



Leader's Guide - Estrangement: Finding Our Way Back to the Father

Psalm 68:5-6 | Dave Roberts | May 17, 2026

Session Overview

This session explores the pain of estrangement and the hope of reconciliation through the heart of God revealed in Psalm 68. Participants will reflect on how distance forms in relationships, how shame and isolation deepen separation, and how God actively moves toward the lonely and broken. The group will discuss practical steps toward healing, restoration, grace, and belonging within families and the church.

Session Flow (60-75 minutes)

1. Welcome and Icebreaker (10 min)

What is one relationship, friendship, or community connection that has deeply shaped your sense of belonging or identity?

Purpose:

To help participants reflect on the human need for belonging and the emotional impact of connection and separation.

2. Scripture Reading (5 min)

Read Psalm 68:5-6 and Luke 15:11-24 aloud.

3. Discussion (40-50 min)

Leader Coaching Sidebar: Navigating Estrangement and Grace

- Create a safe and compassionate environment for honest sharing.
- Recognize that estrangement can involve deep grief, trauma, addiction, or unresolved pain.
- Avoid forcing quick solutions or simplistic reconciliation advice.
- Emphasize God's grace, patience, and pursuit of people who feel far from Him.

1. Why do you think estrangement feels so painful and isolating?

Leader Note: Encourage participants to discuss the emotional and spiritual effects of separation.

2. What stood out to you about the description of God as a Father to the fatherless?

Leader Note: Emphasize God's heart toward those who feel abandoned or disconnected.

3. Why does shame often keep people from returning home or asking for help?

Leader Note: Highlight how shame feeds isolation and secrecy.

4. How does addiction or unresolved pain contribute to estrangement?

Leader Note: Create space for compassionate discussion without judgment.

5. What encourages you about the father's response in the story of the prodigal son?

Leader Note: Focus on grace, restoration, and God's pursuit of people.

6. Why is community such an important part of healing and reconciliation?

Leader Note: Discuss the church's role in welcoming and supporting people.

7. What does it mean that God leads prisoners out with singing?

Leader Note: Encourage reflection on freedom, joy, and restoration.

8. How can Christians create safer spaces for people returning from failure or addiction?

Leader Note: Push toward practical grace, empathy, and belonging.

9. Where do you personally need God's restoration or encouragement right now?

Leader Note: Allow room for vulnerability and prayer.

10. What is one practical step you can take this week toward reconciliation, healing, or connection?

Leader Note: End with practical application and hope.

4. Application and Prayer (10-15 min)

Invite each participant to identify one area of distance, isolation, or hurt where they need God's grace and healing. Ask: What is one intentional step you can take this week toward connection, honesty, or reconciliation?

Closing Prayer Suggestion

Lord, thank You for pursuing us even when we feel distant, broken, or ashamed. Remind us that we are never too far gone for Your grace. Heal wounded relationships, strengthen those carrying loneliness or grief, and help us become people who welcome others with compassion and hope. Lead us home to You and to one another. Amen.