



Week 3: Redemption

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

There are four crucial components for a group to maintain its health: Word, prayer, relationships, and reaching out. In this guide, you will study the biblical passage in three steps: observation, interpretation, and application. As the group leader, you are free to use any part of this guide that can assist you in achieving this goal.

CONNECT

- Are you more of a rule follower or a rule breaker? Why? Do you ever resent people who lean the other way?
- Has someone ever shown you grace and forgiveness you didn't deserve? What was that like?
- What is one last summer activity you're trying to squeeze in before the seasons change?

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this series we've been looking at family through the lens of creation (God's good design for family), fall (the way sin breaks families apart), redemption (how Jesus can restore our families), and ultimately restoration (the great mission God has for families). As we focus this week on redemption, we're studying the story of the prodigal son. A better title might be "The Two Lost Sons," because this story isn't only about a rebellious younger brother who runs from home — it's just as much about an obedient older brother who never left, yet is just as far from his father's heart. Both sons want what the father has rather than the father himself, and both need to be found. Tonight we'll trace how the father's costly, run-to-you compassion meets each son in his lostness, and how that same extravagant love is what our own broken families need most — not just correction, but restoration through the surprising grace of Jesus Christ.

OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

Read: Luke 15:11-32

Discuss:

- Ask someone to recap the younger son's actions (v12-19). Explore the depths of his sin for a moment: What is he saying when he asks for his inheritance early? How is he spending the money he's given?
- What does each brother in this story want from their dad? Do you see any similarities between their requests?
- How does the father move towards each of his sons? Why is this surprising?
- Who is the audience of this parable (see Luke 15:1-2), and how does that shape your interpretation of the ending? What is the unspoken question Jesus is leaving with the Pharisees and Scribes?

APPLICATION

- What is your motivation for obeying God? Do you desire his stuff more than you desire him?
- If you are a parent, do you tend more towards teaching your kids the gospel or good behavior?
- You could summarize this story as having one unrighteous brother and one self-righteous brother. Which do you identify with more? In either case, what helps turn you around towards the love of the father?

PRAYER

- Praise God that he runs towards us in both our unrighteousness and our self-righteousness.
- Ask for forgiveness for the ways that you want God's stuff more than you want relationship with him.
- Pray that we might be a people who run towards the prodigal sons in our lives with the same grace that God has shown us.