

PRODIGAL GOD

LEADER GUIDE

Be sure to begin each meeting with fellowship and prayer. Encourage your small group to underline and take note of anything they would like to discuss, comment, or question for each meeting.

Week 1 - Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 together as a small group. What sticks out to you from the passage that we will be studying for the next few weeks?
2. Recap the story as a whole, what is so powerful about the imagery seen between the father and the younger brother?
3. What would a modern day prodigal son story look like today?
4. What do you think is going on with the older brother for him to respond the way he does?
5. What is the father's message to both the younger and older brother?
6. What is your main practical takeaway from this parable?

Application:

- Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 of Prodigal God this week.

Week 2 - Introduction, Chapter 1

Discussion Questions:

1. After reading the introduction and the first chapter of Prodigal God, what impacted you the most? Are there any questions that came to mind while reading?
2. Considering the audience that it is given to, what does the context say about Jesus' telling of this parable?
3. Can you think of a historical figure or someone you know where their rebellion and irreligious behavior led to spiritual emptiness? Share examples.
4. Can you think of any other times where Jesus had conflict with the Pharisees? Why do you think they were so opposed to His teachings?
5. How can we, the church, attract those who are broken and marginalized with Jesus' message of grace?

Application:

- Read Chapters 2-3 of Prodigal God this week.

Week 3 - Chapters 2-3

Discussion Questions:

1. After reading chapters 2-3 of Prodigal God, what impacted you the most? Are there any questions that came to mind while reading?
2. "There is no evil that the father's love cannot pardon and cover, there is no sin that is a match for His grace." (Pg. 24) How can this be seen in the parable, in other Bible stories, or in your own experience?
3. The younger brother believes he is no longer worthy to be called his father's son. What does that tell us about his view of what it takes to be loved and accepted? Is this view prevalent today?
4. "You can rebel against God and be alienated from Him either by breaking His rules or by keeping all of them diligently" (Pg. 36-39) Explain this statement made by Dr. Keller.
5. Do you agree or disagree that being an elder brother is a more spiritually desperate condition than being a younger brother? Why? (Pg. 46-47)

Application:

- Read Chapters 4-5 of Prodigal God this week.

Week 4 - Chapters 4-5

Discussion Questions:

1. After reading chapters 4-5 of Prodigal God, what impacted you the most? Are there any questions that came to mind while reading?
2. What are some of the characteristics found in the younger brother and the older brother? What characteristics do you see that they both have?
3. Do you agree or disagree that being an elder brother is a more spiritually desperate condition than being a younger brother? Why? (Pg. 46-47)
4. How do people seek to control God through their obedience?
5. The attitude of the elder brother most likely made it harder for the younger brother to come home. How can you prevent this from happening in your own life and in your church?
6. What would help you to identify the "sin under all your other sins"? (Pg. 78) How can you dismantle that particular sin beneath the other sins?
7. "Forgiveness always comes at a cost." How can this truth be seen in the parable? In your own experience?

Application:

- Read Chapter 6-7 of Prodigal God this week.

Week 5 - Chapter 6-7

Discussion Questions:

1. After reading chapters 6-7 of Prodigal God, what impacted you the most? Are there any questions that came to mind while reading?
2. What positive images come to mind when you hear the word “home”? Why is this imagery of the younger son coming home and the father throwing a party on his behalf so powerful?
3. “[Jesus’] love can become more real to you than the love of anyone else. It can delight, galvanize, and console you.” (Pg. 108) How has Jesus’ love delighted, galvanized, or consoled you or someone you know?
4. “There is no way you will be able to grow spiritually apart from a deep involvement in a community of other believers.” (Pg. 127) Why and how is this true?
5. The book mentions four things we need in order to have a foretaste of future salvation now - prayer, service to others, changes in our inner nature through the gospel, and healed relationships that Christ can give. Which of these do you hunger for the most, and why?

Prodigal God Reading Plan

Week 1

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Week 2

Introduction, Chapter 1

Week 3

Chapters 2-3

Week 4

Chapters 4-5

Week 5

Chapter 6-7

Recommended Resources

- Discussion Guide for The Prodigal God by Timothy Keller¹
- The Explicit Gospel by Matt Chandler

¹ Some questions found in this book were used in this Reading Plan

