

# GRACEPOINT CHURCH

## Weekly Devotional

### Once upon a Kingdom: The Stories Jesus Told Lent 4

**The Prodigal mercy of the Father – Linda Magengenene-Moyake –15.3.2026**

#### Scripture

Luke 15:4-32

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

#### Observation

In the next three parables Jesus told the stories of things that were lost and then found. No animal strays more easily than a sheep. The lost sheep could not save herself or find her way back to the flock or the shepherd. This was not unusual. But what was unusual was that the shepherd left the rest of his flock just to find the one that had strayed, and stayed away, searching for her, until he found her. Jesus taught that God actively seeks the lost. When the shepherd found the sheep, he laid her across his shoulders and carried her home, rejoicing. God's joy at finding one sinner who is lost is echoed throughout the halls of heaven. The scribes and Pharisees may not have been happy about a repentant sinner, but God was.

Similarly, a woman who had lost one of her ten silver coins desperately searched for the missing coin. Just because it was lost, she still had a right to it. It was still hers. It may have been part of a piece of jewellery that was held together by a chain and worn around the head of a married woman. She did everything she could to find the coin – by lighting a lamp, then sweeping and cleaning the house. She continued to look until she found it. Once again, she called others to celebrate with her. She had found her coin. Whilst coins do not repent, Jesus took care to add that God also celebrated when one lost sinner repented, was found and was restored.

The familiar parable of the lost son carried on the theme of God's joy at a repentant sinner turning back to Him. It took a while for the foolish young man to realise what he had lost by turning his back on his father. Finding himself in an impossible situation, looking after the pigs, he realised he would be better off at home with his father, even if he worked as a servant. He decided to return home and throw himself on his mercy. He worked out what he would say to

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him and how he would ask him for work. He realised he had sinned in his behaviour and made no attempt to justify himself or make excuses. But he hardly managed to deliver his prepared speech for his father saw him coming and ran to him, arms open wide. He was not interested in the son's speech. His son was home, and that was all that mattered. But the older son was not so pleased. Jesus implied he was like the scribes and Pharisees who had complained (Chapter 15:1-3) whose hearts were hardened and who resented the idea that repentant sinners would be accepted and welcomed by God. Jesus did not say how the story ended. We do not know whether the family was reconciled or not.

In these three parables, the message to the sinners was clear: repent and come home to the Father; and the message to the religious leaders was clear: be happy when those who are lost are found and come home to the Father.

### *Icebreaker:*

What does your earthly home mean to you? How do you know you are home?

### **Application**

- Who do you relate to most in the parable of the prodigal son? Why? Is this the sort of person you want to be? Why/why not?
- How do we come home, if we are like the older brother? What about if we are like the younger brother? Or if we are a mixture of both? What changes would be necessary in your life?
- What does the way Jesus ends the story mean to you?
- Three things are necessary for us to come home:
  - The initiating love of God
  - The need to repent of our inner, hidden sins as well as our outer visible sins
  - The need to be melted and moved by what it cost to bring us home.

Which one of these do you find most challenging to your faith?

- How would you feel, as an older brother, to go out and find your missing brother? How would you feel as a younger brother to be found by him? What difference does Jesus make?
- What would you like to say to Jesus now for all that He did for you on the cross to make it possible for you to come home?

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- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

### Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

### Service

Spend some time this week, looking at your life and making any changes this parable prompts you to make. Make a note of how it affects your relationships with other people. Have they commented on any change they can see in you?

### Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/luke-15/>



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