

CAC LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

The Prodigal Son Through a Different Lens – April 26, 2026

Ice Breaker: What's the most "different" place you've ever traveled to?

Read Luke 15:11–32

Part 1: Seeing Scripture Through a Different Culture

Background Insight:

In places like Guinea, culture is more communal, honor/shame-based, and relationally dependent—closer in many ways to the world of the Bible than modern Western culture.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you about how people from a different culture might read Scripture differently?
2. Why do you think our cultural lens affects how we interpret the Bible?
3. Which of these cultural differences feels most unfamiliar or challenging to you?
 - Honor vs. individualism
 - Community dependence vs. independence
 - Respect for age and authority

Part 2: The Younger Son – More Than Just Bad Decisions

Key Cultural Insights:

- Asking for inheritance early = "I wish you were dead."
- Leaving the land = rejecting family and identity
- The father running = shocking, humiliating act of love
- The son expected shame—but received protection

Discussion Questions:

1. How does viewing the son's request as deeply shameful change how you see the story?
2. What stands out to you about the father running to the son? What does that communicate about God?
3. The son planned to "work his way back" as a hired servant. Where do you see that mindset in your own relationship with God?
4. What does this story teach us about repentance—is it something we achieve or something we receive?

Part 3: The Older Brother – The Hidden Distance (15–20 minutes)

Key Cultural Insights:

- Publicly refusing to join the celebration = humiliating the father
- "I've slaved for you" reveals his heart
- He obeyed outwardly but was inwardly distant

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think the older brother's response feels "justified" to many of us?
2. What clues in the story reveal the older brother's true heart?
3. In what ways can we relate to the older brother—doing the "right things" but missing the Father's heart?
4. Do you ever struggle when God shows grace to others in ways that don't feel fair?

Part 4: The Father – The Heart of God

Big Idea:

The father humbles himself twice—once for each son.

Discussion Questions:

1. What surprises you most about the father's actions in this story?
2. How does this story challenge your view of God?
3. Which question do you think the father is asking both sons—and us?
 - "Why am I not enough for you?"

Application: Which Son Are You Today?

Reflection Questions:

1. Right now, do you relate more to:
 - The younger son (running from God)?
 - The older brother (doing the right things but distant in heart)?
2. What might it look like for you to move closer to the Father this week?
3. What, if anything, makes you feel like you can't come to God freely right now?
4. How might God be inviting you this week to reflect the Father's heart, either by welcoming someone back or by letting go of resentment toward them?

Truth to Hold Onto:

You don't have to earn your way back. The Father is already running toward you.

Prayer

Pray together:

- Thank God for His compassion and pursuit
- Confess areas of distance (rebellion or self-righteousness)
- Ask for a deeper understanding of His heart

Two Minute Takeaway

Each day, take 2 minutes to sit quietly and reflect on this question:
"God, where are You inviting me to come closer to You today?"