

WARM UP



"Over the course of this weekend I was able to come to terms with aspects of my life I thought I had confronted and dealt with a long time ago. I was able to forgive my father for never being there for me when I needed him most. I was able to forgive my ex-wife for her considerable part in the breakup of our marriage. But above all of this, and more importantly, I was able to forgive myself for my part in the end of my marriage. Through prayer I was also able to ask for and receive forgiveness from my heavenly Father God." Ray

BACKGROUND

This story should never have been called the Parable of the Prodigal Son, for the son is not the hero. It should be called the Parable of the Loving Father, for it tells us about a father's love, rather than a son's sin. It tells us about the forgiveness of God.

READ Luke 15:11-32

QUESTIONS

1. Have a discussion about what the relationship of the two brothers might have been like as they were growing up.
2. After the horror of his homeless experience, what brought the prodigal son home?

3. What enabled the father to receive such a worthless son with open arms?

4. Upon his return, the worthless son put together a statement of repentance. Why did he need to do this?

IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER

MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER

1. I will ask each member of my household, "Do you think this home is a place of forgiveness?"
2. Since forgiveness begins in the heart, I will pray the psalmist's prayer, "Search me, O God and know my heart".

CONSIDER THIS

Once Lincoln was asked how he was going to treat the rebellious southerners when they had finally been defeated and had returned to the Union of the United States. The questioner expected that Lincoln would take a dire vengeance, but he answered, "I will treat them as if they had never been away".



WRAP UP

There may be someone in your home or extended family who needs the kind of forgiveness found in this story. Talk with one another about what may be involved to gain complete restoration.