

# CAMPFIRE

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

# STORIES

## PART 5: FAR FROM HOME

Pastor Brian Jenkins

### Luke 15:11-32

<sup>11</sup> Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup> After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.<sup>16</sup> He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup> “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! <sup>18</sup> I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father. “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. <sup>21</sup> “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate. <sup>25</sup> “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. <sup>27</sup> ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup> “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup> “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Use this guide for personal and family devotions and weekly groups.

# SCRIPTURE

**Luke 15:11-32**

Watch this week's message online: [nlchurch.com/watch](http://nlchurch.com/watch).

## OBSERVATION

The Story of the Lost or Prodigal (Prodigal means extravagant) Son is one of the most familiar in the Scriptures. It is the epitome of grace and acceptance, reminding of our Heavenly Father who is always looking for us.

The story is set in a group of three parables, all connected through a central theme of things having been lost then found. The joy of finding something previously thought lost is a combination of happiness and relief, and in a moment all the fear, anger, and perhaps even sadness over the loss of a person or object disappear. These parables all serve to demonstrate that our Father is excited and joyful to welcome us home.

- 1 Why does the son leave his father's house?
- 2 Why does he decide to come home?
- 3 Describe the father's reaction upon seeing his son in the distance.

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# APPLICATION

Although the primary focus of the parable is the returning son, we are also given insight into the reaction of the older brother. His seeming resentment over the father's joy of the younger son's return provides valuable perspective on the effects of legalistic religious obedience and duty without devotion. His lack of concern over his brother speak to us about our views of grace and salvation. We need to realize that the Father is equally overjoyed at the return of anyone into His Family, and that it is an opportunity to celebrate with God.

- 1 What is the older brother's response at the return of the lost son?
- 2 Why is he angry and resentful? Do you agree with him?
- 3 What is the father's response? What does that teach us?

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# PRAYER

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My take away today: \_\_\_\_\_  
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