

## Darkroom

Week 3 - Brian Kangas  
"Homecoming"

**Icebreaker:** Where would your second-best home be located (assuming Heaven was #1)?

### Texts for Discussion:

- Read **Luke 15:1-7**
  - Discuss some areas of this text that stand out to you. Are there any parallels you can draw between characters in the story and yourself?
  - Do you think the party thrown for a sheep being returned was appropriate?
    - Conversely: Given such a huge party/celebration, how much value does that "sheep" have to the shepherd?
- Read **Luke 15:8-10**
  - How many "coins" do you think the woman spent celebrating the return of her lost coin? Anything else strike you as odd or interesting in this parable?
  - Do you have anything that you value beyond its **monetary** worth?
- Read **Luke 15:11-32**
  - The title of this parable could just as easily be "The Lost Son". Prodigal means to spend freely and recklessly; extravagant without reason. It describes the son quite well.
  - When did the father see his son return? What can you infer from this?
  - If we are the lost sheep, coin, and son in these stories (yes ladies, you too!) and God is the shepherd, owner, and father, what can we come to understand about our place in God's heart?

### Things to Consider:

- Like any metaphor, these parables cannot completely describe our relationship to God and the value that he places on us, but they do give us a good mental picture to work with.
- When we lose something of value, it often doesn't matter what it costs to help us have it returned (just look at the volume of "lost cat" posters you see periodically). This world seeks to devalue us because the ruler of this world wants to see us destroyed.
- The sheep was not a perfect specimen...if anything it was kind of an idiot for leaving the flock. The same could be said of the younger son. Our value in Christ's eyes, therefore, is not based on our performance or ability to get out of a jamb. We can't make ourselves perfect; we will never live up to the standard of Heaven without Jesus.

**Going Deeper:**

- When we start devalue ourselves or to think we must be perfect before presenting ourselves to God, we begin to drift away from home. But all we want to be is at home.
  - What is it like coming home from a long vacation? Sure you miss the place you just were, but how good does your bed feel? Having your stuff?
  - In a similar way, your soul desires to be home. That home is with God, but we can't be near him in our imperfection. Whatever are we to do?
  - Discuss some ways as a group that Jesus's death on the cross covered your imperfections. How does your outlook improve when he got up from the grave?
  
- **He is risen!**

**Prayer:** Ask the Holy Spirit to intervene in your prayer life, your thought life, and your relational life to help you experience Christ's love and to pour it out toward those you meet.