



Journey into the Father's Heart: Exploring the Prodigal Son



Seven-day study on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, revealing God's boundless love, forgiveness, and restoration.

Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Day 1: 📖 The Request and Departure</u>	4
<u>Day 2: 🌍 Life in a Far Country</u>	10
<u>Day 3: 😞 The Moment of Repentance</u>	16
<u>Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome</u>	22
<u>Day 5: 🔔 The Restoration of Sonship</u>	28
<u>Day 6: ⚖️ The Older Son's Struggle</u>	34
<u>Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House</u>	40



Introduction

The parable of the Prodigal Son, found in **Luke 15:11–32**, is one of the most profound stories Jesus told to illustrate the nature of God's love. This story reveals a Father's heart that overflows with mercy, patience, and grace, showing us the depth of forgiveness available to all who return to Him. *It speaks across time and culture* to anyone who has ever felt lost or undeserving, offering hope and restoration.

Each day in this study plan, we will delve into different aspects of the parable: the younger son's journey, the older son's perspective, and most importantly, the Father's response. Through Scripture and deep reflection, you'll uncover the layers of meaning and the powerful message of redemption this story carries.

As you engage with this study, consider how God's love is not limited by our mistakes and how His forgiveness invites us into renewal. This journey will encourage you to experience God's transformative love personally and to extend it generously to others.

Join us as we journey into the Father's heart, exploring the grace that welcomes us home, the forgiveness that restores us, and the love that never fails.





Day 1: The Request and Departure



Day 1:  The Request and Departure

Your Verse

Luke 15:11 – “There was a man who had two sons.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 103:8 – “The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.”*
- *Romans 3:23 – “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*



Devotional: Beginning the Journey Away from the Father

The story begins with the younger son's shocking request to take his inheritance early and leave home. This decision symbolizes a deliberate turning away from the security of the Father's provision and love. Many of us have experienced moments where we choose independence over dependence on God, not realizing how costly that choice can be.

However, God's character, as revealed in Scripture like Psalm 103:8, reminds us that He remains full of compassion and love, even when we stray. Romans 3:23 teaches that we all fall short and need God's mercy. This first step, the son's departure, invites us to reflect on our own choices and how we might be longing for freedom but also vulnerable without God's guidance.

Reflect on where you are in your journey—are you close to the Father, or have you taken steps away from Him? Remember, God's love is the steady foundation no matter what.



Reflect and Apply

1. What are the 'inheritances' or freedoms I crave that lead me away from God's protection?

2. How do I perceive God's response to my mistakes or rebellious choices?

3. In what ways can I recognize the steady love of God even when I feel distant?



Day 1:  The Request and Departure

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time you chose your own path over God's.


2. Describe what God's compassion means to you personally.

3. Reflect on how God's grace has been evident in your life despite shortcomings.



Day 1:  The Request and Departure

Prayer for Today

Father, thank You for Your unfailing love that never depends on my perfection. Help me to see the ways I turn away and remind me that Your arms are always open. Teach me to lean on Your grace and to trust in Your timing as I grow closer to You. *Thank You for being patient and compassionate.* May I experience Your forgiveness deeply today. **Amen.** 





Day 2: Life in a Far Country



Day 2: 🌍 Life in a Far Country

Your Verse

Luke 15:13 – “After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Proverbs 14:12 – “There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end, it leads to death.”*
- *Jeremiah 2:13 – “My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water...”*



Devotional: The Emptiness of Life Apart from God

Once the younger son leaves, he squanders his wealth on reckless living and soon finds himself destitute during a famine. This 'far country' represents the condition of separation from God — a life marked by spiritual emptiness and brokenness despite the temporary pleasures.

Proverbs 14:12

Consider your own journey and the ways you might have experienced emptiness despite pursuing certain desires. The good news is that in the darkest moments, God's love is still drawing us home.



