

DISCUSSION NOTES

APRIL 21, 2019

Start by praying and asking for God's help as you seek to grow as authentic followers of Jesus.

GETTING STARTED

1. If you were in our gathering on Easter Sunday, what stood out to you about the Redemption Story video we shared? Why do you think it is so important to share our stories of grace with one another?

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

2. Read Luke 15:1-2. What is the context in which Jesus told the three parables in Luke 15 (what tension do we see in verses 1-2)? What is the big idea of the first two parables in verses 3-10?
3. Read Luke 15:11-32. Make 5-10 quick observations. Who do the three main characters represent? What happens? What is Jesus trying to say about the younger son? about the older son? What do we learn about God?
4. What does the Father's reception of the younger son tell us about God's love? If you were talking to a friend who lives like the younger son, what counsel would you offer him or her?
5. What does the Father's approach to the older son tell us about God's love? If you were talking to a friend who lives like the older son, what counsel would you offer to him or her?
6. Given the context of the story observed in Luke 15:1-2, what primary point do you think Jesus is trying to get across to his hearers? Who is the primary target of this lesson?

LIVING IT OUT

7. If you had to pick one, do you naturally tend to be more like the younger son (tending to resist tradition and constraints to seek self-fulfillment and freedom) or the older son (tending to maintain morality and appearances to seek self-improvement and performance)?

Or, have you been both brothers at different seasons in your life? If so, how?

8. The sin of the younger brother is obvious, but the sin of the older brother can be more difficult to identify. How is it possible to stay in close physical proximity to the Father but have a heart that is spiritually far away from the Father? Why is it so easy for Christians to become self-righteous and prideful?
9. Google "The Return of the Prodigal Son" painting by Rembrandt and study the image. As you look at the painting, what do you see in the Father?

Describe what it would feel like to be the son kneeling and experiencing the grace of the Father. Can you accept that you are worth receiving and embracing like this?

10. What is one way that you want to grow in your personal experience of God's grace this year?
11. Can you name one person (or more) whom you might be called to love as the Father loves you (waiting, unconditionally loving, forgiving, receiving, nurturing, etc.)?