

Luke 15:11-32 Come Home...

11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

28 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

31 “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

COME TO THE PARTY (5 Sessions in Luke): Leader's Notes

Read & Discuss:

- Read the biblical story out loud.
- Give a few minutes of quiet for each person to read the story again on their own and note things that are interesting or confusing.
- Ask open-ended questions that keep the conversation focused on the biblical story.
 - **What do you notice about Jesus and how he interacts with people? What impresses you about him?**
 - **Which of the characters do you find most interesting? Why?**
 - **What do you find surprising or troubling?**
 - **What does the story communicate about God?**
- Let the scripture speak for itself and don't worry about coming to agreement or answering all your friends' questions.

Share & Invite:

- Share a story of how Jesus has been real to you. To prepare, ask the Holy Spirit to show you what part of your story your friend needs to hear. Consider for yourself:
 - **What character in the biblical story do you identify with? Why?**
 - **How has Jesus touched your life and brought healing?**
 - **How has Jesus answered your questions or resolved your doubts?**
 - **Do you relate to my story or to one of the characters in the passage?**
- Ask them to pick a need, struggle, or situation in their life that they can invite Jesus to interact with, e.g. **Is there a place in your life where you've worked hard, but haven't gotten the results you are hoping for? What would it be like to invite Jesus into that area?**
- **What do you think Jesus might want you to do?**

Pray & Watch:

- **I realize it might be new to you to talk to Jesus directly, but let's ask him to interact with your life as he did in the biblical story.** Give your friend the option to pray out loud or silently.
- Finish by praying out loud in a natural way for the areas shared.
- Trust God to get involved in your friend's life. Remember, Jesus is always seeking the lost.
- As you see God speaking to your friend, take a risk to invite them to become a follower of Jesus, e.g. **It looks like Jesus is pursuing you. Would you like to say yes to following him?**
- A great resource for new believers is launch.intervarsity.org.