

onechurch

bigIdea

As you read through the accounts of Jesus' life you can't escape this simple but often overlooked question, *Why would Jesus spend so much time with people who were clearly not God fearing to the neglect of the more religious?* As we explore Luke 15 to find the answer to this question, we'll uncover the driving force behind our church's past, present and future direction.



BIG IDEA: Repentance isn't an emotion of feeling bad.
Repentance is the motion of coming home.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is something of value that you lost? What were the emotions you felt when you realized you had lost it? How long did you look for it?
2. *Read Luke 15:1-2.* Jesus spent most of His time in the company of sinners and tax collectors—those who were relationally lost from their Heavenly Father. How often do you spend time with those who are disconnected from God? How could you spend more time around those who are lost?
3. As Chris said, "People who were nothing like Jesus liked Jesus." What could you do to make yourself more approachable to people who are different than you like Jesus did?
4. *Read Luke 15:25-32.* In the story of the prodigal son, in what ways do you relate to each of the brothers—the "sinful" one and the "self righteous" one. How do you view yourself through the eyes of the story?
5. How has your view of the term "sinner" changed over time?
6. Why do you think it's so difficult not to be legalistic at times? What do you think the root of that is in our lives?
7. The prodigal son ran because "he thought he knew better." What is a time in your life you've run because you thought deep down you knew better than God?
8. Is there a time that you've thought: There's a life that I want that God is trying to keep me from? What self-destructive place did that lead you to?
9. Try to think about an emotional void in your life you may be trying to fill with something other than God, even something that's not outwardly self destructive. For example, are you looking for more out of a relationship (inherently a good thing) than it can give? (with your spouse? boyfriend or girlfriend? parents? children?)
10. What's a time that you've "come running home" so to speak because you came to your senses like the prodigal son did?
11. Do you think that some of your frustration in life may be coming from trying to recreate the "home" that you've lost by trying to find satisfaction outside of God?
12. The prodigal son fears his father's rejection when he finally comes back. When do you tend to give into the lie that you could ever step out of God's grace and get afraid to come back to God?
13. How does it make you feel to be reminded that "you can't earn God's acceptance by serving Him"?
14. *Read Luke 19:10.* Should our focus be any different from Jesus' while He was on the earth? Should our church's focus be any different from Jesus' while He was on the earth? Why?
15. Who do you know that is disconnected from God? How will you engage them this year for the purpose of introducing them to their Heavenly Father?

FURTHER STUDY

1. Imagine yourself as the son when he tells his father he wants his inheritance now. What are you feeling? What motivates you to do this? How do you feel about your father? Are you experiencing any guilt? Why or why not?
2. Now imagine yourself when your money has run out, you are starving, and you decide to return to your father and ask to work for him as a hired hand. Describe your feelings. What do you expect your father to do now? How do you feel about yourself and what you have done? How do you feel about your father?
3. How does the progression and parallelism of these three stories of one lost sheep, one lost coin, and one lost child help you understand the love of God?
4. *Read 2 Corinthians 5:19.* Why is Christ's sacrifice for sin the solution in reconciling us to God? How do we accept this reconciling love in our daily lives?
5. Can you remember a time when you rebelled against God? How did you feel? What brought you back to him? How did you expect him to act when you returned?
6. Was there someone who was praying for you during that time, who wanted you to return to the Lord? How did you feel about that? How did it help you?
7. Describe a time when you have been the person who prayed for a rebellious son or daughter to return to the Lord. How did you help? What was the result?
8. Are there areas in your life today where you are rebellious in following God's will? What should you confess to God about this? What should you do next?

THINK ABOUT IT

This week, find some peace in knowing that you cannot run outside the boundaries of God's grace. Whether you're run from God in the past or you're running from him in some area right now, remember that as followers of Christ, we are people of the second chance. Think about an area you may be struggling with giving yourself or someone else a second chance. How can we pray for you?

Let's let the story of the prodigal son remind us that God is there to welcome us with open arms when we come back. So why wait?

MOVING FORWARD

The value of the thing determines the time we give to searching for it, the energy we give to searching for it, and the price we are willing to pay to retrieve it. How much does God value those who are disconnected from Him? How much do you value those who are disconnected from Him? How much time are you willing to spend? How much energy are you willing to invest? What is the price you will pay?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost. Luke 19:10