

The Parable of the
Prodigal Son

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WARM-UP

- Do you like staying home or are you more of an on-the-go person? Tell us about your regular schedule.
- What was one of the best parties you've attended? What did you like about it?
- Did you ever get lost as a child? What happened?

WORD

“It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.” **LUKE 15:32**

(Read also **LUKE 15:11-31**.)

Jesus told this parable of the prodigal son. It's about a rebellious son who squandered his inheritance, and a loving, gracious father who threw a party when his son came back home. This parable shows the heart of God for the lost—His redemptive grace and mercy towards a sinner who repents and turns to Him. In this lesson, we will look at how the father in this parable responded, and how this is a reflection of our heavenly Father's generosity, patience, and forgiveness.

1 Generosity

“And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them.” **LUKE 15:12**

The younger son became impatient towards his portion of his father's inheritance. Instead of waiting for his father's death, he asked for his share of property. The father responded to his request and even divided it between the two sons. In Jewish culture, the younger son deserved only half of the older son's inheritance. But because of his generosity, the father gave the younger son more than what he deserved. The father was generous despite the son's inappropriate request and lack of thankfulness. This is a reflection of the generosity of our heavenly Father. He blesses even those who are ungrateful. What does the Bible say about the grace of God? (John 1:16)

2 Patience

"And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him." **LUKE 15:20**

The father was determined to see his lost son return. He saw his son *while he was still a long way off*, which meant that the father had been watching and waiting for his son to return home all along. When the father saw the son approaching, he ran to him and embraced him with open arms. God is also like this with His children. He waits patiently, with loving compassion, to restore us when we return to Him with humble hearts. What is the promise of God when we draw near to Him? (James 1:4)

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3 Forgiveness

²¹*"And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'*

²²*But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.'* And they began to celebrate." **LUKE 15:21-24**

The father's response to his son's confession is a beautiful picture of God's unconditional love for His children, His readiness to forgive, and the grace and mercy He extends toward those who do not deserve it, but repent and return to Him. The Bible says that there is *joy in heaven over one sinner who repents* (Luke 15:7) so this shows that God doesn't only forgive but even celebrates the return of His children. What is God's response when we confess our sins to Him? (1 John 1:9)

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APPLICATION

- How is God's mercy and grace evident in your life? How can you grow in your understanding and appreciation of it this week?
- Have you repented of your sins and received God's full forgiveness through Jesus Christ? Do you believe that He has forgiven you of all your sins, and that there's nothing you can do to earn His forgiveness?
- Meditate on the following Bible verses this week and record your observations and prayers in a journal: Psalm 13:5,6; Jeremiah 31:3; John 3:16.

PRAYER

- Thank God for His unconditional love and the free gift of salvation He offered to us through Jesus.
- Pray for an area of your life that needs restoration and forgiveness from God.
- Pray for two friends who need to hear about the love of God and for them to experience His grace and forgiveness. Pray for open doors to preach the gospel to them this week.



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