

1 SESSION

Pictures of God, Part One

FOR THE TEACHING TEAM: Reading to Be Ready

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Romans 12:2, 4-5 Luke 15:8-10
Matthew 18:12-14 and Luke 15:4-7 Luke 15:11-32

THINKING ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE

The Romans 12 passage serves like a theme passage for this course. Paul emphasizes the importance of God's transformation of one's inward being. As we study these passages, we will discover that Jesus desires transformation of persons. One of the ways Jesus seeks transformation is through teaching with parables so that the listeners will come to new understanding and commitment.

The three parables in Luke 15 picture the lost: a sheep, a coin, and a son. But the major picture in all three parables is Jesus' portrait of God. As shepherd, woman, and father, God is pictured as the one who takes the initiative to search, to recover the lost, to restore the relationship, and to celebrate.

Jesus' parables transformed lives because his picturesque stories challenged the listener's perception of God. For those who perceived God to be remote and unconcerned, Jesus' picture of a shepherd searching for a sheep invited a change of mind. For those who viewed God as a severe

QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER

1. Do you need to change the way you think about adolescents?
2. Are you willing to open your heart and your mind to the young people God is placing in your hands and receive them as Children of God?

THE TEACHER'S PRAYER

Loving God, give to me the gifts of a listening ear, a gentle touch, and embracing arms for each of the youth I encounter during our time together. Help me be sensitive to each person and to the needs they bring with them. Help us become a strong community of faith. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

severe and judgmental God, Jesus' picture of a woman rejoicing over a recovered coin invited a change in understanding. For those who pictured a distant, unapproachable God, Jesus' picture of a compassionate father running to embrace his son demanded a transformed heart.

FOR THE TEACHING TEAM: Preparing Together

FOCUS FOR THE SESSION

Jesus taught in parables; in fact, almost two thirds of Jesus' teaching in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is in the form of parables. Jesus taught in parables to transform hearts and minds. The purpose of this course is to examine the ways Jesus used the parables to transform our understanding of God, Faith, Forgiveness, Compassion, Prayer, Hope, Grace, and Discipleship.

In this first session we will focus on the amazing ability we have to visualize pictures in our minds. Visualizing is the term given to our ability to see pictures in our mind; visualizing happens all the time. We visualize when our mind calls back memories, when we think about someone, and when we use our imagination. Because it involves training the mind to either call up or create mental pictures, visualizing can be called a skill. Visualization techniques are part of an athlete's preparation and a performer's warm-up and are increasingly used by those battling serious illness. Since Jesus, as well as Paul, sought to place powerful, life-giving pictures in the minds of his listeners, it is obvious that he understood the power of visualization.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. Form a community of faith by getting to know one another.
2. Be introduced to the goals and opportunities of this course.
3. Define the term parable and be introduced to Jesus' use of parables in his teaching and preaching.
4. Visualize and illustrate our images of God.
5. Compare and contrast our images of God with Jesus' pictures of God in three of his parables.

BEFORE STUDENTS ARRIVE

- Provide three-ring notebooks or pocket folders for each student.

Materials from each session will be kept in the student's folder/notebook. Place the sheets needed for today's lesson in the folders/notebooks along with a pen or pencil.

- Print out Romans 12:2, 4-5 and post it in the room.
- Write these questions on newsprint for all to see or make three copies for the activity in Explore:
 1. In the parable, what is lost?
 2. How has it become lost?
 3. What happens once it is found?
 4. What feelings are expressed in the parable?
 5. What picture of God does Jesus paint in this parable?

MATERIALS LIST

- Art materials, such as watercolors or colored chalk
- Basic supplies
- Hymnals
- Laptop computer or access to desktop computer
- Music and equipment to play it
- Nametags
- Pocket folder, one for each student
- Student electronic journal CD, Metamorphosis, one for each student

6. How does Jesus' picture of God compare with the way you picture God?

- Select and gather music of various types for the painting activity in Express.

SESSION OUTLINE

ENTER

1. What's in a Name?
2. Destination: Transformation
3. Bless Us This Day

ENGAGE

1. With Eyes Wide Shut
2. Word Pictures

EXPLORE

1. What is a Parable?
2. Parables of the Lost

EXPRESS

1. Found Poems
2. Music Paints Pictures
3. Being Transformed

EMPOWER

We Pray For One Another

FOR THE CLASS: Learning Together

ENTER

Self Smart



Picture Smart



People Smart



Word Smart



ACTIVITY ONE: What's in a Name?

