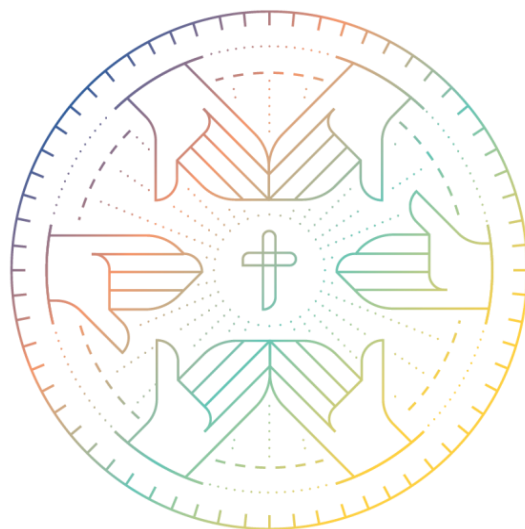


# Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



## ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What's one of the most surprising things someone has done to show they cared about you?

Or

When you were growing up, how did you usually respond when you messed up—apologize, avoid, hide, or something else?

## INTRODUCTION

Luke 15 opens with the Pharisees criticizing Jesus for spending time with sinners. In response, Jesus tells three parables—about a lost coin, a lost sheep, and a lost son. Each story reveals more than human mistakes; they reveal the relentless love of God.

What stood out to you from the message this week?

## INTO THE WORD

### God Runs to the Repentant

**Read Luke 15:11–20, Isaiah 30:18, Psalm 86:15.** How would you describe the younger son's heart at the beginning of the story? Why is it so significant that the father ran to him—even before he could say anything? How does that impact your view of God? Where have you found yourself longing for something more than longing for God?

### Repentance Leads to Restoration

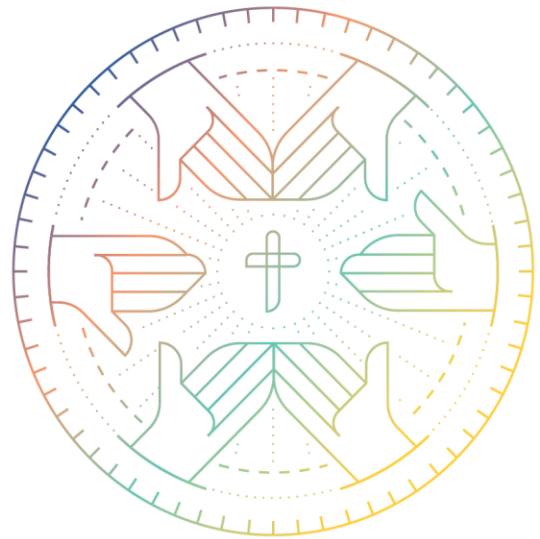
**Read Luke 15:17–24, Acts 3:19, 1 John 1:9.** What does it mean that the son “came to himself”? What does this story teach us about genuine repentance? How does the father restore the son's identity through the robe, ring, and shoes?

### Grace Confronts the Rule-Keeper Too

**Read Luke 15:25–32, Matthew 23:27–28, Romans 3:23–24.** How do you relate to the older brother's frustration? Why is it dangerous to serve God without truly knowing His heart? What do you think Jesus wanted the Pharisees (and us) to see in the older brother?

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## EMBRACE AND EMBODY

Consider these questions:

- Which son do you relate to most right now—the reckless or the resentful? Why?
- Is there an area where you need to stop running or stop earning—and simply come home to the Father?
- How might this story shape the way you show grace to others in your family, your workplace, or your small group?

This parable invites each of us to personally embrace the grace of the Father. For some, that may mean recognizing the need to come home—like the younger son who finally realized that life apart from the Father leads only to emptiness. If that’s you, ask yourself: What would it look like to stop running and receive God’s forgiveness? It might mean letting go of shame or regret that’s kept you distant and instead trusting that God is eager to welcome you with compassion, not condemnation.

For others, embracing grace may look more like laying down the burden of performance. If you resonate with the older brother, ask: Where have I been trying to earn God’s approval rather than rest in His love? You may find yourself close to the Father’s house but far from His heart—resentful, burned out, or frustrated by grace given to others. God invites you to come inside and celebrate, not because you’ve earned it, but because you’re His.

To embody this story means not just receiving God’s grace, but reflecting it to others. Who in your life needs to experience the undeserved kindness of God through you? Maybe it’s a friend who’s wandered far, or someone caught in legalism and guilt. Embodying the Father’s heart means running toward the hurting, not away from them. It means speaking blessing over the undeserving, offering restoration over rejection, and choosing joy when others come home. As we embrace the grace we’ve been given, we’re empowered to extend it—to welcome, forgive, and celebrate in the same spirit as the Father who ran.

## PRAYER PRACTICE

Give your group a moment of silent reflection. You might say, “Take a moment to imagine the Father running toward you. What is He saying? What do you need to receive from Him today?” After pausing for reflection and giving space to hear from God, close in prayer:

“Father, thank You for running toward us—before we had our speech ready, before we had anything to offer. Help us to see ourselves through Your eyes—redeemed, restored, beloved. And help us to embody that same grace to others. Amen.