READ	
Luke 15:11–24	
WATCH	
Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in David Marvin's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.	
What were the four major groups of people in Jesus's society? Which group was Jesus choosing to spend time with?	
What does God feel when he sees you?	
What is God's response to repentance?	
Show Session 1: God's Love for Rebels (13 minutes).	
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## **DISCUSS** Read Luke 15:1-2. Jesus was welcoming and eating with the "prodigal sons" of his time: tax collectors and sinners. This simple act of compassion causes the Pharisees, the good religious people, to criticize Jesus. What does Jesus's compassion for the tax collectors and sinners tell you about him? What does it show you about God's heart for sinners? What does the criticism of the Pharisees show you about their view of sinners? One would think the Son of God would spend time with kings and high priests, but Jesus didn't. If he were to appear today, what kinds of people would you expect the Son of God to hang out with in our society? Read Luke 15:11-24. Jesus uses the parable of the prodigal son to illustrate God the Father's love for people who are far from him. At the very beginning of the story, we meet a son who treats his father disrespectfully and wastes his father's blessings on sinful pursuits. This son represents people who reject God, their heavenly Father. In what ways can you relate to this son? What do we find when we look for love, meaning, and value apart from God? In the video, David asked us what we think God feels when he looks at us. What do you imagine God thinks and feels when he looks at you? Why do you think that? In verse 21, we read that the father's first feeling toward his son was compassion. God feels the same compassion when he sees you. What is your reaction to God's compassion?

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Despite the way he was treated by his son, the father rushes out to embrace him when he returns home. Since the father represents God in this parable, what do the father's actions tell you about God's love for you?

**Note:** To get a peek at the Greek word for compassion,

see Go Deeper section 1 at the end of this study.

In verses 18–19, the son rehearses an apology to his father. But, as David pointed out, the father doesn't let him finish his practiced apology. Instead the father showers his son with gifts and throws a feast in his honor. <b>How might you expect to be welcomed home if you were in the son's shoes?</b>	
<b>Note:</b> To learn more about the signs of sonship, see Go Deeper section 2 at the end of this study.	
Think about the father's actions towards his son. This son has done nothing to deserve a feast. He has not earned the gifts his father gave to him. In the same way, we have not earned God's love or the gift of salvation. They are freely given to us by our heavenly Father despite our sins	
against him. What does it mean to you that God loves you despite your sins against him?	
There is no sin so bad that God will refuse to love you. There is no past too dirty to keep him from embracing you. What can you do to turn away from any sin in your life and toward your loving father?	
LAST WORD	
We often think that God is disgusted or disappointed by us. Even if we believe we are forgiven in Christ, we still struggle to believe that God could see us as anything	
more than muddy children who will mess up his beautiful house. But that is not true. God loves sinners. He loves them so much that he sent his Son to rescue them from	
their sin.	
God does not ask you to clean yourself up before turning to him. All he asks is that you return home to his loving	
embrace.	
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## **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.  rightnow MEDIA	

him as a son instead of a slave. The robe also covers the son's dirty appearance and ritual uncleanliness. Read	
Galatians 3:26–27.	
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What "robe" has God given us? What status does this robe give us in God's house?	
Next the father gives his son a ring. This signet ring was a sign of authority used to sign and seal official household documents. Read Ephesians 1:13–14.	
What "ring" has God given us? How has God marked us with his seal?	
The final piece of clothing the father gives the son is sandals. Sandals were only given to members of the household, not to slaves or servants, and were signs of freedom. Read Galatians 4:31–5:1.	
Why did Jesus set us free? How should we respond tothat freedom?	
After reinstating his son's position, authority, and freedom, the father throws a party in his son's honor. Read Luke 15:8–10.	
Jesus's parables in Luke 15 highlight God's reaction to repentant sinners?	
In Jesus, we are called sons and daughters of God. He covers our sin and gives us every spiritual blessing in heaven. Praise God for what he's done and sit in the assurance of God's abundant love for you.	
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