



GUIDED BIBLE STUDY

Get the Father's Heart

Speaker: Wanda Gardner

Highlighted Scripture

- **Luke 15:1-10 (KJV)**

"Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Jesus first tells of a shepherd seeking one lost sheep and a woman searching for one lost coin. Both stories emphasize God's joy when the lost are found and prepare us to understand the father's welcome in the next parable.

- **Luke 15:11-32 (KJV)**

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

Jesus' parable shows two sons who are distant from the father's heart in different ways. The younger son returns from open rebellion and is received with compassion; the older son remains outside in anger and self-righteousness. The father goes out to each son, inviting both into restored relationship and joy.

- **John 3:16 (KJV)**

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, but whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Wanda closes by connecting the Father's welcoming heart with God's love for the world and the call to tell others about Jesus. God's gift of His Son reveals the depth of that love and gives believers a message of eternal life to share.

Discussion Questions

- Which son's struggle feels more familiar to you right now: wandering away openly or staying near while growing resentful and self-righteous? Why?
- What does the father's response to each son reveal about God's compassion and His desire for restored relationship?
- How can faithful service quietly become a scorecard that makes us feel entitled or superior to others?
- Is there someone whose repentance or return would be difficult for you to celebrate? What might be keeping you outside the celebration?
- What would it look like this week to share the Father's heart by welcoming, forgiving, or reaching toward someone who feels far from God?

Reflection Challenge

Ask God to show you where rebellion, bitterness, pride, resentment, judgment, or unforgiveness has kept you from sharing His heart. Receive His invitation to come home, and then extend that same welcome to someone else.

Ask yourself:

- Am I relating to God as a loved child, or only as a worker trying to prove my worth?
- Where have I been keeping a record of what I have done or what someone else has failed to do?
- Who might need to hear from me that God's mercy is still open to them?
- What would genuine celebration of another person's restoration require me to release?

Try this:

- Read Luke 15 slowly and notice every action taken by the shepherd, the woman, and the father toward what was lost.
- Confess one specific attitude or action that has kept your heart distant from the Father.
- Reach out to one person with a sincere word of welcome, forgiveness, encouragement, or invitation.
- Pray by name for someone who is far from God, asking for compassion and courage to share Jesus with them.

Remember

- The Father seeks the lost and rejoices when they are found.
- Open rebellion and hidden self-righteousness can both distance a heart from God.
- Serving near the Father is not the same as sharing the Father's heart.
- Repentance means coming to our senses and returning to the Father, trusting His mercy.
- God's grace should move us to welcome restoration rather than resent it.
- Get the Father's heart: love people, point them to Jesus, and celebrate when they come home.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for seeking us when we are lost and welcoming us with mercy when we return. Show me where rebellion, pride, bitterness, resentment, judgment, or unforgiveness has kept me from Your heart. Teach me to live as Your loved child instead of trying to earn what You freely give.

Give me compassion for people who are far from You and humility toward those who are finding their way home. Help me forgive, welcome, and celebrate restoration. Give me courage to tell others about Jesus and to reflect Your love in practical ways this week.

In Jesus' name, Amen.