



Restoring a relationship that's gone prodigal, Luke 15

Getting Started

Take a moment to answer one or two of the following questions

- Did you ever run away from home as a child?
- What part of your life would you like to run away from right now?
- If you could run away, where would your favorite place in the world to run away be?

Going Deeper

The word prodigal means to spend money or resources recklessly.

Have you ever had an experience in your life when someone went prodigal on you. Have you experienced a time when someone was reckless with their words or actions and you felt the pain of it?

Read [Luke 15:1-2](#). Based on these verses, what is God's opinion of the prodigal, the reckless? (see also [Matthew 9:9-12](#) and [Luke 19:10](#))

On Sunday we talked about three ways that we need can restore reckless relationships that are different than the way our culture treats prodigals. Take a moment to review each difference.

1) Culture teaches us to say "I'm done with you." God challenges us to say "I'm waiting for you."

Do you have a Donezo list, a list of people that have hurt you that you're done with?

What are the advantages to being done with the people who hurt you?

Read [Romans 12:18](#). What wisdom does this verse give on dealing with people you are in conflict with? What's your responsibility?

Read [Luke 15:20](#). The father seemed to be looking for an opening to restore the relationship with his son. How can you apply this same behavior in your relationships?

2) Culture teaches us to say, "I'll forgive you if you make a full apology." God tells us "Forgive before the full apology comes out."

cont.

Why do we desire a full apology from those that have hurt us?
Why is it nearly impossible to get a full apology from those who have hurt us?

Read [Luke 15:18,19](#) and [Luke 15:21,22](#). Compare what the son had prepared to say to his father to what he actually said. What is the significance of this?

What effect does holding people to their past mistakes have on a relationship?

In [1 Corinthians 13](#) the Bible tells us “Love doesn’t take into account a wrong suffered.” Why is this concept so hard for us to live out? How can we work to practice this truth?

**3) Culture wonders, “What will people think.”
God says, “Don’t worry about the opinions of others. Celebrate the return.”**

Read [Luke 15:25-30](#). Why does the brother have such a hard time with the father’s behavior?

How can we balance our need for justice with this concept of forgiving and forgetting?

Action Steps

Is there a person in your life that has gone prodigal?
What is God challenging you to do to restore this relationship?

Take time as a group to pray for the prodigals that your group has identified

