

MD KIDS CURRICULUM: LUKE

Week 17: Prodigal Brothers (from Luke 15:11-32)

To the Teacher:

This week's story is famously known as the 'Prodigal Son'. However, Jesus' story has two sons in it; the older and younger brother. Jesus is speaking to two audiences; the very religious and the sinner. There are lessons in this story for both brothers, but the story is primarily about the father and his love for his children.

- **Big Idea:** God wants to welcome us into His Kingdom as His children, but those who run away from Him and those who try to earn their way into His Kingdom are both lost and need God's grace.
- **Question:** If you won \$1 million in the lottery, what would you spend it on? Do you think winning a bunch of money would make you more happy or less happy?
- **Starter:** Here are a couple cartoon videos you could show...
 - <https://youtu.be/DJgROx4wFKM>
 - <https://vimeo.com/kidsclub/godsstoryprodigalson>
- **Story:** from Luke 15:11-32
[READ]

Now Jesus was eating a meal and people started gathering around him so they could hear him speak. There were tax collectors and sinners there, and there were also Pharisees, or the teachers of the law. The Pharisees despised the tax collectors and sinners and they were upset that Jesus was sharing a meal with people they thought were dirty, unclean, and rejected by God.

Jesus told them all a story. It went like this...

There was this dad who had two sons. They were brothers. One day the younger brother went to his dad and asked his dad to give him all of the money he was supposed to get when his father died. This was not normal. The younger brother was so selfish that he was basically telling his dad he wished he was dead so he could have his money. The dad agreed to give him all of the money!

The son took the money and left. He travelled all over and bought whatever he wanted. He was living great. Then a famine hit the land so there wasn't enough food for everyone and the price of everything went up. The son ran out of money pretty fast. He had to get a job. He got hired to feed pigs, which was the the worst job he could have gotten because pigs were seen as the worst and dirtiest animal. The son was so hungry he wanted to eat the pig food! He thought to himself, "I am not worthy to go back home to my dad since I took his money and left. He is probably really mad and won't let me be his son anymore. But, maybe if I ask to be one of his servants, he will let me work for him. My dad's servants have more than I do right now." So he set off for home.

As he was walking home, his dad saw him from far away and started running toward him. The son probably thought he was going to be in big trouble and his dad would start yelling at him. When his dad got close, he threw his arms around him and gave him the biggest hug! The son told his dad, "Dad, I sinned against you and heaven. I am not worthy to even be called your son anymore..."

Before he could finish his dad said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on my son. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and now he has been found." So they began to celebrate.

Now the older brother was coming home from working in the fields and heard singing and dancing and saw there was a party going on. He asked one of the servants, "Hey, what is going on?" The servant said, "Your younger brother came back home. Your father is throwing a party to celebrate." When the older brother heard this he got super mad! When his dad came out to see him the older brother said, "What is going on? I have always obeyed you and have done what you said. I have been a perfect son, but you have never thrown me a party or celebrated over me. But, your younger son wasted your money on worthless things and you throw him a party? What is up with that?" The dad told him, "Son, you are always with me and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because your brother was dead and is alive again, he was lost but now has been found."

[Things to Point Out]

- Jesus was communicating two things to two different groups listening to his story:

- ▶ To the Pharisees, he pointed them to the older brother. They thought they could earn God's acceptance through following all the rules and that they deserved God's favor for being good. They thought they were better than others who didn't follow rules as well as them. Jesus wanted them to see that God loves them too as a Father and rejoices when people repent and turn back to Him. He wanted the Pharisees to love sinners the way God does.
- ▶ To the sinners and tax collectors, he pointed them to the way the father welcomed and rejoiced over the younger brother coming home. No matter how far they have run from Him, God is a loving Father waiting for them to come back home... but they must turn away from their wrong way of living and come to Him.
- The ring the other put on his son signified him being part of the family again. The ring would have had the father's symbol on it which was used to seal letters. The son having that symbol to seal letters meant he had the authority of his father.
- There was still a sacrifice needed for the younger brother. The fattened calf was killed in order to have the feast. Jesus has become our sacrifice in order to bring us into the feast of God's Kingdom!

• **Prayer:**

Father, thank You for being a loving Father who deeply loves His children and desires for all people to join Your family. Help us to not see ourselves as better than anyone else, but to understand that we need Your love and forgiveness as much as everyone. Help us to say we are sorry when we disobey. Help us to love others in a way that they would want to follow Jesus too.

• **Craft:**

- For younger kids use attached coloring sheets
- For older kids you may want to try this origami ring: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZ7udfrk7TM>
 - ▶ Talk about how the ring the father put on the younger brother signified him being welcomed back into the family
 - ▶ If that looks too difficult for your kids, try a version of this pipe cleaner ring: <https://www.momontimeout.com/bring-on-bling-valentine-ring-craft/>

• **BLESS Activity:**

For kids to do during the week

EAT: Ask your parents if you could have a dinner party to celebrate God's love, and invite people who need to hear about Him.

Read the story of the runaway boy in Luke 15:11-32. Then number the pictures in the correct order.



