



Reflection—Discussion—Prayer

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." Acts 2:42

MESSAGE: The Lost Sons

Date: 8/31/2025

SERIES: The Parables of Jesus

COMMUNICATOR: Pastor Caleb Vander Greind

CHECK-IN & SHARE WINS: What was one highlight from your week? Where have you seen Jesus at work—in your life or in the world around you? *Celebrating wins helps fuel God's mission and inspire others to join in.*

THINK, DISCUSS, LIVE: These questions are great for personal reflection, group discussion, or both. They're meant to help you grow in your faith, deepen your connection with your Jesus friends, and live it out in the world around you.

1. Someone just gave you a suitcase full of money and said, 'Go travel to a far country!' Where's your first stop—and what ridiculous souvenir are you definitely bringing back?
2. When you used to hear the story of the Prodigal Son, what part stood out to you the most—and why? Looking back, do you think you may have misunderstood or overlooked something in the Prodigal Son story before this message? Please explain.
3. In Luke 15:11–32, Jesus speaks to both sinners and religious leaders. How do the characters in the parable reflect His audience? Is there someone not physically present in the story who still shapes its meaning?
4. From the younger son (Luke 15:11–19), what lessons stand out to you? How does Romans 12:2 describe the transformation he went through, and how might that shape your own focus moving forward?
5. Share about a time you drifted—from God or an important relationship. What caused the distance, and what helped you return? If you're still there, what steps could move you toward healing?
6. In Luke 15:25–30, what stands out about the older brother's mindset toward his father and brother? When have you felt like him—serving faithfully yet feeling unseen? What thoughts or feelings surfaced (comparison, entitlement, resentment, etc.)?
7. Now consider the father. How would you describe his character? What details in the story shape your description? (Luke 15:20–24; 28b, 31–32). Do you think he responded rightly to both sons? Why or why not?
8. Of the three characters in this parable—the younger son, the older brother, or the father—which do you most identify with, and why? What's one key insight you can take away from each of them?
9. How does this story reveal where you are with God today? How do you believe the Father sees and responds to you—and is that shaped more by Scripture or by your own self-perception? As you reflect, read Ephesians 1 for a clearer picture of how God truly sees you.
10. Who in your life reminds you of the prodigal—drifting from God? Who seems more like the older brother—proud or entitled in their faith? How could you gently point them to



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the Father's love with compassion, grace, and forgiveness? What's one first step you can take toward them? (See Galatians 6:1–2)

TAKING NEW GROUND! This week, take new ground by dwelling on Exodus 34:6–7a and how God describes Himself. Meditate on His compassion, mercy, patience, faithfulness, and truth. Which of these do you reflect well, and which invite you to grow so you can reflect Jesus more fully? Share Your thoughts with a Jesus friend and partner in prayer.

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL: Update where you are in the Canvas Circle, Jesus Friends Circle, and Lost Friends Circle. In what specific ways are you becoming more like Jesus, showing His love, and moving closer to the center of the diagram?

STRUGGLING TO READ YOUR BIBLE? We've put together a Bible reading plan to help you read through the entire New Testament in one year. Just one chapter a day, five days a week—plus a short bonus passage to reflect on. You can find it on the **Canvas Church app**—just tap "*Bible Reading Plan*." Prefer to listen? That's an option too! Join us on this life-changing journey with Jesus.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP PRAYER OPTIONS:

1. **Time to Pray:** What's one thing to celebrate and thank God for—and one thing to bring to Him in prayer?
2. **Praise Sentences:** Take a moment to thank God in short sentence prayers—for who He is, what He's done this week, and for people in your group. Let several people pray, even more than once. Then, pray for any needs shared, and close by thanking God for hearing you.
3. **Prayer Clusters:** Meet in groups of two or three (same gender) to share praises and prayer requests. Pray together and for one another during the week. Let those in your group know you prayed—send a quick text of encouragement.

WORDS THAT IGNITE: Find a quiet place and focus on this truth: "**I was lost, and now I am found.**" Let your mind linger on your life in lostness—your thoughts, words, and actions. Then turn your focus to your life in Christ—how He has reshaped your thoughts, words, and actions. Write down what you notice. Let this time guide you in heartfelt repentance, worship, and gratitude for the new life He has given you. Share what you've discovered with a trusted Jesus friend. Let this experience become a starting point for sharing your Jesus story with a lost friend.