

Parable of the Prodigal Son Journal Questions (these won't be shared):

The Parable of the Lost (Prodigal) Son.

Luke 15

11 Then he said, "A man had two sons, 12 and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them. 13 After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.[§] 14 When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. 15 So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. 16 And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. 17 Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. 18 I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.'" 20 So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. 21 His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' 22 But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, 24 because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began. 25 Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. 26 He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. 27 The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' 28 He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. 29 He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. 30 But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.' 31 He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. 32 But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'"

- How is the prodigal son like many young people today? How is the prodigal son like you?
- What is the symbolism of the pig pen in the story? What is Jesus trying to say here? What's it like to be stuck in the mud? Think about a time you were spiritual and morally stuck in the mud.

- St. Paul says in his letter to St. Timothy:: *12I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. 13Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.15Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.16But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.*

What line stands out to you and why? Write a prayer asking God to maybe give you a **greater** sense of your need for his mercy and forgiveness.

- What is the ‘treasure’ the prodigal son realizes he is missing out on? What ‘treasure’ might God have in store for you and your life?
- Have you ever been lost and scared? Were you ever frightened while being lost? Think about going through life with no hope for God, no hope for being saved from sin, etc. How bad would this be? Offer a prayer to God thanking Him for coming to save you.
- This story gives us insight into the heart of God. What are a couple things that this story communicates about the heart and love of God for you?

- The mercy of God is amazing when we experience it. Why do you think it is so awesome?

- The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not just given to us once but are to be renewed in us every day. The second son misunderstood that he already had what his father gave him. How can we ignore the gifts God has given us? Share, too, a time you have been overly judgmental/harsh toward someone in your school.

- How do you think the first son felt to receive the gifts from his father? How did the second son feel seeing these gifts being given to his brother? Whose attitude do you tend to have?