



TLC Study Guide for November 10

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: The parable of the Prodigal Son is probably Jesus' most famous and most powerful parable. It is not just the story of a run-away and rebellious son, but is more about the forgiving father who runs to his son, embraces him, and restores him to the family. Both the younger son and the older son have a skewed understanding of their father's love, and need to understand what unconditional love is all about.

Getting Started:

1. How have you seen God at work lately? Share some of the God-sightings you have had from the past week or so.
2. When is the last time you ran – like a really fast, all out sprint?

In the Word: Read Luke 15:11-19

3. The younger son asks his father for his inheritance. When do you normally get an inheritance, and what is implied by this son's request?
4. How did the son do with his inheritance?
5. Why is a job feeding pigs truly 'rock bottom' for any Jewish person?
6. What motivates the son to return to his father? (see verse 17)
7. What does the son hope for when he returns to his father? (see verse 19)

In the Word: Read Luke 15:20-24

8. List the five verbs (action words) that the father does in verse 20.

9. The father ran to the son. This is a culturally significant thing. It was an act of humiliation, something that respectable Jewish elder men simply did not do. Why did the father do this? Why would he humiliate himself in front of his family and/or village and cause a scene like this?

10. Look at the speech prepared by the son in verse 18-19, and compare it with what the son actually says in verse 21. What do you notice?

11. The father is willing to go out all to restore his son to his position in the family. What are some of the things that the father calls for in verse 22-23?

Putting it All Together

12. Have you ever had a time where you hit 'rock bottom' or had a time where you wandered away from the Lord?

13. Some people place too much emphasis on the son's 'decision' to return to his father. How is the father's act of running and embracing his son a picture of God's undeserved grace?

14. Are we really dead and lost like the younger son when we wander from our father, as it says in verse 24? (see Ephesians 2:1-6)

15. God is still running after his children to embrace them and welcome them home. How do we (or can we) as the Christian Church today celebrate when people are restored to the family of God?

Prayer: Thank God for running to you and embracing you. Praise God for amazing grace and undeserved love. Pray for more prodigals to wander back and to be embraced by the father, and that we would have a heart filled with joy when we celebrate their restoration to the family.

Next Week: Rev. Helmut Paul, pastor in Wittenberg, South Africa, will be our guest preacher on the theme of God working through us. The South Africa team in June visited Pastor Paul's church in Wittenberg, and he is a seminary classmate of Pastor Wangelin.