the Lost; 4) Embrace the hurting – “Don’t break the broken”; 5) Celebrate their return – **Luke 15:10**; 6) Coming home isn’t the end – staying home is. What must the church do for those who come home? **A.** Disciple them and be a community that walks with them.

Start Praying & Start Doing. Please remember to fill out the LIFEgroup meeting assessment form after your meeting. Here is the link: <https://subsplash.com/u/-3VJ3ZF/forms/d/439cdb6e-6d23-4b0a-9aeb-05199f86a9f2>

LIFEgroups

Talk it over | week 8

discussion | study

Come Home

Luke 15:11-32

Pastor Nick Pierce