



Prodigal Son: You're Invited | September 14, 2016

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

People who are far from God are not looking to come home to a God who wants penance. Thankfully, we get the opportunity to paint an accurate picture of a loving, relational God.

Key Verse

Luke 15:31-32 (MSG)

His father said, "Son, you don't understand. You're with me all the time, and everything that is mine is yours— but this is a wonderful time, and we had to celebrate. This brother of yours was dead, and he's alive! He was lost, and he's found!"

Discussion

Whether we want to admit it or not, we like to be right. When we make up our mind on something, we do just about everything to protect that idea even if the idea is not the ultimate outcome we want. If someone wrongs us, we get upset, but we gain control. If that same person apologizes or changes their behavior, we lost control, and get more upset than we were originally.

1. Share a time when someone has wronged you (simple or significant). Talk about how you felt.
2. Have you ever had someone apologize to you and it made you upset? Why?

The Prodigal Son story has 3 main characters. We often forget about the older son, but there are many times in our lives where we behave as if we were him. We get upset when someone else gets something we want, gets something they don't deserve, or when we go unnoticed or uncelebrated.

3. Describe a time when you have felt like the older brother in a life situation?
4. How might God want you to respond/behave in the same situation?

In Luke 15:31-32, the father tells the older son that he is equally as favored. Prior to the older brother sulking, he was the example to the younger brother. It seems as if the role of the older brother is to be an example. God not only wants us to be excited about those far from God coming home, he wants us to be part of the welcoming and party planning committee.

5. Think about the people you know who are furthest from God. Would you be excited if they came home?
6. What are you doing to paint an accurate picture of a grace filled God with people who act like the Prodigal Son?

What's Next?

This week look for two things in your own life: 1. In what ways are you behaving like the older brother from the Prodigal Son story? 2. In what ways do you need to change your attitude and behavior to be able to paint a more accurate picture of how God would treat others who are far from Him? Remember, people far from God are not coming home to a God who wants payment for their wrongdoings. At God's party there is more than one honored guest: the ones who come home and the ones who welcome them home!