

## At the Movies, Week of August 31

### The Greatest Showman

Luke 15:11-32

#### Discussion Questions

1. In the parable, what is the younger son chasing? In *The Greatest Showman*, P.T. Barnum chases success and applause. What are some things people today chase, and how do those pursuits reveal what we truly treasure?
2. The younger son thought he'd find happiness "far away" from his father's house. Barnum thought he'd find fulfillment in fame and fortune. How and why do we sometimes believe satisfaction lies "out there" instead of in God?
3. In the film, Barnum sacrifices relationships for recognition, while the prodigal sacrifices his inheritance for independence. What are some modern "trades" people make in their pursuit of worth?
4. When Barnum loses everything, he finally realizes that family and love are what matter most. When the prodigal son is out of options, he decides to return home.. Why do you think it often takes hitting rock bottom before we see what's truly valuable?
5. The older brother in the parable resents the celebration, feeling overlooked. How does the father respond? How does comparison steal joy in our own spiritual lives?
6. Jesus says in Matthew 6:21, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." How does this verse help us evaluate what we're chasing—whether it's applause, comfort, control, or something else?
7. Both stories show that identity is not found in what we achieve, but in who loves and accepts us. How can remembering that we are God's beloved children reframe what we pursue in life?

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8. If Barnum were in the small group with us today, or if the prodigal son sat next to you, what encouragement would you give them about pursuing lasting treasure? And what do you sense God might be saying to you about your own pursuits?

### **Practical Applications - choose one to focus on this week:**

1. Do a Treasure Audit – This week, take 15 quiet minutes and ask yourself: Where am I spending most of my time, energy, and thoughts? Those things often reveal what we're really chasing. Bring that before God in prayer—asking Him to help align your heart with His treasures (love, grace, relationships, Kingdom impact).
2. Shift from Applause to Appreciation – Instead of chasing recognition or success, practice giving appreciation. Each day, intentionally affirm one person in your life with a word of gratitude or encouragement. It's a small but powerful way to value people over performance.
3. Return to your Father Daily – Just like the prodigal came home, make it a habit to “come home” to God each day—whether through prayer, worship, or Scripture. Even a short daily rhythm reminds us that our worth isn't in what we produce, but in being God's beloved child.