



# 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>

January 21-22, 2017

DATE

Two sons and a father.

LESSON TITLE

Luke 15:11-32, Ephesians 4:32

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 its own party atmosphere.

## check-in/out

As kids leave, remind them about why they received a party invitation 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.*

### **PARTY TIME!**

*\*Divide kids into small groups.*

- It's time to decorate! Tell kids that we'll find out WHY we're decorating later, but for now, just use the available supplies and have fun decorating as a group.
- Each group can decorate their own tables/space and the area around it (The walls, etc.) Here are the supplies you have:
  - **Masking tape** and **markers**
  - **Streamers** (1 roll per small group; tear off pieces and give to kids to hang up)
  - **Regular pieces of paper** (1 per kid; let them draw images of balloons and decorations to hang on walls, etc.)
  - **1 large sheet of tear-off paper** (Let kids draw images of cake, food, balloons, confetti, etc.)

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

- What's the best party you've ever been to? What was it like?
- Why do we throw parties?

**Before you go to Large Group, you can ask kids how their week went. You can also 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:** Kids will (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 struggles. 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. Now that we've heard about the parable from Large Group, why did we decorate for a party? (To celebrate how we can return to God, and he'll love us no matter what. Just like the father celebrated the son who returned home!)
2. How did the two sons make their dad sad? (The younger son rejected him, he ran away from home, spent all of his father's money, etc. The older son was angry and didn't show love to his brother; he wanted him to be punished.)
3. How did the dad treat each of the sons at the end of the story? (He threw a party for the son who left, and he invited the other son to the party too.)
4. Who is like the dad in that story? (God.) Who are like the sons in that story? (We are.)
5. What was Jesus trying to teach through that parable? (That we make wrong choices and turn away from God, but we can always come back and accept his love.)
6. Which son do you relate to more: the younger son who left, or the older son who stayed?

### MAKE IT PERSONAL

- Tell kids that God celebrates when we repent and come back to him, so we're going to fill out a party invitation....for ourselves!
- Give each kid a **party invitation**, and tell them to fill in their name ("Dear...") Explain that this is an invitation from God, and he wants YOU to come to the party, just like the father in today's story threw a party for his lost son.
- Remind kids that the 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 way can WE love God back? (Ideas on next page if kids need help.)
- Have kids **write or draw** one way they can love God on the back of the card.

(Continued on next page.)



- Here's some ideas to love God back, just as he's loved us: Spend time with him, talk to him, listen to him, read his words in the Bible, tell him thank you, write a prayer to him, serve others, follow him by making right choices that Jesus would make, etc.)

*Extra time? Play some party games, like Simon Says, Freeze Tag or Musical Chairs!*

## special notes

There are so many truths packed into this little story. Before you begin, pray that the Holy Spirit speaks to each kid and reveals the truth he/she need to hear.

## presenter tips

Here's a link to today's video:

God's Story / Two Sons and a Father:  
<https://vimeo.com/35595649>

## script

### WELCOME AND WORSHIP

**Main Goal:** Review Connect Time and introduce the lesson.

**Notes:**

**\*Click to play intro music.**

- **Welcome:** Hey everybody! Welcome to Kids' Club. It's so great to see you here today. You did a great job decorating in Connect Time; it looks like we're ready for a party!
- **Ask:** Does anybody know WHY we decorated our room? (Let kids guess.) Good guesses! But actually, it's because of today's story. In it, there's a dad who throws a huge party for his son, and it's not because it's his birthday. It's because of something even better.
- **Say:** Before we get to that, let's watch a movie clip from Finding Nemo. If you've seen it, you know that Nemo gets separated from his dad, Marlin. But then Marlin does everything he possibly can to find his son again. Let's see what happens when they finally reunite.
- **Video: Finding Nemo / Reunion**
- **Ask:** So how did the dad react when he finally found his son? (Let kids respond.) Yes, he was SO glad and relieved! Today we're going to hear another story that's kind of similar, and Jesus told it in the Bible!
- **Ask:** Do you think that when Jesus told stories, it was JUST to have fun and entertain? (Let kids respond.) No! He told stories to teach people about something important. We have a special word for these stories, does anybody know it? (Let kids respond.) That's right, it's called a parable.

