



The Father's Heart for Prodigals

March 29, 2026

Luke 15:11-32

Main Point

God's heart toward prodigals is one of compassion, forgiveness, and joyful restoration. He calls His people to reflect that same heart.

Part 1: Master Teacher (10 Minutes)

Introduction

Why do you think stories of forgiveness and restoration can be both comforting and challenging at the same time?

The parable of the prodigal son shows God's overwhelming grace for those who wander and His invitation to return.

Biblical Teaching

1. The Younger Son's Rebellion (v. 11-16)
 - He rejects his father.
 - He wastes his inheritance.
 - Sin leads to brokenness.
2. The Father's Compassionate Welcome (v. 17-24)
 - The father runs to his son.
 - He restores him fully.
 - Grace transforms shame.
3. The Older Son's Resistant Heart (v. 25-32)
 - He resents grace.
 - He misses the father's heart.
 - Self-righteousness blinds him from joy.

Takeaway

- God celebrates the return of prodigals. His people must share His heart of grace and restoration.

Part 2: Group Discussion (25 minutes)

Facilitator Guidance

- This story is personal for many. Lead with grace and sensitivity.

Discussion Questions

1. Understanding God's Heart

- What does this parable reveal about God's heart?
- Where do you see yourself in the story?
- How does God's compassion impact your view of Him?

2. Responding to Prodigals

- What makes it difficult to welcome prodigals?
- How can you show grace to someone who has wandered?
- What barriers do you need God's help to remove?

3. Letting Go of Self Righteousness

- When are you tempted to act like the older brother?
- How does self-righteousness damage relationships?
- How can you cultivate humility and grace?

4. Celebrating Restoration

- Why is celebration important in spiritual renewal?
- Who can you encourage or support in their return to God?
- How can you cultivate a heart that rejoices like the father?

Next Steps & Call to Action (5 minutes)

Facilitator Closing Thought:

God runs toward prodigals with joy. His people are called to reflect the same grace and love.

Action Step:

Reach out to someone who has drifted spiritually and offer encouragement this week.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for prodigals to return to God.
- Pray for a compassionate heart.
- Pray for restoration and healing.