

Parable: The Prodigal Son

The Building Blocks of the Lesson

Bible Reference

Luke 15:11-32

Memory Verse:

Luke 15:32



Objectives



To help participants know . . .

- * God forgives us when we make mistakes.
- * God longs for our repentance and return.
- * God wants us to forgive others.

Theological Themes



Reconciliation, forgiveness, love, grace and _____ (and your ideas)

_____.

Music



“Create in Me a Clean Heart”

Lutheran Book of Worship - Settings 1, 2, and 3 or in With One Voice #732

Or borrow a “red book” Lutheran hymnal and learn how it was sung during worship “in the olden days”.

Catechism Connection



- * **Lord’s Prayer** – “forgive us our sins”
- * **Fourth Commandment** – “Honor your father and mother”
- * **Sacrament of Baptism and Communion** (forgiveness).

Additional Resources



Look at the week’s local newspapers. Can you find any examples of forgiveness reported? Are there examples of incidents that would have been drastically changed if forgiveness had occurred?

Check the “Chicken Soup” series to find special forgiveness stories and share them with each other. What do they say to you about others and about yourself?

Context



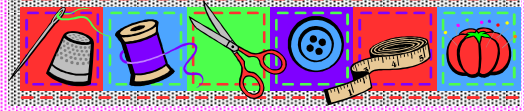
Feeding pigs was very disgraceful for a Jew. In ancient times elder sons inherited double portions of the estate. Jesus suggested second sons get some of the estate. This father was being extremely generous.

Expectations of the younger son of being his father's servant upon his return were genuine. What an unexpected surprise awaited him! What a forgiving father he had!

??? Discuss /Ask???

- Why did the younger son end up feeding the pigs?
- What did the father do when the younger son came home?
- Why was the elder son angry?
- With which character do you identify most and why?
- Have you ever felt cheated?
- Have you ever felt unforgivable?
Unforgiven?
- Has there been a time in your life when it was hard for you to forgive someone?
Would you share about that experience?

Activity



Just after reading the lesson, divide into three groups, numbering off by one, two and three. Have the number ones be the father, the twos be the elder son, threes be the younger son. Have each number group (ones with ones, twos with twos, etc.) discuss together how they would feel to be that person in the story.

Then, create small groups consisting of a father, elder and younger son. Imagine it is the morning after the banquet at breakfast. Have them role play what is said. Then in total group, discuss any insights. Then continue with the appropriate discuss/ask questions.

Sending



Write on a piece of paper the name of someone you need to forgive. Pray for them. Act lovingly toward that person even if you don't feel that way immediately. When the time is right, forgive them and then destroy the paper.

Prayer



**God of Love,
Thank you for forgiving me.
Help me to forgive others, just as you
did, even when it is difficult for me.
AMEN.**