



USE THESE QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PROCESS THE MESSAGE DURING YOUR STUDY TIME OR WITH YOUR GROUP.

Message Recap: Religion says: Obey God, now he can accept you. But the Gospel says: God accepts you, now you can obey him. Religion says: Seek God's acceptance through what you do for Him. The Gospel says: Receive God's acceptance through what Jesus did for you.

» Main Points

- Paper Tigers
- We ARE the Older Brother
- The antidote to the Paper Tiger of Religion is Grace

» Getting Started

- Paper Tigers: "Something or someone that claims or appears to be powerful or threatening but is actually ineffectual and unable to withstand challenge." What are some of the Paper Tigers you believe our world faces today?

» Observation

- Read and reflect on [Galatians 4:3-11 \(The Message Version\)](#); [Galatians 1:6-7](#); [2:15-16,19-21](#); [3:3](#); [4:22-26](#), [4:31-5:1](#); [Luke 15:20-32](#); [Matthew 12:34](#); [John 3:16](#)
- What are your initial reactions to these passages? What do you find challenging? Are you encouraged by any of these verses?

 reachout

- This week, think about the fact that for some people who you know, neighbors, co-workers, or family members, you might be the only "religious" person they know. Make sure this week and always you are living a good example to them as we try to become more and more like Jesus.

 growdeep

- How would you define religion? What are the differences between religion and following Jesus?
- Reread Luke 15:20-32. In what ways does the modern Christian resemble the older brother from the story?
- Look up the definition of grace. How would you describe grace in your own words?
- Who do you wish would show you grace? Who is most difficult for you to show grace to?

 partner with families

- Reflecting on God's grace as a family can bond you and help kids see parents as human, too. This week, try sharing some stories with your family of times you, as a parent, needed grace—maybe from God, maybe from a family member, friend, or co-worker. The gospel says God accepts you. How can you help make this truth a reality in your family this week?

» Next Steps and Prayer

- "Prodigal" does not mean "wayward" or "rebellious." It actually means: "spending money or using resources freely and recklessly; being **wastefully extravagant**; having or giving something on a **lavish scale**." How does this definition reframe how you think of God the Father? Reread John 3:16 through the lens of the Prodigal God.
- Close by inviting God to reveal to you the Paper Tigers of Religion that exist in your heart, and ask him to show you ways to extend grace to others as a remedy for "religious."