

MD KIDS CURRICULUM: LUKE

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

To the Teacher:

This weeks 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 and Missio Basic:

God invites everyone to his party. But some people don't come because they think they are bad. And some people don't come because they think they are too good.

God always says, "Come home!" He desires all of us to become part of the family of God.

Starter Ideas: You may choose to set up all or some of these activity centers for the children to play with or do as they arrive. Help children with the activities. Kids can stay in one center or travel to more than one.

1. Coloring Page: Have the kids color a picture of the prodigal brothers and their father.
2. Free Play: Allow the kids to play with the classroom toys. (dolls, basketball, cars, tea party set, dress up, etc)
3. Playdough: Allow the kids to play with the playdough. Ask the kids to try and make pigs out of the dough or even rings. They might also make food for a feast. Talk to them about the significance of those items in today's story.

Circle Time: When all the kids have arrived and have had time to participate in at least one center, walk around the room and have each child follow you around the circle until you have a line with everyone in it. Lead them to the circle for prayer time. (Like playing follow the leader.)

Welcome Song: (To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?")

Welcome, [Name]

Welcome, [Name]
Hear God's Word
Hear God's Word
We can trust in Jesus.
We can trust in Jesus.
Welcome, friends.
Welcome, friends.

Repeat until every kid and adult has been welcomed.

Jesus taught us to share peace. We share peace in a special way by repeating Jesus' special words. Jesus used these words of peace when the disciples were scared. Jesus said, "Peace be with you." We share the peace of Jesus. During worship we can say, "Peace be with you."

Make sure kids are sitting in a circle on the floor. Kneel down in front of each person/kid and share God's peace by shaking their hand and saying, "Peace be with you." Remember to honor those kids who do not want to be touched!
Let's all say Jesus' words of peace. "Peace be with you." Repeat a few times before moving on to prayer.

Prayer Time:

Praying for Others: Ask the kids if they have anything that they would like to have prayed for. Share requests and then have someone pray for them. Remind the kids to pray for friends throughout the week.

Praying Together: (*touch your nose for 'smell', your ears for 'hear', etc.*)

*God, help us use our **ears** to **hear** you, our **eyes** to **see** you, and our **brains** to **understand** your word. Thank you Jesus that you live in a body like ours.*

Activity to introduce the Story:

1. Set Up: Use painters tape to lay out a line across the room. Ask the children to stand on one side of the line. Announce that that side of the line represents "**home**" and the other side represents a "**far off country.**"

2. Explain the game: When you call out "far off country," everyone should jump to that side of the line. You will keep calling out "home" and "far off country" and the children must jump to the correct side of the line. So, if they are at "home" and "home" is called again, they just stay in place. If they make a mistake, they are out.

3. Call out “home” or “far off country” quickly, alternating between them, but sometimes calling out one of them twice or more times in a row. You can also try to catch the children out by pointing to “home” while calling out “far off country.”

4. Once a few children are out, ask everyone to start on the home side again so no one is sitting out for too long. This also allows a short pause in the game.

5. Toward the end of the allocated time, ask everyone to sit back down in the circle and say: **“In today’s story someone goes from home to a far off country. Let’s find out why and what happens.”**

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]

1. Jesus was telling 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 love 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 ask for forgiveness 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.

2. The ring the other put on his son represented 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 or power of his father.

3. 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!

Snack Time: Let's take a big stretch! Pause for kids to stretch and get the wiggles out. Clean the table for snack time. Help the kids wash hands together before delving into today's snack. Sing songs while you wash hands. You can give them each a wipe or a squirt of hand sanitizer. Have the children have a seat at the table. Today's snack is goldfish or veggie straws. Make sure

none of the kids have an allergy to them. Begin passing out the napkins, goldfish or veggie straws, and cups of water.

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.□

Optional playground time: If you have extra time please feel free to take the kids to the playground. Please be mindful that preschool class playground time does not start until 5:30PM.

Closing Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for your word, The Bible.

Thank you for sending Jesus in a real body so we can know you.

Help us to trust that your word is true.

Thank you God, Jesus and Holy Spirit.