

Bible Lesson

The Lost and Found Son

Luke 15



“Be glad! Your brother was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found!”

Luke 15:32

The Lost and Found Son

Jesus told this story: A man had two sons. The younger son said, "Father, give me my part of your money right now. I will not wait until you die." So the father gave the son his money.

The son ran off to a city far away. He spent money on parties, drinks, and women. Soon his money was gone, and so were his friends.

The young man got hungry. No one gave him anything. He asked a farmer for a job. He had to feed the pigs. Even the pig's nasty food looked good to the hungry man. He thought, "I will go back and ask my father for a job."

He walked all the way home. The father saw him coming down the road and ran to his son. He hugged him. "Father, I have sinned," said the son.

The father kissed him and held a big party. "I thought my son was dead, but he is alive! He was lost, and now is found."

The older son heard the music. He yelled, "It's not fair! I have been a good son. I never got a party." The father said, "Son, all that I have is yours. But let's be happy. Your brother was dead, and is alive. He was lost, and is found!"

Questions

1. What happened when the son went to live in a city far away?
2. How did the father act when his son came home?
3. How is the father in the story like our father in heaven?
4. If you have ever been lost and then found, how did you feel?

Pray this Prayer:

Dear Father in heaven,
Thank you for forgiving me when I sin and wander away from you. Thank you for letting me always return home to your loving, forgiving, happy arms.
Amen

Write on the son your name.
Also write, "Alive, found,
home, back with God."
Write on the Father,
"My loving Father God."



Show students where the story is in the Bible. Use the Bible references above the illustration.

Before you read:

Activate Prior Knowledge

- a) What would be the worst thing you could lose?
- b) How would a parent feel if a child left home?
- c) How might he or she feel when the child comes home?

After you read:

Framed in Love

Use the illustration on the title page. In pen, write these words on the father's arms "God, my loving father." On his hands, write "forgives and forgets." Write your name on the person. Along the bottom, write "I once was lost but now am found." When the ink dries, color over the words with light-colored crayons. Cut and put into a 5"x7" frame.

Steps to Happiness

Have each child trace his bare feet, one on each piece of paper. Draw toes and toenails and cut out. Ask the kids to label the feet with different ways we wander away from our father and steps the son took away in the story. For example, they may write "stop going to church" on one footprint and "cursing" on another. Write on the board: No matter how many steps we take away from God; it only takes one step to come back." Lay the footprints on the ground. Have the kids step on the footprints that are leading "away from God." Then, they say they are sorry and come running back to His loving, forgiving arms. The students can each make another footprint on cardstock to keep. They write the saying above on the foot. In the toes, they write the secret to coming home, "I am sorry, Lord Jesus."

Dynamic Dialogue

Interject imaginative dialogue from others' perspective throughout the story. Assign several kids a paragraph to work on ahead of time. Then, let them insert character's words into the story with exaggerated feeling while it is told aloud. For example, look at the fourth sentence in paragraph three: "Even the pig's nasty food looked good to the hungry man." Your student might add: "'Oh no, now that guy is drooling over my corn cobs,' grunted a round, pink pig." Enjoy the creative process.

Tape along this edge.

God and Me

The story of the prodigal son is this world's best-loved tale. We can see ourselves in it. Use it as an evangelism tool for someone who might be away from God. Lay this sheet over the story. Tape along the left side. Cut the dotted lines from the right and fold the flaps back. As you read, ask your friend the questions on the flaps. Prepare for a reunion celebration!

1. Are you a child of God? Did you feel that you were once a part of God's family? Are you still?

2. Have you been away from home...away from God? Do you feel lost?

3. Have you decided to come back to God?

4. Your loving Father longs for you. He is waiting and watching for your return.

5. God, your loving Father, forgives and accepts you!

6. All of heaven rejoices in YOUR return to God... to LIFE.

WELCOME HOME!

I Once was Lost but now am Found

Find lines in the story that illustrate how the son was lost, found, far away, near, etc. (in the left two columns). Talk about how we are the same. Ask someone to share his testimony and incorporate those qualities. Now photocopy the chart onto card stock. Cut the squares and hide them. Put the kids into teams. As the kids find them, they can see which pair got the most matches according to rows across.

I once was...	but now am...	Scripture	Reference
lost	found	Rejoice with me! I have found...	...my lost sheep. Luke 15:6
dead	alive	So, he gave us new life because of what Christ has done. He gave us life even when we were...	...dead in sin. God's grace has saved you. Ephesians 2:5 (NIV)
far away	near	But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been...	...brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13
a sinner	forgiven	But God is faithful and fair. If we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins.	He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. 1 John 1:9
homeless	sure of my home in heaven	My Father's house has many rooms.	I am going to prepare a place for you. John 14:2-3
ashamed	honored	Bring the best robe and put it on him.	Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Luke 15:22
unloved, lonely	loved and in a family	He adopted us as his children...	...with all the rights children have. Ephesians 1:5
a person with bad habits	a new person with new habits	If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.	The old is gone; the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17