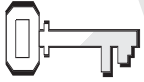


Home Again!



References

Luke 15:11-32;
Christ's Object Lessons,
pp. 198-211



Memory Verse

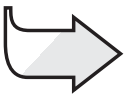
"This son of mine was
dead and is alive again;
he was lost and
is found" (Luke 15:24, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:

- Know** that people in God's family don't stop caring about each other.
- Feel** eager to accept everyone as part of God's family.
- Respond** by being friendly and helpful to others in our community of faith.



The Message

People in God's family never stop caring for each other.

Monthly Theme

We are members of God's family.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

A man has two sons. One of them feels restricted at home and demands his inheritance so he can go out into the world to live on his own. His father complies and the son goes out and wastes all of his money on worldly pleasures. Without money or friends, he realizes he has made a terrible mistake. He returns home and is warmly welcomed by his father, who gives a party in his honor.

This is a lesson about community.

Our family is a community. Our church family is also a community, a community of faith. Just as the father lovingly received and cared for his prodigal son, so we are to lovingly receive and care about all who wish to join our community of faith as members of God's family.

Teacher Enrichment

First-born—"This position was closely linked with the birthright and its special privileges, which included not only a favored portion of the inheritance but also certain spiritual blessings and responsibilities in the family" (*The SDA Bible Dictionary*, p. 369).

"In the parable of the prodigal son is presented the Lord's dealing with those who have once known the Father's love, but who have allowed the tempter to lead them captive at his will" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 198).

"The love of God still yearns over the one who has chosen to separate from Him, and He sets in operation influences to bring him back to the Father's house. . . . In the parable there is no taunting, no casting up to the prodigal of his evil course. The son feels that the past is forgiven and forgotten, blotted out forever. And so God says to the sinner, 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins'" (*ibid.*, pp. 202, 204).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	travel pictures and/or posters (see activity)
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Travel Center</i> B. <i>Lost and Found</i> C. <i>Ignored</i>	various objects and/or pictures showing different ways of travel object to hide in the classroom small gift for each child
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	<i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> box used last week 1-inch (2.5 cm) x 6-inch (15 cm) strips of paper in two different colors, pencils, glue or stapler
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	cassette tape/CD, toy car, toys, container of sweets, clothes, nice coat or outer garment, ring, box large sign reading "Home" with words of the memory verse, small toy car for each memory verse word, transparent tape and small pieces of paper or blank stickers Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Caring for the Broken</i>	broken toys, torn story books, etc; repair items such as glue, transparent tape, needle and thread, etc.
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Secret Care Plans</i>	paper, pencils, markers, crayons, etc.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Prepare in advance: Display pictures or travel posters of faraway places. On each picture put questions and facts about the place.

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Direct the children to the pictures on the walls. After all have had a chance to look, ask the children to sit down and begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- objects and/or pictures showing ways of travel

A. Travel Center

Talk about what is involved in each type of travel illustrated in the “Travel Center” pictures displayed where all can see.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **When you go on a trip, what is your favorite way to travel? Why? How do you least like traveling? Do you like to visit faraway places? Do you like to go with your family or alone? Why? Today our lesson is about a boy who left home. He traveled into a faraway country and got into some difficulty. Our message for today is . . .**



PEOPLE IN GOD’S FAMILY NEVER STOP CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

Say that with me.

B. Lost and Found

Choose a child to hide something in the room while the others sit with eyes closed. The other children in the class have to find it. The child who hid the object says “hot” if the searchers are getting close, or “cold” if they are getting too far away. When the object is found, have the class applaud.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel when you were looking for the lost item?** (Anxious to find it very soon.) **How did you feel when you were getting close?** (happy) **How did you feel when you found it?** (happier still) **Our Bible lesson today is about a boy who was lost and then found. We will learn that . . .**



PEOPLE IN GOD’S FAMILY NEVER STOP CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

Say that with me.

C. Ignored

Bring enough small gifts for every child in the class. Choose two teachers. Give the first teacher only a few gifts; give the second teacher enough gifts for the rest of the class.

Say: **These teachers are your friends, and they have a little gift for you today. Line up and go to the first teacher to get your gift.** When the first teacher has no gifts left, tell them to go to the other teacher for their gift.

