

SERIES	Parables
BIBLE	Luke 15:11-31
TITLE/TOPIC	Come Home
OVERVIEW	In our polarizing times, the Prodigal Son parable... or the story of the Two Sons causes us to see ourselves, others, and God in a new way. We always want mercy for ourselves, but judgement for the other. We want redemption for ourselves when we've strayed from the family of God, but condemnation for others when they stray in their lives. We all have some of each brother pulling at us. But in the middle of this family that is running away from each other we have a God who brings everyone to the table. Stop trying to run away from what God is putting together.
SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN	<p>You can not outrun your invitation to return to God (Luke 15:11-20a) This son doesn't care about the father, only His things. In offending his father, he takes his things and spends it all on things he wants. Regret hits after realizing he wasted everything for no one and nothing in return. But when he needs help, he knows where to turn and he leaves to go back home. He doesn't know how He'll be received, but He knows that He will be taken in.</p> <p>You cannot outrun the love of God (Luke 15:20b-24) the best day of the father's life is when he get's to celebrate his family being together again! Everyone is invited to welcome a son back home. The father publicly restores belonging and value to this son who had left, but has returned.</p> <p>You cannot outrun the necessity of loving each other (Luke 15:25-32) This son is also dishonoring the father and tearing apart the family, just from a different place. His pride, entitlement, self-assurance, and lack of love cause him to see his inheritance being lost by his brother, and spent on a party by his father. Just because we never wandered doesn't mean we aren't lost.</p>
GOSPEL	From everything we know in the story it's easy to identify which son was living right, and which was living wrong. Jesus gives us a perspective that reminds us that both were separate from God. One ran away from God to a distant country. The other ran away from God while staying put in his house. No matter how we find our way back to the father's table, whether from wild living in a distant country or hardened entitled living in the house of God... we all need to accept the invitation to join with God and celebrate whoever is seated around the table.
NEXTSTEPS	Begin: come back to God