- As the youth arrive for this first session, invite them to make and wear nametags.
- Knowing each other's name is crucial in forming community; we need to be known and to be called by our name.
- Even if the students know one another, invite them to write their name, or nickname, and draw a symbol on the nametag that represents something unique about them.
- When everyone has finished, invite each student and teacher to share about their name, how they received their name, and about the symbol they choose to put on their nametag.

ACTIVITY TWO: Destination: Transformation

- Gather together and read Romans 12:2, 4-5.

"Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God – what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect....We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body."
- Explain that even though this is a course on the parables of Jesus, this passage from Paul's letter to the Romans will serve as the theme for the course. The key phrase is, "let God transform you inwardly by the complete change of your mind."
- Invite a discussion by asking:
 1. What do you think transformation means?
 2. What place does transformation have in our culture?
 3. What kinds of transformation do you see around you?
 4. Do you know anyone who has been transformed in any way?
- Paul's words provide an excellent way to move into an introduction of this course:
 1. The gospel of Jesus Christ is transforming; people have been and continue to be changed.
 2. The gospel brings life from death, hope from despair, and joy from sorrow.
 3. The transformation Paul calls for is "a complete change of your mind." Our attitudes and actions will change only after a change of our mind.
 4. Paul drew a picture of a body in the minds of his readers in order to communicate truth about the church.
 5. Jesus told parables to transform minds and to communicate truth about God, Faith, Forgiveness, Compassion, Prayer, Hope, Grace, and Discipleship.
 6. To hear, read, and study the parables of Jesus is to open oneself to being transformed.

ENGAGE

Self Smart



Picture Smart



People Smart



Word Smart



ACTIVITY THREE: Bless Us This Day

- Lead the group in an opening prayer that expresses eagerness and anticipation for all that will take place within the group — a new understanding of God and a new awareness of one another.

EXPLORE

Music Smart



Word Smart



People Smart



ACTIVITY ONE: With Eyes Wide Shut

- Vivid pictures do fill our minds; we can recall them in our mind's eye any time we wish.
This activity is designed to introduce our ability to visualize.
- Introduce this exercise by talking about our gift of sight. Stress the point that even with our eyes closed we can see; even with nothing before our eyes we can cause visual images to appear in our minds.
- Invite the class to close their eyes and to keep them closed while you read the list of things they are to picture in their minds. Read the list slowly. Invite students to see in their minds the following things:
 1. the face of someone else in the room
 2. home
 3. a favorite place
 4. church
 5. a country they would like to visit
 6. God
- After a few moments, invite the class to open their eyes and share briefly what they saw and experienced during the exercise.
- Invite a discussion by asking:
 1. Was it easy to see the pictures in your mind?
 2. Which pictures were the most difficult for you?
- If any members of the class are athletes, musicians, or dramatists, ask them to share experiences they have had with visualizing the plays, the scores, or the scenes they were preparing to perform. How helpful was it to visualize what was expected?

ACTIVITY TWO: Word Pictures

- Begin by sharing that Jesus expressed the love and will of God by speaking in parables.
He painted vivid "word pictures" in the minds of those who listened, pictures that illuminated the nature of God.
- Before examining Jesus' pictures of God, the class will examine the pictures of God seen in our minds.
- Distribute drawing paper and markers or pens.
- Invite the class to draw the picture that came to mind when they visualized God.
They can draw images, abstracts, or just lines and colors. This is not intended to be an art project, but rather an opportunity for students to practice expressing what they visualize.
- Announce that the drawings will be shared at the close of the session.

ACTIVITY ONE: Found Poems

- Invite students to explore your hymnal for phrases that are used to describe God.
- Some hymns you might use, but are not limited to, include:
 1. A Mighty Fortress is Our God
 2. Holy, Holy, Holy
 3. Immortal Invisible God Only Wise
 4. Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
 5. Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud
 6. Worship the King
- A Found Poem consists of words or phrases from various sources pulled together to create a new piece of poetry. Remember, it isn't necessary for poems to rhyme!
- As a group, create a Found Poem describing God using phrases from the hymns.