You Need:

- small gift for each child

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think the first teacher felt when everyone went to the other teacher?** (maybe forsaken, alone) **Have you ever been ignored when you didn't have anything to share?** (yes) **Are some people your friend only when you have something to give them?** (seems so) **How does that make you feel?** (used, not loved for who I am, etc.) **Today we will learn about someone who lost all of his so-called friends when his money was gone. We will also learn that no matter what happens . . .**



PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY NEVER STOP CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Let the "Welcome Buddies" introduce the visitors. Give these visitors a special warm greeting.



Suggested Songs

- "Anywhere With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 45)
- "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129)
- "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 28)
- "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 139)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Remind the children that God cares for people everywhere.



Offering

Say: **When we give our offerings for missions, we show that we care about our neighbors all over the world.**

You Need:

- decorated box used last week



Prayer

Continue the prayer chain that was started in Lesson 8. Give each child two different color strips. On one strip ask them to write a name and a prayer request for that person. On the other strip they can write an answer to a prayer that they prayed on behalf of someone else. These strips can then be linked together and glued or stapled. Add the links to the Lesson 8 prayer chain. Say: **Praying for other people is one way to show that we care about them. Our chain symbolizes community and how we keep caring for one another.**

You Need:

- 1-inch (2.5 cm) x 6-inch (15 cm) strips of paper in two different colors
- pencils
- glue or stapler

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- medium-sized box
- cassette tape/CD
- toy car
- toys
- container of sweets
- clothes
- nice coat or outer garment
- ring

Experiencing the Story

Characters: prodigal son, father

Props: Prepare in advance a box with the following things inside: a cassette tape/CD, toy car, food, toys, sweets, clothes, etc. These things are to represent the type of things on which the prodigal probably wasted his money: music entertainment, travel, fancy food, rich desserts, and fancy clothes. Also have waiting elsewhere a nice coat and a ring. These things symbolize the clothes and ring the father presented to the son upon his return.

As you tell the story have the children (at the appropriate time) choose objects from the box to represent the items in the story. Choose a boy to play the prodigal, and, at the appropriate time in the story, place the coat and ring on him.

Read or tell the story.

“Dad, please, I want my part of the inheritance money now!” The young man spoke firmly as he put his hand on his father’s arm.

Father sighed. “You’ve asked so many times. I don’t want to see you go. But maybe the time has come to give you your share.” The son couldn’t help noticing the tears in his father’s eyes as he spoke.

Before long, the inheritance money was divided between the man’s two sons. The younger one immediately packed his bags and left home. He went to another country, far away from the farm life he had known. He had plenty of money to spend, and that’s just what he did! If he wanted something, he bought it. He gave

big parties. He wasted money on whatever his heart desired. *[Have the children choose things in the box that represent things on which the prodigal wasted his money. As they take out each thing, have them mention what that object represents. See the note after **Props** for ideas.]*

But one shocking day, he realized that his money was gone. No more parties. No more buying whatever he wanted. It was gone! And so were his new friends.

He began to look for a job, but the country he was in was having hard times. In fact, it was a time of severe famine. There was no work, and no food to be found.

Finally, someone took pity upon him and gave him a job feeding pigs. It was about as disgusting a job as he could imagine. But at least it was a job. He was starving. Even the pig’s food looked good to him.

Suddenly he said to himself, *What am I doing here? How did I get myself into this mess? Even the people who are servants at my father’s house have enough to eat! In fact, they usually have food left over! I know what I can do! I’ll go back home and ask my father to hire me as a servant!*

So the young man headed toward home. *[Have the “prodigal son” walk to one side of the room.]* All the way home he practiced what he would say.

When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. *[Have the “father” standing opposite the “prodigal son” on the other side of the room.]* *Can it be?* he thought. *Can it really be my son?*

Dashing down the road, he wrapped his boy in a big hug. *[“Father” runs to “prodigal son” and hugs him.]* They laughed and cried together. Then the son said, “Father, please forgive me. I’ve sinned against God and against you. I

don't deserve to be called your son any more. . . ."

Before he could finish what he had planned to say, his father called to his servants. "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on my son. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. *[Place the coat and ring on the "prodigal son."]* Run back to the house and get a feast ready. My boy has come home, and we're going to celebrate. This is my son who was lost. I thought he was dead, but he's alive!"

