

Prodigal

We'll focus on the parable of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15, specifically examining the younger son's story. Sometimes people can feel they've gone too far from God. But God races toward us with compassion, not condemnation. No one is ever too far gone for God's love and redemption, even when they've made devastating choices or burned bridges with family and community. We are also called to be holders of hope for others because God can rewrite anyone's story in unexpected ways.

CONNECT

Share about a time when you felt lost or got in over your head with something - how did you find your way back?

LEARN

1. What does the younger son's request for his inheritance reveal about his heart toward his father and community?
2. Why was working with pigs particularly significant for a Jewish audience hearing this story?
3. How does the cultural context of the 'kezazah' ceremony help us understand the depth of the father's grace?
4. What does the father's racing to meet his son tell us about God's heart for those who are far from Him?
5. Why do you think the son believed the best he could hope for was to be a hired servant?
6. How does this parable challenge our assumptions about who is 'too far gone'?
7. What does it mean to be a 'holder of hope' for someone who seems far from God?
8. How can we as a church better reflect the father's heart of compassion?

APPLY

This week, identify someone in your life who might feel 'too far gone' - either from God or from reconciliation with others. Commit to being a 'holder of hope' for them through prayer, encouragement, and demonstrating God's unconditional love.

PRAYER

Lord, thank you for your relentless love that pursues us no matter how far we've strayed. We ask that you would open our hearts to understand your boundless love and grace. Help us to see ourselves and others through your eyes of compassion. Help us to both receive and extend that same grace to others. Give us your heart of compassion and help us to be bearers of hope to those who feel too far gone. In Jesus' name, Amen.