



3rd – 5th

February 22-23, 2014

DATE

Two Sons and A Father

LESSON TITLE

Luke 15:11-32
The Adventure Bible (p. 1148)

WHERE TO FIND IT

God is A Loving Father

MAIN POINT

schedule

Connect Time (15 minutes): Five minutes after the service begins, split kids into groups and begin their activity.

Large Group (30 minutes): Begin 20 minutes after the service starts. Model what it looks like to be engaged in large group.

Small Group (15 minutes): Keep kids in small groups until parents arrive. If you *all* have extra time at the end, you can review the video and songs together.

tips

Before service begins, decide as a volunteer team how you want to run the Connect Time decorating. And don't forget to clean it up after service. The next group gets to create their own party atmosphere.

check-in/out

As kids leave, remind them to tell their parents what they made out of clay today!

large group heads up

We're learning about one of Jesus' parables: the story of two sons and their father. It shows us how much God loves us, no matter what we do wrong. Sometimes, this story emphasizes the younger son, but we're looking at both sons equally.



connect time

GOAL: *Connect Time is all about engaging kids in an activity that allows them to connect with each other right away while simultaneously piquing their curiosity for Large Group and preparing their minds for what they're going to hear.*

DECORATE FOR A PARTY

The room should look like a party when kids return from large group. So during Connect Time, decorate! Small groups can decorate their tables, whole groups can decorate the room, etc. Here are the supplies you have;

- **Streamers** (1 roll per small group)
- **1 snowflake dangling spiral** per small group **(these will get reused!)**
- **Butcher paper** on which you can draw balloons and confetti with **markers**
- As you decorate, ASK:
 - What was the best/worst part of your week?
 - Why do you think we are decorating today?

Before you go to Large Group, remind kids of the expectations for Large Group behavior: (1) be kind, (2) listen when somebody speaks, and (3) follow the leader's instructions.



instructions

Goal: to help kids (1) retell the story, (2) connect the love of the father in the story to the love of God for us, and (3) understand that no matter what, God wants us to love him back!

Why? This story connects to different types of kids, depending on their struggle. Make sure to talk about both sons—and the love the father had for *each* of them.

Tip: Before you begin, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal truth to kids and help them process it.

small group

REVIEW THE STORY

1. OK, so why are we throwing a party today?
2. To whom did Jesus tell this story?
3. How did the two sons make their dad sad?
4. What did the dad do when the younger son came back?
5. Who is like the dad in that story? Who is like the sons in that story?
6. Remember, Jesus told that story to teach a lesson. What do you think that story teaches us?
7. Is anything about this story confusing? Any questions?

CONNECT TO THE STORY

Even at this young age, some kids may connect more with the younger son; some the older. This activity will give them some space to connect to the story personally.

- Give each kid some **clay**.
- Kids can sculpt their favorite part of the story (or an object from their favorite part).
- Either share with everyone, or have kids turn and share their favorite part with a friend.

APPLY THE TRUTH IN THE STORY

- Kids should still have clay.
- Put them in pairs.
- Remind them of today's verse: **Matthew 22:37-38 Jesus replied: "‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment..."**

- That dad (and God) just wanted his sons (and us) to love him back. ASK:
 - How could the younger son love his dad back? How could the older son?
 - What would it feel like to know that somebody loved you SO much that they always wanted to be with you, no matter what you did wrong? (*Remind them that God does love them that way!*)
- In pairs, kids should think of ONE way they can love God back this week (they can refer to the actions from today's large group game)
- In pairs, sculpt something to show it.
- Before you share, hand out the **party blowers**. Remind kids that God is like that dad who throws a party when we love him back.
- Share sculptures.

***Pray with the kids, thanking God that he loves us SO much.**

Extra Time? Put kids into teams. Tell them they have to choose at least three objects from the room to use as props as they re-enact the story.

PLEASE COLLECT THE CLAY. IT WILL BE REUSED BY OTHER SERVICES.

special notes

Today, we're focusing on how much God loves us...and how he wants us to love him back!

presenter tips

There are so many truths packed into this little story. Before you begin, pray that the Holy Spirit speaks to kids and reveals the truth they need to hear.

script

Hi everybody! Welcome to Kids' Club. It's so great to see you today. You guys looked like you were having a lot of fun in your Connect Time game. In fact, it looks like we're getting ready for a party! Does anybody know why we're decorating? (Let kids guess.)

Actually, we're decorating for a party because in today's story, there's a dad who threw a party for his son. You'll find out why by the end of large group today!

JESUS TELLS A PARABLE

But to find out, we have to learn this story. It's another special story that Jesus taught called a parable. Does anybody remember (or know) what a parable is? (Let kids say: a story that teaches a lesson.) That's right, it's a story that teaches us a lesson.

Now, when Jesus told this story, he was talking to lots of people. Some people **were following Jesus**. Some people were called "**sinners**." Of course, we ALL do wrong things (sins), but these people knew they made a lot of wrong choices and they hadn't decided to follow Jesus yet. And some people were called **Pharisees**. Pharisees did a lot of good things, but they didn't do those things because they loved God. They did them so people would be impressed.

TWO SONS MADE THEIR DAD SAD

These people were all pretty different, but Jesus wanted everybody in the crowd to know God loved them—and that all he wants is for us to love him back. So he told a story about two brothers. One did a lot of "wrong" things. One did a lot of good things. Both of them made their dad very sad. Let's watch a video about the story Jesus told. As you watch, see if you can figure out why the sons made their dad sad.

