

jesus school

The Father's Heart

Lisa Goetze

The Prodigal Son and The Prodigal Father

Luke 15:11-32

"Be merry"
Greek – *euphraino*
"eu" (glad, joyful)
"phren" (in the gut)

Zephaniah 3:17, Matthew 22:4, Revelation 19:6-9

- Can you let the Father celebrate with you? For you?
For others? And can you take part in that eternal celebration?
- Will you let the Father embrace you?

Anna Lakatos

A video story:

**In my Father's eyes
There is a love
That burns
Like fire for me**

Rick Wukasch

In Jesus we see a clear picture of the Father.

Jesus saw the Father as His:

1. Strong and authoritative leader
2. Wise teacher
3. Present guide and helper
4. Caring provider
5. Responsive problem solver
6. Alert protector
7. Compassionate caregiver

Matthew 11:25-30

**Mark 14:36, Hebrews 1:3a, Colossians 1:15, Luke 2:25-40,
Luke 3:21-22, Mark 9:7, 1 Peter 5:7**

- How is Jesus revealing the Father love of God to you? How are you listening to him, and allowing him to teach you how to be a child? His messenger? His beloved?
- How is he giving you rest from having to be God, and instead to let God be God?
- How is he training you to carry your yoke – and making it easy, or easier?

Home Church Questions

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. Watch the Father's heart video as a group for your focus activity.

<http://www.fathersloveletter.com/>

2. After reviewing Sunday's message, talk about what most encouraged, convicted, or perplexed you.

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

3. Read Luke 15:11-32.

- a. What verse or idea stands out to you? Why?
- b. What are you learning about the Father's character as you read this story? Which part of the passage conveys this? Read it again aloud.
- c. Which character do you identify with? The prodigal son? The older son? The father? How come?
- d. Read verse 31. How do you see God working this truth out in your life? Give examples and offer thanks to God together.

HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

4. In your huddles, each choose one takeaway question from Rick or Lisa's notes. Talk about your answer and pray for each other.

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Quotes

Welcome to our local teaching Sunday at The Meeting House. Today we will be hearing from Lisa Goetze, Rick Wukasch and Anna Lakatos on the Father's heart.

...his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.
~Luke 15:20

This most pitiful excuse of a son, Jesus tells us, is the object of the Father's intense longing and passion and affection. He is the object of the Father's care and unconditional no-strings-attached forgiveness.
~C. Baxter Kruger

Unlike a fairy tale, the parable provides no happy ending. Instead, it leaves us face to face with one of life's hardest spiritual choices: to trust or not to trust in God's all-forgiving love.
~Henri Nouwen

The feeble gospel preaches, "God is ready to forgive"; the mighty gospel preaches, "God has redeemed."
~P.T. Forsyth

There is one attribute of God that not even the best parent can hope to imitate - that is God's ability to be with you all the time. As parents we just cannot give constant attention 24 hours a day. We are finite beings who can only focus on one thing at a time. Not only is God with you all the time, but He gives you His whole attention.
~John Dawson

The return to the "Father from whom all fatherhood takes its name" allows me to let my dad be no less than the good, loving, but limited human being he is, and to let my heavenly Father be the God whose unlimited, unconditional love melts away all resentments and anger and makes me free to love beyond the need to please or find approval.
~Henri Nouwen

I will be a Father to you and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.
~2 Corinthians 6:18

Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.... Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father."
~John 14:6,9