ACTIVITY TWO: Music Paints Pictures

- Composers of hymns and songs use lyrics and music to paint pictures of God. In the same way, music can inspire us to visualize God.
- Invite students to use watercolors, or colored chalks, to create pictures of God as they are inspired by some music you have previously selected.
- Join together in a circle and ask the youth to share their paintings.
- Remember that this activity is not intended to be an art project. Avoid making comparisons among the drawings. Help the class be accepting of one another's expressions. Respond with encouragement as each drawing is shared.

ACTIVITY THREE: Being Transformed

- Read again in unison Romans 12:2,4-5:

"Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God — what is good, and is pleasing to him and is perfect....We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body."

- Invite each student to take a minute to complete an unfinished sentence that begins, "Do not conform yourselves to _____."
- After allowing a minute for them to write a completion, invite students to share their sentences.
- After each sentence is shared, the whole group is to respond in unison, "Let God transform you inwardly!"

ACTIVITY ONE: We Pray For One Another

- Invite the class to offer prayers for their joys and concerns, for each other, and for this class that all might be open to the transforming power of the parables of Jesus.

The CD *Metamorphosis: A Journal* provides a way for students to reflect on the current week's session and to look ahead to the next week's session. Students will be invited to listen to the parables, look for signs of transformation within their own lives, reflect upon a Scripture passage, and act upon God's invitation to them. Remind the class that their work in the journals is personal and no one will be required to share anything from their journals with the rest of the class.

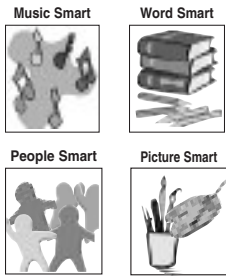
As you distribute the CD's, briefly demonstrate the organization of the CD on a computer. Explain that there are six headings for helping them respond to each parable. The same headings will be repeated each week. Students are encouraged to spend time in reflection and devotional time every week and to spend time each day with one of the headings: Hear, See, Understand, Focus, Reflect, and Act. There is also a section Looking Ahead. This section provides material that focuses on the lesson for the coming week.

EVALUATION

In evaluating this session, consider these questions:

- Were the youth involved in the activities?
- Were the instructions clear?
- Did our group come closer together?
- What parts of the session especially stood out and why?

EXPRESS

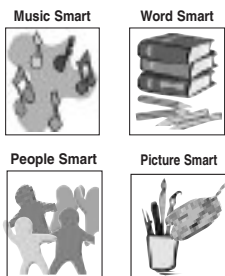


ACTIVITY ONE:

Found Poems

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EXPRESS



4. Joyful, Joyful,
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Sovereign, Rock
and Cloud
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King
- A Found Poem consists of words or phrases from various sources pulled together to create a new piece of poetry. Remember, it isn't necessary for poems to rhyme!

ACTIVITY ONE: What is a Parable?

- Invite the class to share their ideas about the definition of a parable.
- Share one or more definitions from a dictionary or a Bible dictionary, or one of the many books about Jesus' parables.
- Emphasize that a parable is a story composed of familiar objects, events, and persons that is told in order to convey a more profound, spiritual truth. The listeners or readers visualize one thing, but are helped to see and understand something else.
- When Jesus speaks about seeds, vines, soils, and so forth, he is not presenting a lecture on gardening; he is speaking about the Kingdom of God. People throughout the ages have envisioned God; people living in Palestine at the time of Jesus had ideas and perceptions of God. Many of Jesus' parables provide pictures of God.

ACTIVITY TWO: Parables of the Lost

- Divide the class into three groups and assign each group one of the following parables:
 1. Group One: The Parable of the Lost Sheep in Luke 15:4-7
 2. Group Two: The Parable of the Lost Coin in Luke 15:8-10
 3. Group Three: The Parable of the Lost Son in Luke 15:11-32
- Each group will read and discuss their assigned parable. Invite the small groups to use the following questions on posted on the wall, or on the handouts you have prepared, to guide their study and discussion:
 1. In the parable, what is lost?
 2. How has it become lost?
 3. What happens once it is found?
 4. What feelings are expressed in the parable?
 5. What picture of God does Jesus paint in this parable?
 6. How does Jesus' picture of God compare with the way you picture God?
- Gather the groups together and invite each group to share their answers to the questions.

- As a group, create a Found Poem describing God using phrases from the hymns.

ACTIVITY TWO: Music Paints Pictures

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AFTER CLASS

(continued)

LOOKING AHEAD

Prepare nametags for Session 2 with these words: Older Son, Younger Son, and Parent. Make the tags large enough to be read across the room.