Video: God's Story / Two Sons and A Father

Wow, what an amazing story! I'm sure glad God loves us, no matter what we do. (**Show**



script continued

picture of two sons.) So why did the younger son make his dad sad? (Let kids respond: basically, he sinned, ran away from his father, lived wildly, etc.) That's right, he didn't even care about getting close to his dad.

And why did the older son make his dad sad? Did anybody figure it out? (Let kids respond.) Yes, the older son made his dad sad because he followed the rules but forgot that it's special to obey. And he wanted his brother to get punished. That's not loving at all.

THE DAD LOVES THEM BOTH

But even though the boys made their dad sad, did he love them anyway? (Let kids say: Yes.) How do you know? (Let kids respond.) Yes! BEFORE the younger son could say "sorry," while he was still in the distance, the father RAN up to him and KISSED him.

And even though the older son didn't want to go to the party, he was invited! At *any* time, he could come in and have a great time celebrating with his dad and brother, as a family.

(Refer to the dad in the picture.) So does anybody know who the father is like? (Let kids say: God) Yep, and who do you think the brothers are like? (Let kids say: us.) That's right. All the dad wanted was for his sons to love him back and obey him because they loved him. And you know what? That's exactly what God wants from *us* too. Remember, in the Bible, Jesus tells us this:

SLIDE: Matthew 22:37-38 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment..."

WE CAN "GO HOME" TO GOD (OR "GO TO THE PARTY" WITH GOD!)

We don't know what the older brother ended up doing. He was *invited* to the party, but maybe he stayed angry and didn't go...Jesus doesn't tell us. But we DO know that the younger brother decides to leave his bad choices and go home to his father.

(Show picture of the loving father.) And the good news is, we can do that, too! No matter what we've done, we can repent, which means say "sorry" and go back to God—or join him in the party. He'll welcome us back with celebration and open arms, just like the dad in the story!

LET'S PRACTICE

So let's practice! Everyone stand up, and spread out. (Leave up picture of the dad.) Repenting means to return to God, and asking for his help. And we're going to play a game to help us all remember how good it is to repent. After all, who wouldn't want to be close to a dad who is full of love and wants to throw a party when we come back to him?

So I'm going to give an example of things we all do. If what I say seems like something that shows love to God, everyone take one hop. If it seems like it would make God sad, turn your back toward the screen. Let's try that part now.

- I invited a new kid to sit by me at lunch. (Everyone hop.) Good job! Loving others shows God we love him!



script continued

- I told a tiny little lie to avoid getting into BIG trouble. (Everyone turns his or her back toward the screen.) That's right...it's a choice that would separate us from God.

But you do not have to stay that way! Just like the younger brother could come home and the older brother could have gone to the party! You can repent and get close to God again. So, when I say "repent", you say, "I repent". Then you can turn back around. And next, you can say, "I need God's help." Then you can take one hop towards God, the Father.

OK, let's get started:

- I encouraged my sister when she was learning something new. (Hop)
- I hoped my older brother would get in trouble for not helping me do the dishes. (Turn from God) That's right. All right, repent! ("I repent", turn around. "I need God's help", hop.)
- I made my friend feel left out. (Turn from God) All right, repent! ("I repent", turn around. "I need God's help", hop.)
- I gave my friend a high five when she won a game and beat me. (Hop)
- I prayed that God would give me strength to be nicer to others at school. (Hop)
- Now this is an interesting one, listen closely, and think about whether this gets you closer to God, or separates you from him: When my grandma was over, I helped my brother with homework. But only because I wanted my grandma to think I was a kind person; I stopped helping him right when she left. (Turn from God) It's good to help people, but God wants us to act out of love for him and them, not so that we look good to others. All right, repent! ("I repent", turn around. "I need God's help", hop.)
- I worry that I will not be taken care of, I don't trust God. (Turn from God) All right, repent! ("I repent", turn around. "I need God's help", hop.)
- One more: I told God how great he is by singing songs and dancing. (Hop)

Wow, every time we hopped, we could pretend God threw a party! God loves us SO much, that he celebrates when we decide to get close to him!

WORSHIP

And remember how singing songs and dancing for Jesus shows God we love him? Let's all love our father right now by worshipping him together.

Song: Because You Love Me (with hand motions)

Song: Before I Go, I Stop

PRAY

Can I have somebody come up and thank God for always loving us no matter what?



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PREP needs



connect time supplies

Per small group

1. Roll of streamers (put a combination of colors in the rooms. Blue: <http://bit.ly/1eLsTV1> or Red: <http://bit.ly/1ahwbTP>
2. 1 snowflake dangling spiral per group (can reuse for services! Please put a combination of colors in the rooms: OT: IN-4/3091 OR IN-13613810)
3. Butcher paper
4. Markers

small group supplies

1. Noisemakers (Party blowers)
2. Adventure Bible (p. 1148)
3. Clay (enough for each kid to have some; can reuse per service; something like this: <http://bit.ly/1j4z9OI>)

large group supplies

The Adventure Bible (p. 1148)

a/v needs

1. Video: God's Story / Two Sons and A Father
2. Image: Two Sons
3. SLIDE: Matthew 22:37-38 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment..."
4. Image: Loving father
5. Song: Because You Love Me (hand motions)
6. Song: Before I Go, I Stop

connect questions

Tell me about the two sons and their father.
What does this parable teach us?

parent page

We learned another one of Jesus' parables: the story of two sons and their father. Ask your child what it teaches us. And, if you want, read it together in Luke 15:11-32 or watch a video about it by searching for "God's Story: Two Sons and A Father" on CrossroadsKidsClub.net.