GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

* **Share a time when you received some great news. How did you respond? Who did you share it with?**
* **Share a time when you received some heartbreaking news. How did you respond? Who did you share it with?**
* **Have you ever been there for others when they received crushing news? How did you respond to their hurt?**

**Main Point**

Jesus didn't come for those who are self-sufficient but for the lost and needy.

One of the most difficult times to find words is when you want to help someone in pain. We do not have answers and do not have the power to restore what is broken. God, on the other hand, responds with grace to those in pain as well as those in joy. His grace has the power to change things. In Luke 15 and 16, we see that Jesus came for the lost and the needy.

Have a volunteer read Luke 15:11-32.

* **Put yourself in the place of the father in this story. How would you have felt? What would you have done in response to your son’s request?**
* **In your spiritual journey, what do you identify as your time in a “far country”? Where are you right now in your spiritual journey?**

Forgiveness is our greatest need and God’s greatest provision. It is God’s joy to welcome us. The prodigal reminds us of how gracious God has been to all forgiven sinners. Regardless of the depth of sin, every Christian is a product of amazing grace.

The older son was jealous of the younger. The older son had been faithful to their father while his brother ran off, but his little brother was the one being honored. The older son wanted the gifts of the father as well and felt he deserved them. Grace, though, is not about deserving; it is impossible to deserve. Grace is about trusting and receiving.

Self-righteousness is a dangerous sin. If allowed to run its course, it convinces us that we don’t need God. The elder brother is the poster child for self-righteousness. We need to constantly examine our attitudes, for an elder-brother attitude can develop in each of us. Struggling against becoming self-righteous is a constant battle.

Have a volunteer read Luke 16:19-31.

* **Why do you think Jesus opens the parable with a contrast between the rich man and the poor man, and then closes it with a call to hear the word of God? What is the connection between hearing the word of God and moral behavior?**
* **What are some ways we trust in ourselves over trusting in God?**
* **How should this parable motivate us to share the gospel with others?**

This parable insists that Christians must not be like those who only care for their kind and remain ignorant of the plight of the poor. The church has no “good news” if it is not “good news” for the poor. Perhaps the best conclusion, one drawn from this passage’s connection to the parable of the dishonest manager (Luke 16:1-13), is that the rich man’s selfish orientation toward money and unconcern for a fellow human being revealed a lack of a relationship with God. The man trusted in himself. Similarly, the poor man’s joyful place in eternity did not come because of his earthly poverty. He must have known God and benefited from that relationship that came about by grace through faith.

**Application**

What does God do with lost sinners? He focuses His attention on them. He seeks them out. He pours His love on them. He waits patiently for them to repent of their sins and come back to Him. When a sinner repents and becomes a part of God’s kingdom, heaven erupts in joy. God is joyful because of us and is always ready to receive us.

* **In what area of your life are you most likely to need restoration? Why?**
* **What did love require in each of the parables in Luke 15? What does that teach us about God’s love for us?**
* **What are some practical ways we as individuals and as a group might serve the needy around us? How might doing so provide us opportunities to share the gospel?**

**Pray**

Thank God for revealing Himself to us and inviting us into an eternal relationship with Him through His Son. Ask God to give us a passion for His glory, so we might find joy in serving the needy and sharing the gospel with the lost people around us.