Make copies of the questions in the "Explore" section of the next week's lesson.

Make arrangements to obtain a videotape or DVD of *Jesus of Nazareth*, available at most video rental stores or resource centers. Be sure to arrange for the video equipment. You may need to arrange for the class to go to another room to view the video.

Please note: In general, Federal Copyright Laws do not allow you to use videos (even ones you own) for any purpose other than home viewing. Though some exceptions allow for the use of short segments of copyrighted material for educational purposes, it is best to be on the safe side. Of course, it is always right to be on the ethical side. Your church can obtain a license from the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation for a small fee. Check their website www.mplc.com or call 1-800-462-8855.



Homes and Families

For the Teaching Team: Reading to Be Ready

Thinking About Scripture

The story of the “lost sons” is among the most powerful of the parables of Jesus. Both sons rebel. Both reject the father’s wisdom and guidance; both are full of pride and scorn. Both are ungrateful; both break his heart. Yet this father does not react from hurt, shame, or anger. He bestows unfailing grace and acts, to reconcile and restore both sons to the family, to the detriment of his own standing and reputation. This is a powerful illustration of God’s love for each of us. God’s love is unfailing, gracious, and always aimed at our complete restoration—no matter how pridefully, scornfully, or rebelliously we break faith. Even when we reject God completely, God, like the father in this parable, is still running down the road, robe in hand, to welcome us home.

Scripture Passages



Luke 15:11-32
1 John 3:1-2

Reflection Questions for Teachers

1. What are the ways in which I have shown God’s enduring love to the members of my family this week?

To my friends and co-workers?

To those I am in conflict with?

2. Do I see each of my students as a child of God?

The Teacher’s Prayer

Dear God, I sometimes put my own feelings and needs as a parent, a child, or a friend, ahead of those of the people I love. Remind me of the example you set forth in Christ, and help me to be a faithful representative of your love. Amen.

Focus for the Session

Like the first activity of the students in the drama **Outcry!**, this introductory session will focus on defining home and family—an important starting point in a course designed to explore and understand relationships in families. The image of God as a parent is a prominent one in scripture, and the church can be an alternate family for those who cannot find nurturing at home.

Today's scripture lesson will focus on the nature of God's love as demonstrated in a parable through a human father. The replacement of any negative parental images among your students with a healthy one, as described by Jesus, is the first step in our journey toward better understanding of each other and better discipleship within our own homes.

Because of its many levels of meaning, this story can be related to almost every session of the course. Do not hesitate to remind students of the illustration of the father's ceaseless love and concern for the continuation and restoration of the relationship with each son.

Some cultural background is needed when you are reading and discussing this parable with your students. In the culture Jesus addressed, many things were understood by his listeners that are not automatically understood by Western readers today. You will find some helpful notes in the Engage activity.

The ideas which should be emphasized in this first lesson include:

- ◆The outpouring of love on the part of the father
- ◆His willingness to let the son make his mistakes.
- ◆The father's joy at his son's return and unconditional welcome

The 1 John scripture is a reminder of the "lavishness" of God's love and works in concert with the parable to establish our identities as children of God. It is, in fact, a part of the closing ritual of each week's session and serves as a thematic passage for the course.

Session Objectives

1. Become acquainted with one another.
2. Review the unusual format of the course.
3. Define home and family.
4. Explore relationships of family members.
5. Explore relationships within the family of God.

MATERIALS LIST

Basic Supplies
Folders to hold handouts, one per student
Nametags
Newsprint or Poster Board
Session handouts

SESSION OUTLINE

Enter:

Something About Me
Introducing Outcry!

Engage:

The Parable of the Lost Sons
Walk in His Shoes
We Create a Parable

Explore:

Home is. . .
That's a Quote
Meet the Cast

Express:

My Family Tree

Empower:

We are God's Family
Our Closing Blessing

Before The Students Arrive

1. Gather Basic Supplies
2. Arrange supplies for nametags
3. Identify students who may have reading challenges so they will not be put on the spot by having to read without preparation. With advance work, they will be able to participate by reading one of the smaller roles and by taking part in the unscripted role-playing action.
4. Create a poster of 1John 3:1-2 as it appears in the Empower section and post it near the tree poster.
5. Make copies of The Parable of the Lost Sons (Luke 15:11-32), What is "Home"?, and Meet the Characters.
6. Sketch a tree with multiple branches on a piece of large newsprint or poster board to be used in the Enter section. Post it where students can sign on one of the branches as they enter the classroom.

