
Next Week's Life Group: Harmony in The Home, Part 1
Next Week's Story: Ephesians 5:18-24

Our Church's Definition of a Biblical Disciple of Jesus

A person who is committed to *following, being changed by,* and *on mission* with Jesus (taken from Matthew 4:19).

The Purpose of Life Groups

Life Groups are where we connect with God and with others through relationships - growing in spiritual maturity as biblical disciples of Jesus and inspiring a culture of discipleship as we do life together. Life Groups are loving, safe, and interactive places where people can be authentic and vulnerable as they explore, experience, serve, and grow in relationship with Jesus, the Word, and others. Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:23-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:11.



MADE FOR MORE

*Look carefully then how you walk,
not as unwise but as wise,*
Ephesians 5:15

GETTING STARTED

Describe the most unusual meal you have eaten.

STORY BACKGROUND

It was a common practice for teachers to use a parable or an allegory to convey simple, yet important messages to their students. Parables and allegories often require the learner to be engaged in the story in order to draw out the intended meaning. Jesus often used parables and allegories as a method of sharing truth. When studying the parables and allegories of Jesus, it is very easy to see more in them than the simple point Jesus was intending. It is important to stay focused on the simple truth that is most evident in the parable you are studying.

This week we are studying the parable of the prodigal (or lost) son. Luke presents this parable among other parables taught by Jesus, so there is not much situational context given.

During the time of this parable, the wealth of the father was considered the wealth of the family. The heirs to the estate enjoyed the entire undivided inheritance each day while they lived with their family on the estate. The heirs would each receive a share of the estate when their father died. The eldest son, by virtue of birth order, would receive a double share. Since there are two sons in this parable, there would be a total of three shares of the estate. The oldest son would receive two shares and the youngest would receive one.

MORE TRANSFORMATION



STORY: Luke 15:11-32
Ephesians 4:17-5:17 (Read aloud)

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 15:31
*And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me,
and all that is mine is yours."*



HEAD LEVEL: These questions help us to examine what the Word tells us.

- Who are the main characters in this story? Who do they represent?
- At what times did the prodigal act unwisely and at what times did he act wisely?
- In your group, discuss how Paul's teaching in Ephesians 4:17-5:17 would apply to the characters in the parable.



HEART LEVEL: These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- Which character do you identify with the most? Why?
- Do you think the younger son deserve to be celebrated? Do you think the older son's anger was warranted? Why or why not?
- Do you have "prodigal son" moments? Do you have "angry son" moments? If you are willing to share, what are they?



HANDS LEVEL: These questions help us commit to a next step and live it out in our everyday lives.

- How can you change your "prodigal son" moments? Your "angry son" moments?
- Which of the truths will bring you greater strength and freedom right now as you live through the struggles and joys of life in Christ?