Reflect and Apply

1. Where have I experienced emptiness despite seeking satisfaction elsewhere?

2. What 'far country' experiences have shown me my need for God's restoration?

3. How does recognizing the emptiness of sinful choices lead me back to God?



Journaling Prompts

1. Describe a season when you felt spiritually or emotionally empty.

2. Write about what drew you away from God during difficult times.

3. Express your hopes for restoration as you turn back to Him.



Day 2: 🌍 Life in a Far Country

Prayer for Today

Lord, I confess that my own choices sometimes lead me away from Your best. In moments of emptiness and need, remind me that You are my true source of life and hope. Draw me close when I feel far and teach me to rely fully on You. Help me to surrender my desires and find satisfaction in Your love. *Thank You for never giving up on me. Amen.* 🙏💧❤️





Day 3: 🤔 The Moment of Repentance



Day 3: 🙏 The Moment of Repentance

Your Verse

Luke 15:17 – “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare ... and here I am starving to death!’”

Supporting Scriptures

- *2 Chronicles 7:14 – “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray... then I will hear from heaven.”*
- *Psalms 51:17 – “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.”*



Day 3: 😞 The Moment of Repentance

Devotional: Turning Back with a Humble Heart

The turning point in the parable is when the younger son 'comes to his senses'—a moment of repentance filled with humility and recognition of his need for the Father. This awakening is essential and mirrors what God desires from us: a sincere acknowledgment of our failings and a heart ready to return.

2 Chronicles 7:14 offers a promise that when we humble ourselves, God listens and acts. Psalm 51:17 reassures us that a broken and contrite heart is precious to God. Repentance is not about shame, but about restoration and renewal. This moment teaches us that no matter how far we have gone, God welcomes us when we choose to come back.

Reflect on your own moments of realization and repentance. How did God meet you there and begin your healing process?



Day 3: 😞 The Moment of Repentance

Reflect and Apply

1. What does 'coming to my senses' look like in my spiritual life?

2. How do I respond to God's call to repent and return?

3. In what ways does humility open the door for God's restoration?



Day 3: 😞 The Moment of Repentance

Journaling Prompts

1. Recall a time when you turned back to God after realizing you were lost.

2. Write about what repentance means to you personally.

3. Describe the feelings and changes that accompanied your return to God.



Day 3: 🙄 The Moment of Repentance

Prayer for Today

Gracious God, thank You for moments of clarity that draw me back to You. Help me to remain humble and open to Your transforming work in my heart. I want to live with a contrite spirit that pleases You. Restore me fully, Lord, and guide me on the path of righteousness. *Your forgiveness brings new life.*

Amen. 🙏🌟🕊️





Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome



Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome

Your Verse

Luke 15:20 – “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Isaiah 54:7 – ‘For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back.’*
- *Psalms 145:8 – “The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.”*



Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome

Devotional: The Father's Embrace of Grace

One of the most tender moments in this parable is the Father's response. Despite the son's mistakes, the Father runs to meet him before he even asks for forgiveness. This speaks powerfully about God's eagerness to restore us, not waiting for us to prove worthy, but welcoming us with open arms.

Isaiah 54:7 reassures us that God's compassion is steadfast, even after times of distance or failure. Psalm 145:8 reminds us of God's rich love that is patient and slow to anger. The Father's embrace in the parable shows us a love that is unconditional and full of mercy.

Reflect on the Father's eagerness to forgive and restore. How does this change your view of God's character and your relationship with Him? God desires to embrace you right where you are.



Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome

Reflect and Apply

1. How does the Father's reaction challenge my understanding of God's forgiveness?

2. Have I experienced God's compassion in ways similar to the father's welcome?

3. How can I show this kind of grace and compassion to others?



Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time you felt unconditionally loved by God.

2. Describe what it means to be welcomed 'while still a long way off.'

3. Reflect on ways to extend grace to someone in your life.



Day 4: ❤️ The Father's Compassionate Welcome

Prayer for Today

Dear Father, thank You for chasing after me with compassion and love. Your grace overwhelms me, and Your embrace restores my soul. Help me to accept Your forgiveness fully and to live in the freedom it brings. Teach me to reflect Your mercy in my relationships. *Thank You for loving me unconditionally.*

Amen. 💖 😊 ✨





Day 5: 🛎 The Restoration of Sonship



Your Verse

Luke 15:22 - "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him.'"

Supporting Scriptures

- *2 Corinthians 5:17 - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come."*
- *Galatians 3:26 - "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith."*



Day 5: 🛎 The Restoration of Sonship

Devotional: Clothed in Love and Renewed Identity

The Father not only welcomes his son back but restores him fully—clothing him with the best robe, putting a ring on his finger, and giving him sandals. These symbols speak of honor, acceptance, and reinstatement into the family with dignity and love.