### JESUS TELLS A PARABLE

**Main Goal:** Understand that Jesus wanted to reach all kinds of people, those who followed him already, and those who didn't.

- **Say:** Now, when Jesus told this story, he was talking to lots of people. Some of them followed Jesus, and some didn't.
- **(Image: Sinner)** Some of these people knew they made wrong choices, but they hadn't decided to follow Jesus yet.
- **(Image: Pharisee)** Some of these people were called Pharisees. They 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.
- **Say:** These people were all pretty different, but Jesus wanted everybody in the crowd to know God loved them—and wants us to love him back. And remember, no matter who you are, we all sin and make wrong choices. None of us is perfect!

### TWO SONS AND THEIR DAD

**Main Goal:** Illustrate God's love for us through the parable of the Prodigal Son.

- **Say:** So He told a story about two brothers. One did a lot of wrong things. One did a lot of good things. But 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**
- **Ask:** So why did the younger son make his dad sad? (Let kids respond: He sinned/made wrong choices, ran away from his father, lived wildly, etc.) That's right, the younger son made a lot of wrong choices. He didn't even care about getting close to his dad.
- **Ask:** And why did the older son make his dad sad? This one's a little harder. (Let kids respond.) Yep, even though the older son followed the rules, he didn't show love to his brother. He wanted his brother to get punished, and didn't understand why his dad was happy to see him. That's not loving at all.

### THE DAD LOVES THEM BOTH

**Main Goal:** Describe how the dad showed his love for both his sons.

- **Say:** We've talked about why both of the sons made their dad sad, but there's something a lot more important to focus on: their dad loved them anyway! What did their dad do to show this? (Let kids respond.) Yes! BEFORE the younger son could even say "sorry," while he was still in the distance, his father RAN up to him and KISSED him.
- **Say:** And even though the older son didn't want to go to the party, he was invited! At any time, he was welcome to join in and have a great time celebrating with his dad and brother, as a family.

## WE'RE FORGIVEN TOO

**Main Goal:** Understand that the parable represents God's love for us, and how Jesus gave his life for us, so that we could be rescued from our wrong choices.

- **(Image: The father)** So does anybody know who the father represents? (Let kids say: God) Yep, God. And who do you think the brothers are like? (Let kids say: Us.) That's right, US. This story shows us what our relationship with God is like. And just like the dad in the story, all God wants is for us to accept his love. And to love him back!
- **Say:** No matter what we've done, we can repent, which means say "sorry" and go back to God. He'll welcome us back with celebration and open arms, just like the dad in the story!
- **Say:** Now there's a pretty big reason WHY we can repent and go back to God...it's because he sent a rescuer to us, to save us from all our wrong choices. Who is that Rescuer? (Let kids respond.) Yep, it's Jesus! Let's read our verse for this month, and see what it says about this:
- **Slide: Ephesians 4:32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.**
- **Ask:** Since Jesus gave his life for us, and forgives us of every wrong choice we make, what can WE do too? (Let kids respond.) Yep, we can forgive others, and show kindness to them, just like Jesus has done for us. Because of Him, we can repent, and turn away from our wrong choices.

## PRACTICE REPENTING

**Main Goal:** Play an active game to help put repenting into practice!

- **Say:** So let's practice! Everyone stand up, and spread out. Repenting means we return to God, and ask for his help. And we're going to play a game to help us all remember how to repent.
- **Say:** I'm going to give an example of things we all do. If it seems like something that shows love to God, everyone take one hop. If it seems like it would make God sad, like the dad in the parable, turn your back toward the screen. Let's try that part now. (Say the following prompts.)
  - **"I invited a new kid to sit by me at lunch."** (Hop.) Good job! That's a choice that shows love.
  - **"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 separates us from God.

