



PART 2: Coming Home

INTRODUCTION

Many people believe God requires us to obey his rules in order to be in good standing with him. As a result, in many churches, you need to behave before you can belong. “Get your act together before approaching God.” But is that true? Is that really how God sees us and wants us to see him?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your most vivid memory of “misbehaving” in school? What was the result of your actions?
2. Why is it such a common belief that you have to get your act together before belonging to a church?
3. Read Luke 15:1–2. Who are the “tax collectors and sinners” in our culture, the people who are usually kept on the outside of church? Is it difficult to imagine Jesus welcoming them and eating with them?
4. Read Luke 15:11–32. What strikes you about this story? Why did that element of the story make an impression on you?
5. “God is for you and waiting to embrace you.” How does that idea change the way you think about God?
6. What is one thing you can do this week to remind yourself that God is for you and waiting to embrace you? How can this group support you?

MOVING FORWARD

The parable of the prodigal son reminds us that God doesn’t want to condemn our pasts, but to celebrate our presence—regardless of where we’ve been or what we’ve done. God welcomes you home. Knowing that, how can you create space in your life this week to “come back home” to God?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

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... “For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate.

Luke 15:20, 24