In the same way, when we come to Christ, we are made new (2 Corinthians 5:17) and adopted as God's children (Galatians 3:26). Our past mistakes do not define us; God clothes us with righteousness and restores our identity as treasured sons and daughters.

Take time today to embrace your identity in Christ. Consider how God's restoration affects your self-worth and purpose.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does being fully restored by God mean for my identity?

2. How do the Father's gestures in the parable reflect God's kindness towards me?

3. Am I living in the freedom and honor God has given me through restoration?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about what it means to be a child of God through faith.

2. Describe how God's restoration has changed your view of yourself.

3. Reflect on ways to walk confidently in your God-given identity.



Day 5: 🔔 The Restoration of Sonship

Prayer for Today

God of restoration, thank You for clothing me with Your righteousness and calling me Your child. Help me to live fully in this new identity, letting go of shame and embracing Your honor. Teach me to walk confidently in the purpose You have for me. *Restore my soul and renew my spirit daily. Amen.*





Day 6: The Older Son's Struggle



Day 6: 📖 The Older Son's Struggle

Your Verse

Luke 15:28 - "But the older son became angry and refused to go in."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 5:44 - "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*
- *Philippians 2:3 - "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."*



Day 6: 🏠 The Older Son's Struggle

Devotional: Overcoming Resentment Through Grace

While the younger son's story is prominent, the older son's reaction introduces another important lesson. He becomes angry and refuses to celebrate his brother's return, revealing a heart struggling with resentment, pride, and misunderstanding of the Father's grace.

Jesus presents this to challenge us to examine our own attitudes towards forgiveness and generosity. Matthew 5:44 calls us to love even those who hurt us, and Philippians 2:3 encourages humility and valuing others above ourselves.

God's grace is indiscriminate, and the older son's struggle invites us to reconcile with any bitterness we carry and to embrace joy over restoration, whether for ourselves or others.



Day 6: 🏰 The Older Son's Struggle

Reflect and Apply

1. Do I struggle to celebrate the restoration of others? Why?

2. How can I cultivate a humble and loving heart toward those I find difficult to forgive?

3. What does true grace mean when it feels unfair?



Day 6: 🏠 The Older Son's Struggle

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time you felt resentment or jealousy over someone else's blessing.

2. Reflect on ways to practice humility and love in challenging situations.

3. Commit to forgiving or releasing bitterness towards someone in your life.



Day 6: 🏰 The Older Son's Struggle

Prayer for Today

Lord, search my heart and reveal any anger or pride that blocks my compassion. Teach me to celebrate Your mercy in others and to love as You love — freely and generously. Help me to walk in humility and to reflect Your grace in all my relationships. *Transform my heart to mirror Yours.* **Amen.** ❤️





Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House



Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House

Your Verse

Luke 15:31 – “My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 15:15 – “I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”*
- *Romans 8:15 – “You received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’”*



Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House

Devotional: Embracing Our Place in God's Family

The parable closes with the Father reminding the older son—and us—that a relationship with God is about presence and belonging. The reminder that "everything I have is yours" points to the intimate fellowship and abundant inheritance we enjoy as God's children.

Jesus calls us friends (John 15:15) and invites us to relate to God intimately as 'Abba, Father' (Romans 8:15). Living in the Father's house means embracing a life of love, acceptance, and purpose. It calls us beyond rules or comparisons into the heart of God's family.

As this study concludes, reflect on your place in God's family. How can you grow deeper in this relationship and live fully in His love and freedom?



Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House

Reflect and Apply

1. What does it mean to be constantly present 'with the Father'?

2. How do I experience God's friendship and sonship in daily life?

3. In what ways can I cultivate a deeper relationship with God as my Father?



Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about your feelings of belonging in God's family.

2. Describe how calling God 'Abba, Father' changes your relationship with Him.

3. List practical ways to grow closer to God each day.



Day 7: ✨ Living in the Father's House

Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, thank You for welcoming me into Your family as a beloved child. Help me to live each day aware of Your presence and inheritance. Teach me to enjoy our intimate relationship and to share Your love with others. May I continually grow in trust and friendship with You. *You are my true home.*

Amen. 🏠 ❤️ 🌿





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