



WEEKLY STUDY

Week Three

We wrapped up the series All Things New by sharing the vision of Providence Church with a look towards the future. If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/signup and click on Small Groups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture. Follow the daily prayer prompt and then pray this prayer together:

O God we confess that we have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us we pray. Free us for joyful obedience and make us new through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: Luke 15.1-2

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

- Jesus upset the religious leaders by associating with those who were outsiders. At Providence, we call this disconnected. He wasn't worried about appearances or pleasing those in power. Instead he saw the deep need for grace and mercy in order to reconnect them with the Father. Who are the disconnected around you today? How might Jesus welcome them?
- *Pray that those who feel disconnected would hear the invitation of Jesus to spend time with him.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 15.3-7

Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be

more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

- Jesus is responding to the religious leaders' misunderstanding of God's heart for the sinner. He tells the first of three parables, pointing to a truth that is bigger than the story. God pursues us even if we wander off. His love for us is bigger than the ups and downs of our story. Have you ever felt like God pursued you?
- *Pray for the eyes of the Shepherd who notices the lost one.*

WEDNESDAY: LUKE 15.8-10

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

- Here, the lost thing causes a frantic search and results in a party. A party over a coin! It's extravagant. And Jesus is saying that all of heaven is that extravagant over us when we have been lost. Have you ever gone over the top to celebrate the return of something or someone lost?
- *Pray for a heart of celebration instead of judgement when a lost person is found in Jesus.*

THURSDAY: LUKE 15.11-20

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' 20 So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

- The third parable from Luke 15 gets personal. The lost thing is a son, (and a second wayward son who stuck around). A key turning point for the youngest son took place among the pigs. He hits rock bottom and realizes how much worse his life has become while living away from his father. Have you had a "pig sty" moment when you knew you needed to come home to your heavenly Father?

- *Pray for those who are in the pig sty—that they would cry out to God who will welcome them back.*

FRIDAY: JOHN 14.26-27

26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

- When Jesus was preparing his disciples for his crucifixion and resurrection, he gave them words of promise, comfort and hope. Hidden in this promise is a hint that they would forget some of the things that Jesus had taught them. The promise is that of a reminder from the Holy Spirit. The fulfillment of that promise leads to peace. What does the Holy Spirit use to remind you of Jesus' words and example?
- *Pray that the Holy Spirit would daily jog your memory of who God is in Christ.*

SATURDAY: EPHESIANS 2.1-2, 4-5

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient... 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

- These words from the apostle Paul echo the parable of the prodigal son. We are dead in our transgressions as the son was assumed dead in Luke 15. The son came to life in his return to the father because of the father's great love for him. So too we are restored to life. Because of the love and mercy of God we are made alive in Christ. We have been saved and restored to the family of God. Can you imagine a great banquet thrown in your honor?
- *Pray with gratitude for this gift of grace and forgiveness which restores you to life!*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- Read Luke 15.25-32. Focus on the older son's reaction to his brother's return. Have you ever felt like the older son? How have we collectively acted like the older son in the current climate in our country? How do we overcome this sense of righteous indignation?
- Pastor Jacob shared these words in his message, "We did not put our hope or focus on Donald Trump for four years and we will not be a church that puts our hope or focus on Joe Biden. We will pray for him as we did for the former. We will call out evil and stand against it. Our focus will be Christ and Christ alone." How does this perspective reflect or differ from your impulse?