

Lesson 15

CHAPTER 15, THE PRODIGAL IN ALL OF US

At the beginning of both Chapter 14 and Chapter 15, we see the Jewish religious leaders, the Pharisees, trying to catch Jesus at violating the Law of Moses. They want to expose him to the people as an imposter. Again and again, Jesus exposes their ignorance while teaching us important truths about God and about himself. This chapter is all about the heart of God the Father for those who are lost. Chapter 15 contains one of the most endearing parables, The Prodigal Son. Rembrandt, Murillo and other famous painters have captured this story on canvas. For fun, Google these paintings and see if you can identify the prodigal son and the older brother.

1. In chapter 14, the Pharisees were condemning Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. Read Luke 15:1-2. What are they condemning Jesus of in these verses?

2. Jesus responds with two endearing stories about God's heart for the lost in verses 3- 10. What are they? What do you notice about God in these? How does He react to finding the lost? What is the reaction of the angels?

3. Who do you know that is lost? Write a prayer to God the Father asking him to diligently search for that person. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any way you can be a "worker in the harvest field." See Luke 10:2.

4. Read the rest of Luke 15. What do you think was the first mistake the younger son made? See Exodus 20:12.

5. Pigs were abhorrent and unclean to the ancient Jews. Only Gentiles raised them. What does this tell you about where the son was spiritually? What do verses 17-19 and 21 reveal about the younger son?

6. What do you notice about the father in these verses? The father had to wait for the son to “come to his senses.” How do we wait for loved ones that are “lost” without losing hope? See Hebrews 10:23-24 and Hebrews 11:1.

7. What are your thoughts about the older brother? Relate this to the stories of the lost sheep and lost coin in the first part of Luke 15. What does the story of the older son tell us?

APPLICATION: Whom do you identify with in the story of the prodigal son? Share with your group.

PRAYER: Loving Father, you seek the lost because your heart desires for all to come to faith in you and your Son, Jesus. As with the father in the Prodigal Son story, you diligently search the horizons of our hearts to see us repent, turn, and come back to you. Even in our sinfulness, you rejoice when we come back into your arms. Before we can even display our worthiness, you claim us as your own. Thank you, Father. Give us hearts to reach the lost; give us the words and prayers to bring those who have strayed back into your kingdom. Then may we rejoice with the angels. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.