

Connect Group Discussion Guide – 3/17/2024

Lost – The Lost Son

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvR0S5fB8AzraGYts4eQfg> (Posted on Monday)

Audio Only: On Spotify or Apple Podcasts: Connection Point Podcast

Highlights

- Week 1: God sees us.
- Week 2: We are valuable to God and He will never stop looking for you
- Why did Jesus teach in parables?
 - It connects us with the prophets; they sometimes taught that way. See 2 Samuel 12:1-4 and Isaiah 5
 - In this case it connects the Pharisees with the prophets. They would have understood the concept of using parables because the prophets did. Maybe they'll actually listen!
 - It's an invitation to meditate on the words of Jesus
 - Everyday Disciples take Jesus's invitation to stay curious about what the Kingdom of God may look like!
 - **What parable(s) have you meditated on that shows you Jesus and His Kingdom?**
 - Parables take our assumptions by surprise; maybe turn them upside down!
 - **Car conversation: What did you learn about Jesus that surprised you?**
 - Parables illustrate HOPE.
- **Luke 15:11-12** The 2 sons contrast each other
- **Luke 15:13-16** squandered = throwing to the wind and letting it blow away
 - The Pharisees would have seen the tax collectors and sinners as unclean. If the son was with the pigs, he would have been unclean.
 - Note that no one gave the son anything to eat. Jesus is pointing out to the Pharisees (and to us sometimes) how much disgust we have for other people; unclean people. (See verse 2 again!)
- **Luke 15:17-20** a "light bulb" or "aha" moment. Maybe it doesn't have to be this way.
 - He was honest with himself and rehearsed what he's going to say to his dad
 - He's homeless and broken but he has HOPE his father will respond.
 - **Talk about an "aha" moment you have had, or a time you've had to become honest with yourself and with God.**
 - The father saw – he was looking for him EVERYDAY, was filled – his son had value and was moved to keep looking, and ran – God wants to be near you and he wants you to be near Him.
- **Luke 15:21-24** The father doesn't even acknowledge the son's speech, he goes right to the celebration. God does the same thing for us!
 - The father doesn't correct the son's unworthiness; he is still his son. His father CHOSE to make him his son.
 - Jesus does that for us – when we are not worthy, Jesus says we are still His child.
- **Luke 15:23-24** dead → alive is the same as lost → found. Being lost, being separated from God is the same as death
 - **What do you think the Pharisees are thinking?** (disgust, I wouldn't have done it that way, the father is way off).. **What are YOU thinking?**
- **Luke 15:25-27** The older son is angry.
 - The father went out – again; he went after BOTH of them **Which son are you?**

- Jesus went after the Pharisees (the older son who has disgust for unclean people and doesn't really care if they're lost or found). He knew what they were thinking and pursued them (while trying to teach them) by telling them the story. **Jesus loved the Pharisees just as they are to run to them!!!**
- **Luke 15:28-30** The older son has an attitude
- **Luke 15:31-32** He's still the son. We don't know how the older son ultimately responds, but the father gives the invitation to celebrate
 - Don't wait to celebrate.
 - Relationships are messy, but we celebrate
 - If life isn't perfect, it's messy, you/we can still celebrate

Are you lost? Jesus sees you, He knows you, you are valuable and He won't stop looking for you.

**Jesus wants to be near you.
When you take 1 step in His directions, He will RUN to you.**