



## The Prodigal Son – Week Two

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

### Overview

Our second *ComeBack Story* of the series is based on a parable of Jesus. It is the account of the Prodigal Son, a story of rebellion, repentance, redemption, and restoration.

### Discussion Questions

When you hear a reference to the “prodigal son” what do you think of?

**Read Luke 15:11-32** for the entire parable account. In summary, the younger of two sons demands and receives his inheritance from his father. Upon traveling to a foreign country, the young man squanders all of his money on wild living. Faced with poverty and starvation, this young Jewish man takes work feeding pigs, so desperate that he longed to eat the pods he fed the swine. *Coming to his senses*, he returns to his father’s home genuinely humble and repentant. The father spots the wayward son from a distance and runs to meet him with open arms of love and forgiveness. Amidst a large celebration of the errant son’s return, the older son reveals a jealous heart, resentful of the father’s forgiveness toward the rebellious younger son. He mistakenly believes the father does not value him nor his years of devotion.

- Do you see yourself as any of the characters in this parable? Explain.
- What is most challenging for you about this parable?

### Three Truths from the Prodigal Son Parable

#### 1. **Prodigals come in all shapes and sizes.**

What seems like an obvious storyline becomes a deeper discovery of the hearts and motives of each character. Because neither sons understood the father’s love for them, they turned away from the father--the younger fleeing in rebellion and the older responding in prideful performance and *religious* commitment.

- Why do you think the younger son tries to work himself out of his dilemma instead of returning immediately to his father?
- Do you think the older brother is justified in his behavior? Why or why not?
- With which of the two sons do you most associate?

## 2. The Father's love is **vast and unconditional**.

The love of the father is evident throughout the entire parable. Likewise, our heavenly Father loves us immeasurably and extravagantly, longing to be in a restored relationship with us.

- Do you agree with the father's celebration of his son's return? Explain.
- When people come back to you after making a mistake, do you find it easy to extend grace? Can you describe a time when you extended grace? Can you describe a time when you withheld grace?
- Share when you experienced the Father's grace. How did you respond?

## 3. The key to the ComeBack is all in the **turn**.

Like the Prodigal Son, our *comeback* starts with humility and repentance. It begins when we come to our senses and realize we can't save ourselves. Our story *takes a turn* when we *make a turn* back to the Father.

- Describe a time in your own life when you "came to your senses." What circumstances brought you to this point?
- Do you feel this story has a happy ending? Explain.

## Life Challenge

What is the main point Jesus is speaking to you in this parable? How can you genuinely apply this to your life and what would be the result?

## Prayer

*God, You are a loving Father, patient, and kind to me. Lord, reveal any wrong motives in my heart that would lead to rebellion or religious performance. Help me to understand how You see me and my true identity as a beloved child. I am a co-heir with Christ Jesus, I have all the blessings of Abraham and the inheritance of eternal life. Pray for the specific needs of the group.*