

ROCKPOINT

CHURCH

Week 1- “Finding Father”

In this series, we are going to dive deep into a story that Jesus told that is foundational to Christianity, and yet Christians often do not fully understand the depth of what Jesus was teaching. Jesus told this story because He lived in a world that is similar to ours, where people have all kinds of ideas of who God is, what salvation is, and what it means to be right with God. Jesus wanted to give us His perspective on those things through the story of the prodigal son.

1. Have you ever felt as if somehow you were not good enough to fit in Christian circles? What made you feel that way?
2. Have you ever thought that you were better than someone else because of the moral decisions you made compared to their lifestyle? If so, do you think that God sees the moral differences when He looks at both of you?
3. Describe to the group who you think God is and how you think He sees you.

Read Luke 15:1-3

4. Why do you think it frustrated the Pharisees so much that Jesus would want a connection with people who didn't live a moral lifestyle?
5. Jesus is showing that God stops at nothing in His pursuit of those who are disconnected from Him. What does this tell you about the heart of God? How have you personally experienced God's pursuit of you?

Read Luke 15:11-32 (*Consider asking your group members to read this before arriving to group.*)

6. In this story who do you most identify with? The prodigal son or the older brother? Why?
7. When Christians read the story of the prodigal son it is easy to focus on what the two sons *did* and miss that the story is really about what the Father did for them. Do you

wrestle with focusing on what you are doing or not doing to please God? Is it hard for you to rest in the truth that God is not a judge but a Father who loves you?

The title of this series is “Prodigal Father” because of 3 ideas:

- **Most Christians have lost their understanding of God as a loving Father.**
- **One of the primary influences in our personal understanding of God is our human father.**
- **The real definition of the word prodigal is “*having or giving something on a lavish scale.*” (New Oxford American Dictionary)**

8. Growing up what was your relationship with your father like? How has your relationship with your father shaped your perspective of God?

9. Discuss the truth that no matter what son in the story you identify with, God is a loving Father who is lavish, reckless, and generous in forgiveness, grace, and love.

10. Will you take the step this week to really ask yourself the question: “How do I see God?” Do you see Him as a distant deity, an angry judge, or demanding boss OR do you see Him as a recklessly, lavishly, generous Father who has invited you into a relationship with Him?

As we dive into this story over the next several weeks will you spend time reading this story as often as you can and ask God to help you understand Him more and ask Him to help you see yourself through His eyes?

Over the next few weeks we are going to discover in the story of the prodigal son that Jesus paints a picture of God that shows He is a lavish, reckless, and generous Father. As we discover God as a Prodigal Father we get to explore how He redefines sin, salvation, who we are, and how we relate to Him in a way that redefines our story. All we have to do is trust His love.