

READ IT

This rotation's Bible story is
The Prodigal Son
from Luke 11-32.

Like the Prodigal Son's father, God welcomes us all home.

Ask each other what you remember about:

- Squander
- Dissolute
- Famine
- Fatted calf
- Plead
- Disobey
- Rejoice

Normally, children would not receive their inheritance until after their father died; the older son would also be given preference. The younger son in this story really insults his father and long tradition by asking for his inheritance before his father has died.

Read the whole story together in the Bible!

Spark Story Bible pages 378-383

Spark Bible pages 1153-1154

Family Prayer

Dear God, Help us remember that no matter how hard we try, we are like the younger son. We wander far from you. We sin. Only because of your open-armed loving are we all welcomed home. Lord, help us to come home! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

TALK ABOUT IT



Family Conversations

- 1 Who do you love to see after a long separation?
- 2 Why do you think the older brother reacts as he does?
- 3 God's love and kingdom do not follow human reason. Why does the father welcome the son home? What does the father want the elder son to understand?
- 4 Take turns sharing what you would like to do if you could spend all your time doing anything you want—without worrying about money or anyone else. How could that get you in trouble?

Eye Spark

When you see homeless people, remember the prodigal son who was so deeply loved.

Ear Spark

When you hear about people or people without a home, remember the father who wanted his younger son to come home so badly.

LIVE IT

For families to do together

We can feel free when we work for others. Find an aid organization—maybe a food pantry or a local church ministry—that will allow your family to volunteer and schedule a time to help.

For younger kids

Write a letter to someone you miss who is far away and ask him or her to come “home” to see you.

For older kids

There are many ways to separate yourself from your parents and put yourself in harm's way. Rules and chores do not seem freeing. Give some thought to the ways in which rules, chores and restrictions DO free you. Talk about it with your parents. This week, make an effort to take care of all your responsibilities and to help your family with a cheerful heart.

TRY IT

Art

Play a “What happened next?” drawing game as a family. Gather a long piece of paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Sit along one side of the paper. The first person draws the first part of the story, the second person draws the second part, and so on until everyone contributes to the final party scene.

Bible Skills and Games

Play a board game or card game that your family enjoys. Make up new rules. Write them down. Change them often. Try making rules that encourage everyone to win. Talk about ways that God’s love works beyond limits, rules, or boundaries.

Computer Lab

Pack one or more “Run Away from Home” kits for a local faith-based homeless shelter. Include new socks and underwear, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, washcloth, and a small Bible. Wrap it in a large towel and secure with ribbon. Use drawing software on a computer to make a card that says, “Welcome home” and includes the Bible text for this story. Deliver the kits as a family.

Cooking

When your family has a reunion at the end of a busy day, celebrate! Greet each other with open arms and gather around a snack. Instead of a fatted calf, make Brown Cows. Pour 3/4 cup of root beer over a 1/2 cup of ice cream and drizzle the top with caramel syrup. It’s a prodigal party!

Creative Drama

This story has many destinations—the family’s home, the party places visited by the prodigal son, and the pigsty! Designate parts of your home as these three locations. Then tell the story as you move from site to site.

Music

Reread the first two verses of Luke 15. Jesus welcomed people others did not welcome. As a family, discuss who the un-welcomed people in your community are. How can you welcome the un-welcomed? Create a family welcoming action plan. Make sure your welcoming plan is a safe one for your family.

Science

The son who left his family lived well for a while, but when a famine took place, he became needy. What happens during a famine? Who is most affected? What areas are affected by famine today? Go online to learn more about famines in our world.

Video

The son had to stay with pigs. Some people have pigs for pets! Find out why. Look online for videos about pigs. How do they move? What do they sound like? What makes a pig a good pet? Don’t “hog” your research findings—share them with others!