



October 12-13, 2019

“The Parodical Son” – Part 1

Luke 15:1-3; 11-24

Home Group discussion questions are written by Pastor Art Hunt.
Contact him at art@lighthousehome.org.

Connect: Of the two extremes—wanting to escape God’s boundaries or trying hard to earn God’s love with good behavior—what, in your immature moments through life, has been your tendency? Explain.

1. Read Luke 15:1-3—the context

- There were two groups that Jesus might have been speaking to: 1) conspicuous sinners and 2) the scribes and Pharisees. To which of these two groups do you think Jesus was primarily speaking to and why?
- What might Jesus have wanted to communicate to both of these two groups?
- Do you observe a third or fourth group in America today? If so, tell the group what you have observed.

2. Read Luke 15:11-20a—the parable.

- This part of the parable describes the actions of the younger son. He requested an unusual thing. Normally a younger son would have received 1/3 of a father’s estate and the older, 2/3’s; however, not until the father had died; or perhaps, the father became incapacitated. The younger son’s request was audacious in every way!
 - Paraphrase the son’s request with the emotional tone that you think is depicted in the parable.
 - What would such a request have communicated to the father?
 - In fact, what do most “prodigals” (including each of us) communicate when we say “no” to God’s love?
- What truth might the Father’s acquiescence to the prodigal’s request communicate to the reader of this parable?
- Paraphrase the son’s inner conversation that leads him to repentance. How do his experiences bring him to self-awareness? What part does the character of the Father play in it all?
- Why is it that pain and difficulty seem to draw people to God just as much as realizing His amazing love for them? When the Spirit was drawing you to faith, which did He use: an awareness of your limitations, or an understanding His love?
- How does this truth help you when friends and family do not respond to the gospel?

3. **Read Luke 15:20b-24—the parable continued**

- What qualities of God our Father does this passage demonstrate? Identify as many as you can and talk about each of those qualities. (Be sure an read this passage slowly as you look for these qualities.)
- Discuss which of these character qualities currently impact your heart the most, at this point in your journey with Jesus.
- How does this section of the parable provide hope for friends and family who have not yet repented?

4. What is **the big picture truth** . . .the central truth. . .of this portion of “The Parodical Son” (Luke 15:11-24)? Discuss this as a group and come up with a one sentence statement that reflects the big-picture truth of these verses.

- (If you need help, go to the instructions on the next page to help you arrive at the central truth of the passage. Work as a group to develop this big picture truth.
- How has this truth touched your life practically in the years you have been following Jesus? How has it humbled you? Encouraged you? Motivated you?

Forming the Central Truth of a Passage

To form the big-picture or central truth of a bible passage, study the passage and ask, “**What is the largest question the biblical author is addressing, and what answer is he giving to that question?**” The question should begin with *who, what, when, where, why, how* so that it cannot be answered by “yes,” or “no.”

Take-Home Truth

1. What is the largest question the biblical author is addressing?

2. What answer is the passage giving to that question?

- The largest question being handled in Luke 15:11-24 might be: “Who does God welcome into His family?”
- The answer might be: “All who genuinely repent and seek forgiveness, establishing or restoring his or her relationship with God.
- It all becomes the take-home truth by 1) turning the question into an incomplete sentence, and 2) putting together the question and answer.

So then the take home truth of Luke 15:11-24 might be something like: God welcomes everyone into His family who repents of his sins and seeks the Father’s forgiveness, resulting in an ongoing relationship with Him. This take-home truth is a little awkward. But, the longer you work on a Take-Home Truth, the more accurate and articulate it becomes!

**Notes to Home Group Leaders
(Do Not Include in Group Notes)**

Remember, you can use these questions as is; or you can create your own discussion questions, taking from this document as a like. Remember too, that you do not have to go through every question! That is, if you have 30 minutes for the group discussion, keep track of the time, and use the questions as best you can!

On question 2, your group might have one or two answers. It's certainly true that Jesus appears to be talking most prominently to the scribes and Pharisees, but there is a case to be made that His message is just as strong to the sinners in the crowd, (and indeed sinners in every era). As you lead the discussion, allow for both points of view.

The **big-picture truth** mentioned in question 5 is arrived at by asking two questions. (See hand-out above) This might be difficult for you and your home group, so I have provided a take-home truth. But I would always prefer that a group work together in discussion and come to the central truth. The instructions on the next page will help any individual or group discern the central truth of a passage.