Today, in our own family and in our church family, we want to be just like the father in the story. We want to care about people, even when they make bad choices. We want to accept everyone with love. And we want to celebrate when someone comes to Jesus.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think the son felt when his father hugged him?** (loved and cared for, amazed, etc.) **How do you think the father felt when he hugged his son?** (overjoyed that he was back home) **How do you feel when you see a person who leaves God and makes big mistakes?** (Sometimes I don't care about that person; hope that he/she gets what he/she deserves; wish that he/she would come back to God, etc.) **When a person leaves God's family and makes big mistakes, what are you going to do? What will you remember?** Answer with today's message:



PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY NEVER STOP CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

Memory Verse

Before Sabbath School prepare a large sign reading "Home" with words of the memory verse printed underneath. Tape one word of the memory verse to the bottom of each toy car. Hide the cars around the room.

To begin this activity explain that the cars are hidden. The children are to find a car, then "drive" it and "park" it near the sign that says "Home." When all the cars are parked at the sign, ask the children to read the memory verse from the sign together. Then ask them to turn the cars over and put the words in the right order. Mix up the cars and repeat the activity until all know the verse.

Bible Study

Have a child read about the family reunion in today's Bible story (Luke 15:20-23). Choose other children to read Bible records of other family reunions:

Jacob	(Genesis 32:6 and 33:4)
Joseph	(Genesis 45:1, 14, 15)
Moses	(Exodus 2:7-9)
Lazarus	(John 11:38-44)
All God's children	(John 14:1-3)

Debriefing

How do you feel when you are separated from your family? (I miss them, etc.) **How do you feel when you return home?** (happy, not happy, etc.) **What is your favorite family reunion story among the stories that we just read? Why?** (Accept answers.) **Tell that story in your own words. What part of today's Bible story shows today's message in action?** (The father accepted his son back home and cared for his needs.) **What do you wish to remember about everyone, no matter what they do?** (Say today's message together.)



PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY NEVER STOP CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

You Need:

- large sign reading "Home" with memory verse printed underneath
- toy car for each memory verse word
- cellophane tape and small pieces of paper or blank stickers

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- broken toys
- torn story books, etc.
- repair items such as glue, cellophane tape, needle and thread, etc.

Caring for the Broken

Display the broken items on one table. Put the repair items on another table.

Give every child a broken toy. Ask:

How would you fix the broken toy?

What repair item would you use to fix it?

For example: teddy bear with an arm coming off—use needle and thread. If enough supervision and time, allow use of the repair materials to start fixing the toy.

Debriefing

Say: **Some people in God's family are like broken toys. They are broken and need some tender care to fix**

them. They need to meet someone who cares for and loves them, even though they made mistakes that caused them to be broken.

How can you show that you care for members of God's family who need fixing? (Be friendly; listen to them; love and accept them; help them the best way you can, etc.) **When you care for others in need, how do you feel?** (happy) **When others care for you, how do you feel?** (happy, grateful) **What are you going to remember? Let's answer with our message:**



PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY NEVER STOP CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Secret Care Plans

Say: **Think of someone who is not really your friend. Maybe that person even did something to make you unhappy. Make a secret plan to do something helpful and nice for this person during this coming week.**

Write or draw a picture of this plan on paper. On the top of the paper write "Secret Care Plan." Then write "Result" on the other side. Later this week, under "Result" write or draw a picture of what happened when you carried out your plan. If you get a chance, do something else that is nice for this person—this time not in secret.

Allow time.

Debriefing

Ask: **Have you decided whom you will surprise with your "Secret Care Plan"?** (Ask for a show of hands.) **Be prepared to share your experience during "Prayer and Praise" time next Sabbath.**

How do you feel about showing that you care to someone who is not your friend? (not sure; scared; want to try, etc.) **Why do you want to do this?** (Answer with today's message.)



**PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY
NEVER STOP CARING FOR
EACH OTHER.**

Closing

Pray that the children will have courage to show that they care about all of God's children, even those who aren't their friends.

You Need:

- paper
- pencils, markers, crayons, etc.

Home Again!

References

Luke 15:11-32;
Christ's Object Lessons,
 pp. 198-211

Memory Verse

"This son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:24, NIV).

The Message

People in God's family never stop caring for each other.

Has anyone you loved ever gone away, or moved away from home? How did you feel when they left? Did they ever come back for a visit?

A long time ago an unhappy son left home. Here's his story.

