

CALL TO ACTION SERIES

EPISODE 7: THE PARABLE OF THE THIRD BROTHER

look back

First, **LOOK BACK** at the past week by asking, “How did we do?” Begin with prayer, then check in with one another—sharing honestly, celebrating victories, acknowledging struggles, and graciously offering practical help.

 **PRAYER** - Begin with prayer, inviting Jesus into the conversation.

Follow up on last week’s assignment:

- What specific action did you take to affirm or assist your adult children?
- How did they respond?
- Did this open any new conversations or strengthen trust between you?

look up

Next, **LOOK UP** to God’s Word by asking, “What does Jesus want us to know?” If you haven’t already, watch this week’s video: “*Call to Action Series: The Parable of the Third Brother*.” Then use the “What Do You Think?” and “What Does God’s Word Say?” sections to draw out the main truths together.

 **WATCH: Call to Action Series: The Parable of the Third Brother**

Episode Summary

Jesus’ famous parable of the prodigal son is really the story of two lost brothers, one trapped in rebellion and one in self-righteousness, and a Father overflowing with holiness and grace. The message points to a third Brother—Jesus Himself—who leaves heaven’s glory to rescue us. We are called to follow His example: to leave our comfort zones, seek the lost, and bring them home to the Father.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Whether you’re studying on your own or with a group, each guide follows a simple yet powerful rhythm: **Look Back/ Look Up / Look Forward**. For group leaders, additional instructions for leading a small group are included at the end of the first workbook in each series.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. The father’s love reaches both rebellious and religious hearts. Where might you need to extend that kind of grace in your own family?
2. Cain asked, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Genesis 4). How does this question confront you when you think about friends or family far from God?
3. Jesus as the “third brother” crossed every barrier to rescue the lost. What personal comfort zones might He be calling you to leave behind?
4. How can we balance building strong faith communities (synagogues) while also engaging the secular world (Mars Hill)?
5. The parable ends without resolution. How might Jesus’ open ending challenge you to “finish the story” in your own life?

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?

KEY VERSE

Luke 15:28–32 (NIV) – “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, ‘Look! 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. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’” The father’s response reveals God’s heart: He pleads with the self-righteous to rejoice over redemption and to join the celebration of the lost being found.

SUPPORTING VERSE

Supporting Verses Luke 19:10 (NIV) – “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” A reminder to stay flexible and willing to adapt so that relationships—and the Gospel—can reach every generation.

2 Corinthians 5:18–20 “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation... We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” God the Father is empowering and speaking through us to bring lost sons and daughters home to Him.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Hebrews 2:11
Romans 10:14–16



Finally, **LOOK FORWARD** by asking, “What does Jesus want us to do?” Commit to simple, practical steps for living out this week’s lesson. Review the assignment, share commitments with the group, pray for one another, and step forward together with faith and hope.

THIS WEEK’S ASSIGNMENT

Identify one person in your life who may be in a “far country.” Commit to pray for them daily and reach out this week with a text, call, or visit to show Christ’s love and invite deeper conversation. Take time to reflect on any “older brother” attitudes in your own heart. Ask God to replace judgment with compassion and to send you—like the true Third Brother—toward those who need to come home.

PERSONAL GROWTH COMMITMENTS



- What has God laid on my heart?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading me to change?
- What will I do in my own life, in my relationships, and to reach next-gen loved ones?

SHARE WITH THE GROUP



Encourage sharing commitments, prayer needs, and real-life stories.
Close with prayer.

