

GO DEEPER

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We've highlighted a place where the following segment could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.

But you can also use this section as a short devotional to carry you through the week until your next group meeting.

1. Peek at the Greek: Compassion

Some ancient Greek words are so nuanced, so particular, that simple English words fail to capture their depth. *Splanchnidzo* is one of those words.

Splanchnidzo is most commonly translated "compassion." To many English speakers, "compassion" is a feeling of pity or concern—feeling sorry for someone. But *splanchnidzo* literally means "to be moved to one's bowels." It is a physical reaction to seeing the needs of another that drives a person to immediate action.

When the father had compassion on his prodigal son, he did not merely feel sorry for him; his insides did a flip. He did not even think of what the son had done with his money before rushing out to him. The compassion he felt was an explosion of joy.

When God the Father sees you, he feels *splanchnidzo*.

When are you most likely to think God dislikes you?

What causes you to avoid God?

In what ways does understanding God's compassion change the way you approach him?

2. Signs of Sonship

When the younger son returns home, he is given multiple pieces of clothing and a feast. To our eyes, they may just seem like nice gifts, but in Jesus's culture they symbolized specific rights and privileges. In Christ, these same privileges are extended to all Christians and teach us a lot about how God treats repentant sinners.