"Dad, please, I want my part of the inheritance money now!" The young man spoke firmly as he put his hand on his father's arm. He wanted to get away from his family . . . and hard work.

Father sighed. "You've asked so many times. Are you sure? Maybe the time has come to give you your share." The son couldn't help noticing that his father had tears in his eyes as he spoke.

Before long, the inheritance money was divided, and the young man packed his bags and headed out. He went to another country, far away from the farm life he had known. He had plenty of money to spend, and that's just what he did! If he wanted something, he bought it. He gave big parties. He wasted money on whatever his heart desired. And he made new friends who helped him spend his inheritance.

But one shocking day, he realized that his money was gone. No more parties. No more buying whatever he wanted. And no more friends! Everything was gone!

He began to look for a job, but the country was having hard times. In fact, it was a time of famine. There was no work, and no food to be found.

Finally, someone gave him a job feeding pigs. It was about as disgusting a job as he could imagine, but at least it was a job. He thought

he was starving. Even the pig's food looked good to him.

He suddenly said to himself, *What am I doing here? How did I get myself into this mess? Even the people who are servants at my father's house have enough to eat! In fact, they usually have food left over! I know what I can do! I'll go back home and ask my father to hire me as a servant!*

As fast as his hungry legs could carry him, the young man headed toward home. He practiced what he would say when he got there. It always began, "Father, I have sinned . . ."

When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. *Can it be?* he thought. *Can it really be my son?* Dashing down the road, he wrapped his boy in a big hug. They laughed and cried together. And then the son began his speech. "Father, please forgive me. I've sinned against God and against you. I don't deserve to be called your son anymore. . . ."

Before he could finish what he had planned to say, his father called to his servants. "Quick! Bring the best robe

for my son. Put a ring on



his finger and sandals on his feet. Run back to the house and get a feast ready. My boy has come home, and we're going to celebrate. This is my son who was lost. I thought he was dead, but he's alive!"

Today, in our own family and in our church family, we want to be just like that father. We want to care about people, even when they make bad choices. We want to accept everyone with love. And we want to celebrate when someone comes home to Jesus.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, play hide and seek with your family. Pretend you are the "lost" son in the Bible lesson story. Who is watching out for you? Read your Bible lesson together.
- Read Luke 15:20. Teach the memory verse to your family.
- Sing a praise song before prayer. Thank God for watching over you.

Sunday

- With your family, read and discuss Luke 15:11-20. Whom do you think the son represents? The father? Ask God to help you make wise choices.
- Begin a picture book of events in the story.
- Write the memory verse words below on smiley face cutouts—one word per cutout. Luke 15:24 will help you put them in the right order.
of and was mine dead alive lost was son
he is found this again and

Monday

- During family worship read and discuss Luke 15:21-32. Did the son say all he had planned? Why? Add drawings to your story picture book.
- Arrange your memory verse cutouts. Say the verse. Then thank God for a loving family.
- Sing "I Have the Joy" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 109).

Tuesday

- For family worship tell your lesson story in your own words, using your picture book version.
- The lost son wasn't the only lost one in the Bible. Read the following texts and discover what was lost and found. Write it in the blanks.
Luke 15:9 _____ Matthew 18:12, 13 _____
- Pray for people you know who have turned away from God.

- Arrange the memory verse cutouts without help.

Wednesday

- During family worship read 1 John 4:8. Then make a card that says, "God loves you no matter what. And so do I." Think about someone who has hurt you and send them the card. Ask God to help you love each other.
- Ask a family member to help you look up the word "prodigal" in a dictionary. What does it mean?
- Say your memory verse in front of a mirror.

Thursday

- During worship look up these texts and read about some people who were separated from God for a time. Tell why and write their names.
Genesis 28:10-13 _____ Exodus 2:11-15 _____
2 Samuel 12:13 _____
- Make up a tune for your memory verse.
- When the prodigal son came home, his father celebrated with a party. Celebrate your family's love by enjoying a special treat. Thank God for that love.

Friday

- During worship act out your lesson story as a family. Put a lot of emotion and energy into it. If you have party noisemakers, use them at the end of the story.
- Read Ephesians 4:32. The lost son made his wrongs right and his father forgave him. Take time now to make right any hurts you might have had in your family this week. Pray together that you will always love and care for each other no matter what.
- Sing "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 140, verse 1).