



WEEKLY SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Coming Home

The Prodigal

Luke 15:11-24

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

VERSES FOR MEDITATION AND REFLECTION

“Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’

Luke 15:21-24a.

When studying this parable, our initial inclination may be to reject the notion that we are like the prodigal son. Thomas points out that any time our moods dictate our actions, or when we create our own rights and definitions, we are the prodigal. The more we insist on doing our own thing, the more we will find ourselves in a foreign land, just as he did in the story.

We must wrestle with the fact that the prodigal is part of our DNA if we are to truly come alive. God does not give us rules just for the sake of our following them, Thomas says, but for the sake of our flourishing. How can we begin to discern God’s design so that we can flourish in the way he intended?

Thomas cites the example of Rembrandt’s early life being one of self-indulgence and excess. Eventually he began to see what it was like to go to a foreign land—his friends deserted him and he lost all his possessions. But even though he died penniless and alone, he found peace with God at the end of his life.

Thomas points out that it is ultimately grace, not rules, that changes the hearts of prodigals. Can you relate to the early life of Rembrandt? Think about times in your life when you have seen God’s grace welcome you back home, and ways in which you can use your own story to extend grace to those around you wherever you live, work, and play.

Prayer: *Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for welcoming us back home with your grace and mercy. Help us to be able to recognize our tendencies to control our lives and situations, and to look toward your design for our lives. Be with us as we support each other in an effort to be more faithful to you.*
Amen.