For the Class: Learning Together

ENTER

Picture Smart



Self Smart



Word Smart



People Smart



Activity One: *Something About Me*

As students arrive invite them to choose one of the branches on the tree and sign it.

◆ Indicate the supplies and invite them to make a nametag.

◆ In addition to writing their names on the tags, invite each student to draw a symbol in the lower right hand corner that will reveal something that is particularly significant about themselves and perhaps previously unknown.

Examples: a leaf for a concern for the environment, a basketball for athlete, a drama mask for an actor, a quill pen for a writer, a chef's cap for a cook, or a musical note for a music lover.

Be sure that everyone on the teaching team also creates a nametag with a symbol of their own to share.

◆ When everyone has completed their tags, invite the group to briefly share his or her name and symbol with the rest of the class.

Conclude this activity by pointing out that the different symbols stand for something special and unique about each person in the class. All of us are special and unique in God's eyes, but because we are so diverse, we are sometimes in conflict with each other.

Activity Two: *Outcry!*

Explain that this Bible study is different from the usual because it features a drama titled *Outcry!* During each session the students will read aloud a scene from the play.

◆ Share that as the weeks go by the group will define what a family is, explore what the family of God is like, and examine the kinds of problems which prevent our own families from expressing the kind of love and support we all need.

Each week we will study short passages of Scripture that relate to the situation revealed in the dramatic scene for the week.

ENGAGE

Activity One: *The Parable of the Lost Sons*

Word Smart



Body Smart



Moral Smart



Self Smart



People Smart



◆As you distribute copies of *The Parable of the Lost Sons*, explain that this parable is the centerpiece for the course, as well as a focus of this lesson.

◆Choose a narrator and read the script together, speaking in groups as the lines indicate.

Before adding pantomime to the reading, share the following cultural information with the group:

1. In the Middle Eastern culture of Bible times, asking for your inheritance before your father's death was a hurtful, shocking act. It would be as if you were telling your father that you were tired of waiting for him to die. A son doing so would ordinarily have been whipped for showing such open disrespect for his father. The son's action cuts his ties with the village and his home, major parts of his identity. He is now a drifter, someone not to be trusted.

2. The father's decision to give his son the inheritance would be totally unexpected in this culture. The father has been publicly humiliated and the whole village would be enraged at the son because he was a bad reflection on them as well as on his father. Thus, when the son returns, he is at risk in walking through the hostile village.

3. In a small Middle Eastern village, a man's standing in the community and the extent of his personal wisdom, is reflected in the slow, ponderous manner in which he walks. No one over the age of thirty would ever run anywhere. To do so would be to seem quite ridiculous. But this father takes up his robes in his hand like a child and creates such a scene that the villagers temporarily forget the scandal of the returning son in the light of the father's humiliating behavior.

4. The younger son has devised a face-saving plan to cover his return: he will abase himself by acting as a hired servant, a day worker who cannot be trusted in the house, to work off his debt for the money he squandered. But he is not given the chance to present his plan. He is received at once as an honored guest and restored to full status as a son of the house. He has not earned his forgiveness, but responds with a new heart—and a willingness to reconcile with all parties.

◆Read the scene again, but this time ask for volunteers to act it out in pantomime while others read.

◆Choose a father, the two sons, some party friends, and even a few pigs to play their parts in the story. Whether the actor is male or female doesn't matter.

◆Discuss entrance and exit points in the script beforehand.

Activity Two: *Walk in His Shoes*

Invite a discussion by asking:

1. What would happen if you asked your parents to sell their house and major assets and empty their savings account to divide their property among their children now?
2. Do you think your parents would hand over several thousand dollars and cheerfully ship you off to Las Vegas?
3. After you run out of money, how many of you feel you could go home again to live off your brothers' and sisters' share of the fortune?

Activity Three: *We Create a Parable*

- ◆If time permits, divide the class into two groups:
 - one to represent parents and
 - the other to represent children.
- ◆Invite the two groups to write responses for each question in "Walk in His Shoes."
- ◆When both groups are ready, invite them to create a brief modern day "lost sons" skit.

EXPLORE

Activity One: *Home Is. . .*

Word Smart



Self Smart



- ◆Divide the class into pairs or trios and invite each group to write the word "home" on a large piece of paper.

If your class is small, try this as a whole class discussion using a chalkboard or a large piece of paper taped to the wall.

