



TLC Study Guide for March 31, 2019

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: God's forgiveness is absolutely amazing. We so often feel that it is conditional on our achievement or denial. But it is purely by God's grace that our heavenly Father runs to us in love and compassion to restore us to His family. The parable of the forgiving father (prodigal son) so vividly portrays the father's love for both his sons!

Getting Started:

1. How have you seen God at work this past week? Share your "God-sightings" from the past few days.
2. We all have times in our lives where getting to church is a struggle, or where we may stray from the Lord. Was there ever a time in your life when you were not regularly worshipping, or a season of life where you were not close to the Lord? What brought you back?

In the Word: Read Luke 15:1-3, 11-19

3. Jesus told the parable of the forgiving father for a reason. It was to counteract the attitude of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. What were they grumbling about in verse 2?
4. The younger son in the parable asked for his share of the inheritance from his father. When do people *usually* get such an inheritance, and what is implied by the son asking for this?
5. What did the younger son do with his inheritance? (v. 13)
6. When the younger son had reached such a pitiful state (remember that pigs are unclean animals to the Jews), he "came to his senses." What does he think he will do, according to verse 17-19? (Notice the absence of any notion of forgiveness. His real motivation for doing this is found in verse 17)

In the Word: Read Luke 15:20-32

7. A grown man running through a village would be a rather startling sight, and yet the father humiliates himself by running out to meet his son. What motivated him to do this? Vs. 20

8. Before the younger son can finish his speech and request to be made a servant, the father interrupts him by giving him restored status as a son. What are the symbols of that status? Vs. 22-24.

9. The older son who heard about the party for his prodigal brother was angry and refused to come in from the field. What does the father do for the older son that is similar to what he just did for the younger son? (vs. 28)

10. The older son thought that he had his status because of his achievements, faithfulness, and effort. But he speaks very harshly to his father in vs. 29-30. Why do you think the older son was so angry and upset at his father? Was this justified?

Pulling it all together

11. Do Christians today ever get the same complaints that Jesus did in verse 2? Why or why not?

12. How can we sometimes be like the younger son, and how does the story demonstrate God's attitude toward us?

13. How can we sometimes be like the older son, and have a wrong understanding of what makes us really God's children, and how does the story demonstrate God's attitude toward us?

Prayer: Thank the Lord for his compassion and the ways that He runs to us with grace and forgiveness. Ask the Lord to forgive our waywardness, when we are prodigals, and for our self-righteousness, when we are the arrogant older son. Ask God to give us a heart of compassion so that we, too, might eat with "sinners" and outcasts to share with them Jesus and the grace and mercy of our loving heavenly Father.

Lent! This **Wednesday (April 3)** is a great follow up to the Sunday sermon, as we look at prayers of forgiveness. Jesus forgave those who crucified him and showed us how to live out the prayer He taught us "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." **Worship at 7 p.m.**