

## TALK IT OVER

### PARABLE OF THE LOVING FATHER

#### ICEBREAKER (Start Talking)

How did your parents react when you got in trouble as a kid?

#### READ (Start Sharing)

God knows the world needs good fathers, so when Jesus came to earth He did so with the authority of the Son and the love of the Father. Read **John 5:20\*** Jesus models for us how a Child of God learns from his father, is obedient to his father and has full trust in his father. **Which of these three traits that Jesus models do you have a hard time doing? Why?**

#### READ (Start Sharing)

We all fall short of Jesus' glory as a Child of God, so in *Luke 15* He teaches us in parable about our nature. The prodigal son rejects and leaves his father to take on the world his own way. When he is literally starving, he wants to return home for provision: Read **Luke 15:18\*\***. **Share a time when you strayed away from God and eventually repented and returned to his mercy and love?**

#### READ (Start Sharing)

The son felt shame and expected punishment for hurting his father. However, the father's joy over his son's choice to return was greater than all the pain. Read **Luke 15:32\*\*\***. God isn't focused on our sin, he just wants to celebrate our return home to Him. **How does this story give you strength to invite friends and family to come back to church and God?**

#### WHAT WILL YOU DO (Start Doing)

**Think about your relationship with God the father and how you can grow closer to His love. Repent of any sins, return to him and receive his love and mercy. Pray and invite the prodigal sons and daughters you know to come home.**

**PRAYER (Start Praying)** Father God, thank You for giving me Your Son Jesus to be my model and life leader. Give me the courage to return to you in the areas I have strayed and invite others to do the same. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

## READ GOD'S WORD DAILY using S.O.A.P.

#### Day 1:

*For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.*

**\*John 5:20 (NIV)**

#### Day 2:

*“Do not hold on to me,” Jesus told her, “because I have not yet gone back up to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them that I am returning to him who is my Father and their Father, my God and their God.”*

*John 20:17 (GNT)*

#### Day 3:

*I will go home to my father and say, “Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you,*

**\*\*Luke 15:18 (NLT)**

#### Day 4:

*We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!”*

**\*\*\*Luke 15:32 (NLT)**

#### Day 5:

*See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*

*1 John 3:1 (ESV)*

# TIPS FOR ONLINE SMALL GROUP

- 1. HOSTING A SMALL GROUP MEETING ON ZOOM.** If you are interested in hosting a small group on zoom through New Hope Windward, let us know. Our small group team will help you get started. Zoom training is available.
- 2. EMAIL INVITE.** Ensure to send out a calendar invite with the meeting details and how to connect to the meeting platform on zoom.
- 3. REMINDER DURING THE WEEK.** Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting.
- 4. START ON TIME & STICK TO YOUR TIME SCHEDULE.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time. Most small group meetings are held for about 60 minutes.
- 5. ZOOM'S BEST PRACTICE.** Familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.
- 6. DOWNLOAD ZOOM APP.** In order to participate in the Online Small Group, download the Zoom App from your iPhone or Android. You may also download the Zoom App from your laptop PC or iPad device.

# TIPS TO IN-PERSON GROUP

- 1. START & FINISH ON TIME.** Doing this will show your small group you value their time.
- 2. BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE.** Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.
- 3. CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT.** Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: "What is said in small group, stays in small group." **Nothing, nobody, never...** *"Share nothing, to nobody, never"* outside of the group.
- 4. MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY.** Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by either calling and/or texting your host or responding to the zoom email invitation by accepting or declining. This will help your host to plan accordingly especially if it is an in person small group gathering.
- 5. AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH.** Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.
- 6. ASK FOR HELP.** The Small Group Ministry is here to help. Email [smallgroups@nhww.org](mailto:smallgroups@nhww.org) to ask any questions, request training or other assistance for your Small Group.