People Smart



- ◆Encourage the class to brainstorm any word associations with "home" and make a cluster of related words around the core word. Is it a place? Is it a building? Is it a group of people? Is it necessarily a group of people related by blood?

- ◆After a few minutes, invite each group to share a few of their responses.
- ◆Continue the activity by asking:
 1. What it means when someone or something "feels like home"?
 2. What does it mean to be "homesick"?
 3. What do the students long for most when they feel homesick?
 4. Invite the small groups to add these feelings about home to their paper.

Activity Two: *That's a Quote!*

- ◆Distribute copies of the "What is Home?" hand-out.
- ◆Introduce this activity by explaining that we will read five quotations from famous thinkers and writers on the subject of "home".
- ◆Invite students to individually read through the list and decide which quotation about home they like the best.
- ◆Invite volunteers to briefly identify their favorite quotations and explain why they like them.

Activity Three: *Meet the Cast*

- ◆Distribute the “Meet the Characters” page from the **Outcry!** script.
- ◆Share that the young people in the play encounter some problems that cannot be solved—at least, not alone, and not in thirty minutes, like a television drama or comedy.
- ◆Quickly read through the “Meet the Characters” with the group.
- ◆Explain that in the “On My Own Time” activities in *Odyssey: The Journal CD* they will be using at home, they will have the opportunity to review the characters and think about which roles they would most enjoy reading in the weeks to come.
- ◆Decide now whether the same people will play the major roles from week to week, or whether the roles will rotate.

EXPRESS

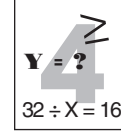
Picture Smart



Self Smart



Number Smart



Activity One: *My Family Tree*

- ◆Begin this activity by sharing that relationships are connections.
- ◆Invite the students to show the connections in their family by drawing a tree and on its branches writing the names of their relatives.
- ◆Have everyone begin with themselves and their brothers and sisters, then parents, grandparents. Encourage the class to extend the tree back as far as they can.
- ◆Extend this exercise, if time permits, to include an extended family tree. Invite thoughts about this extended tree by asking:
 - Are there people you and your parents or siblings consider family members, even though they are not blood related? If so, to whom should the lines of relationship extend?
- ◆Invite the class to take their family trees home and ask their parents to supply missing information about family connections.

EMPOWER

Activity One: *We Are God's Family*

Self Smart



People Smart



Word Smart



Moral Smart



◆ Indicate the poster of the tree the youth signed when they entered; write “Family of God” vertically on the tree trunk.

◆ Introduce the closing ritual by saying that the story of the “Lost Sons” is the way God, our heavenly parent, loves us. It defines and illustrates how the family of God is called upon to operate. The story of the elder son communicates to us that it isn’t enough to “follow the rules”. We are God’s children; we make up the branches of God’s “Family Tree”. We are called to forgive, reconcile, and restore—no matter what the cost to ourselves.

◆ Invite the class to take a few moments to think about and pray silently for the people in their family, and the people in God’s family.

Activity Two: *Our Closing Blessing*

◆ Read aloud 1 John 3:1-2. This is a thematic passage for the course, and it will be part of the weekly closing ritual.

◆ Invite the class to read the closing blessing with you:

Teacher: How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God!

Youth: This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

All: We should love one another.

EXPLORING AT HOME

This week the youth are to be encouraged to show their family trees to their parents and fill in any gaps they might have left in their personal family histories, write their own definitions of home or choose a favorite television family and answer questions about what they especially like about the way that family interacts, reflect on what they like about their own families, and read Scene 1 of the drama **Outcry!**

EVALUATION

- ◆Are you able to recall each student by name and remember at least one thing that each student said or did?
- ◆Did you learn something unique about each of student?
- ◆Did you have time to follow the lesson plan or did time constraints force you to eliminate an activity, or cut short time for student responses?
- ◆Look over any activities eliminated to determine if any activity can be moved over to the next session.
- ◆Were you able to define home and family?
- ◆Were you able to illustrate the quality of love in God's family?

Looking Ahead

1. Next week the group will begin reading the play and connecting the analogies of contemporary behavior with model situations from the scriptures.
2. Review the introductory notes about how to get a dramatic reading going smoothly.
3. Look over the discussion questions and be sure to read Scene 1 of **Outcry!** so it will be fresh in your mind for the upcoming session.
4. The folders are to be used to keep any handouts for the students from week to week. Be sure to collect them each week as the class will need all of the course handouts for Session 10.

