

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Return from Exil - Part 7

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Introduction

Jesus shares a parable about a younger son who regretted leaving home and wasting his inheritance. During a famine, the son came back and asked his father for forgiveness. Instead of punishing his wayward son, the father was filled with compassion and even celebrated his homecoming. In this season, God invites us to return from our exile to His home, where there is plenty of grace, mercy and love to share.

Read

Luke 15:11-32, Romans 8:37-39

Discuss

1. How has it been for you this week since restrictions eased, permitting meetings with more friends and family members? Share with the group about celebrations you may have had.
2. Read Luke 15:22-32. Discuss the three different figures in Jesus' story of the prodigal son. Who do you relate to most? Why did Jesus intentionally end the story in this way?
3. Pastor Dale mentioned that some of us could be like the prodigal son, experiencing some form of exile away from home. What are some experiences that made you feel lost and isolated from your loved ones? What are some of the challenges that you may have?
4. We may know someone who has journeyed away from us. Instead of judgment, God showed us His grace and mercy when we came back to Him after exile. Discuss some ways that you could reach out with love and compassion to those who are currently away from God.

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5. Pastor Dale reminded us that we may fall into the trap of being lost in religion. To what extent do you think this could be a reality in our generation? God promises His unconditional love for those who are willing to return to Him. Are there any barriers hindering you from accepting God's love?
6. Read Romans 8:37-39. In these verses, God promises that we are more than conquerors because of His love for us, and that nothing can separate us from His love. Share with the group some uplifting times when you have experienced God's unconditional love. When have you experienced being a conqueror?

Respond

This week, pray that the Holy Spirit would bring to mind someone with whom you can share God's unconditional love. Pray that God will enable you to show grace and compassion to someone who is wanting to return from exile. Is there a specific plan you can make in celebration of someone's coming home? Commit to doing it.