## PRACTICE REPENTING (Cont.)

**Main Goal:** Play an active game to help put repenting into practice!

\*If you're running low on time, you can pick just a few of the prompts you want to say. Just try to get to the last two prompts, they're the most important for kids to recognize.

- **Say:** Now...do you guys have to stay turned away forever? (Let kids respond.) Nope. Just like the younger brother could come home, you can turn back, even after making some wrong choices! You can repent and get close to God again. So, when I say "repent," you say, "*I repent.*" Then you can turn back around. OK, let's get started:
  - "*I hoped my older brother would get in trouble for not helping me do the dishes.*" (Turn from God.) Good job. Now repent! (Let kids say "I repent," and turn around.)
  - "*I encouraged my sister when she was learning something new.*" (Hop.)
  - "*I made my friend feel left out.*" (Turn from God.) Now, repent! (Let kids say "I repent," and turn around.)
  - "*I prayed that God would give me strength to be nicer to others at school.*" (Hop.)
- **Say:** Now listen to this one 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! (Let kids say "I repent," and turn around.)
  - "*I worry that I will not be taken care of, I don't trust God.*" (Turn from God.) All right, repent! (Let kids say "I repent," and turn around.)

## RESPONSE TIME

**Main Goal:** Give kids a chance to actively respond to what they've heard today.

- **Say:** Okay, everybody sit back down. Those are just a few examples of how we sometimes turn away from God, but can ALWAYS turn back, and follow him instead. Right now, let's all take a minute and think of one real choice we've made recently. Something that made us turn away from God. (Pause.) Now let's watch a short video that will help us repent of that thing right now.
- **Video: Take a Minute / Repent**
- **Say:** It can be hard to admit when we're wrong, but once we do it, it's the easiest thing in the world to accept God's love and celebration for returning to him!





**PRAYER AND WORSHIP**

**Main Goal:** Close the lesson with prayer and worship.

- **Pray:** (Invite someone up to pray for the group, asking God to help us repent, and turn towards him, just like the son in today's story.)
- **Set up worship:** I think it's time we did some real celebrating! Everybody stand, and let's worship God for loving us no matter what we do.
- **Music Video: Trust in the Lord**
- **Music Video: All Our Hope**



### connect questions

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

### lesson supplies

Connect Time			
Item	Usage	Details	Provided by
Markers	1 set per small group, reused		site
Masking Tape or Painters Tape	1 roll per small group, reused		site
Tear-off sheet of paper	1 per small group		site
Streamers	1 roll per small group	Oriental Trading (IN-/C540)	KC Central
White paper	1 per kid	8x11"	site

Small Group			
Item	Usage	Details	Provided by
Markers	1 set per small group, reused		site
Invitation	1 per kid	Page 11, white cardstock, color, cut into half-sheets	KC Central

Large Group			
Item	Usage	Details	Provided by
Bible	1 per large group, reused	Adventure Bible	site



# JOIN THE PARTY!

You're invited to be  
a part of God's family!

NAME:

Time: **Now!**

Place: **Anywhere**



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# A/V needs

3rd-5th



1. Song slide: for when kids enter the room (All that You Need instrumental; mp3 only; can be downloaded on website)
2. Video: Finding Nemo / Reunion (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7bNhYr3ves>)
3. Image: Sinner
4. Image: Pharisee
5. Video: God's Story / Two Sons and Father (<https://vimeo.com/35595649>)
6. Image: The father
7. Slide: Ephesians 4:32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.
8. Video: Take a Minute / Repent (<https://vimeo.com/134734456>)
9. Music Video: Trust in the Lord  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goc2k9Qe-eo&feature=youtu.be>)
10. Music Video: All Our Hope  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1oRGws1io&feature=youtu.be>)