

What God is Really Like

WHAT GOD IS REALLY LIKE, GOOD FRIDAY NIGHT OF WORSHIP: KEZAZAH

Throughout the story of the Prodigal Son we tend to focus more on the sons than the father. This week we are going to take a long look at how the father in this story is a revolutionary representation of God not just to the culture Jesus was speaking directly to but also our culture.

BIG IDEA: Your relationship with God is never broken beyond repair.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Briefly describe your relationship with your father.
2. How would you compare your relationship with your father to your relationship to God?
3. Have you ever experienced unconditional love? Please describe.
4. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Luke 15:25-32.*


“A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now before you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, “Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.”’

Luke 15:12-20 (NLT)

5. Read the entire story and focus on the father’s thoughts and actions to get a picture of God’s character.

There is a Jewish custom that comes if a Jewish boy takes his inheritance and squanders his inheritance among the Gentiles—if he dared to try to return home, the entire community would gather upon his return. As a symbol of how destructive he had been, how he had broken his relationship with that community and his family, the entire community would gather together. When that boy tried to come home, they would take a pot as a symbol of his life. They would break it before him.

*This is a way of saying, “This is the brokenness that you have caused. You have broken everything that is good. You have broken trust. You have broken the heart of your father. Your damage is beyond repair. So this broken piece of pottery is a symbol of your brokenness you caused. Let these be the broken pieces of your broken life. You are not whole. You are not welcome. You are no longer family. You are cut off.” In fact, they called this ceremony the **kezazah**, which is Hebrew for **the cutting off**. The relationship can never be repaired.*



6. With your Bible or Bible App, read Isaiah 53:3-5.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.



Isaiah 53:3-5 (NLT)

7. Chris said, “Jesus literally became our *Kezazah*—becoming broken because of the brokenness we caused. Jesus was physically broken for the sorrows and sin we caused. What do we learn about God’s grace from the father in this story? What do we learn about God’s grace from Jesus the Son being broken for us?
8. How does God’s grace deal with sin?
9. In what ways is God’s grace a “free” gift? In what ways is it not “free”?
10. Read *John 14:23* and *Revelation 3:20*. In these passages how does Jesus communicate his invitation to a relationship with Jesus and the Father? What would it look like to have Jesus make his home in your heart? (*John 14:23* and *Revelation 3:20*).
11. Tell about a time when you have experienced forgiveness. Was it given freely?
12. How can you “come home” to God?
13. Is there something in your life right now for which you need to ask forgiveness? If so, pray to your Heavenly Father.

MOVING FORWARD

Think about the cross and how Jesus became broken and our *Kezazah*—how Jesus repaired our relationship with our Heavenly Father by becoming broken Himself. Take some time and experience **communion**.

The primary purpose of communion is to take time to remember all that the Lord did for us. It is a time to worship and give thanks for the forgiveness of our sins and the new life and relationship that we have in Jesus Christ. This time of remembrance was initiated by Jesus just before His death. Because we tend to be forgetful people, in the Old Testament, believers were called to remember the faithfulness of God through various memorials. In the New Testament, this is the way that Jesus wanted us to remember His love and forgiveness of our sins.

“For this is what the Lord himself said, and I pass it on to you just as I received it. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and you, sealed by the shedding of my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.” For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NLT

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:4-5 (NLT)