The Parable of the Lost Sons

Luke 15:11-32

Narrator: There once was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to him:

Men: Father, give me my share of the property now!

Narrator: So the man divided his property between his two sons.

Women: After a few days, the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money.

Men: He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living.

All: He spent everything he had.

Narrator: Then a famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing. So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm...

All: To take care of the pigs!

Women: He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate

All: But no one gave him anything.

Narrator: At last he came to his senses and said:

Men: All my father's hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve! I will get up and go to my father and say:

All: Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers.

Narrator: So he got up and started back to his father.

Women: He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity

All: And he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him.

Men: Father!

Narrator: Said the son

Men: I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.

Narrator: But the father called to his servants.

Women: Hurry! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Then go and get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast!

All: For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost but now he has been found.

Narrator: And so the feasting began.

Women: In the meantime, the older son was out in the field. On his way back, when he came close to the house, he heard the music and dancing.

Narrator: So he called one of the servants and asked him

Men: What's going on?

Women: Your brother has come back home

Narrator: The servant answered

Women: And your father has killed the prize calf because he got him back safe and sound.

Men: The older brother was so angry that he would not go into the house!

Narrator: So his father came out and begged him to come in. But he spoke back to his father:

Men: Look, all these years I have worked for you like a slave, and I have never disobeyed your orders. What have you given me? Not even a goat for me to have a feast with my friends! But this son of yours wasted all your property, and when he comes back home, you kill the prize calf for him.

Women: My son

Narrator: The father answered

Women: You are always here with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be happy, because

All: Your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.

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Outcry! Meet the Cast

Mrs. Robinson teaches the Humanities class in which each of the five major student characters are enrolled. She is energetic, enthusiastic, and easy to talk to.

Matt Carver is an outspoken senior boy who sometimes intimidates other students with his sarcasm. He has a bad temper and sometimes gets into fights, but he has a large circle of friends (mostly guys) who regard him as a leader.

Sam Carver is Matt's father. He is a construction contractor who expects all of his orders to be obeyed on the spot. This attitude extends to his son, and he and Matt are often in conflict.

Claire Powell is a junior girl who is a little insecure about her talents and abilities. She is a loyal friend and a hard worker at school; still, she sees the bad things about herself more clearly than the good ones.

Janice Powell is Claire's mother, a busy, energetic woman who urges her daughter to become more active in school activities and to become popular.

Whitney Sloane is a very pretty senior girl who has many friends and a reputation for wildness. She dates a 22 year old college dropout and has a very casual attitude about her schoolwork.

Joseph Sloane is Whitney's father, a very successful corporate lawyer with little time for his family.

Paula Sloane is Whitney's mother, a magazine editor and member of the social set.

Keith Hoffman is a quiet, studious junior boy. He makes very high grades, but tends to fade into the background.

Timmy Hoffman is Keith's ten-year-old brother who looks to Keith for most of his parental guidance.

George Hoffman is Keith's troubled, alcoholic father.

Sally Hoffman, Keith's mother, is a department store floor manager who depends on Keith to keep the house running.

Sandy Jacobs is an outgoing, talkative junior girl who is involved in many school activities.

Jenny Jacobs is Sandy's nine-year-old sister.

Karen Jacobs is Sandy's mother, a Special Education consultant for Sandy's school system.

Frank Jacobs is Sandy's father, a history teacher in another high school.

Clark, Ryan are friends of Matt.

Susan, Erik are other students in the Humanities class.

Man, Woman—George Hoffman's parents, Keith's grandparents, in a flashback scene

What is “Home”?

But how shall we expect charity toward others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves? Charity begins at home is the voice of the world, yet is every man his greatest enemy, and, as it were, his own executioner.

— Sir Thomas Browne in *Religio Medici*

**Where we love is home
Home that our feet may leave
But not our hearts.**

— Oliver Wendell Holmes in *Homesick in Heaven*

**And homeless near a thousand homes I stood
And near a thousand tables pined and wanted food.**

— William Wordsworth in *Guilt and Sorrow*

The great advantage of a hotel is that it's a refuge from home life.

— George Bernard Shaw in *You Never Can Tell*

It all depends of what you mean by home...

Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in.

I should have called it

Something you somehow haven't to deserve.

— Robert Frost in *Death of a Hired Man*



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