



## The Prodigal Son

### Handout

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**Session Theme:** Characteristics of God

**Activity:** Too Hot/Too Cold

**Scripture Story:** *Luke 15:11-32*

**Video Clip:** Despicable Me

11 Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So the father divided his property between the two sons and gave the younger son his inheritance/share. 13 A few days later the younger son packed, took his inheritance and traveled to a distant country. There, he squandered his property in wasteful living. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in great need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16 The son would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating because no one gave him anything. 17 Then he came to his sense and he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger?! 18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' 20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is now found!" And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 He called one of the servants and asked what was going on. 27 The servant replied, "Your brother has come back, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because your brother has returned safe and sound.' 28 Then the older son became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29 But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with wasteful spending, you killed the fatted calf for him!' 31 Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was gone, dead it seemed, but now he has returned, as if from the dead; he was lost and has been found."

**NOTES:** Jesus tells this story partly to help display characteristics of God. Who in the story do you think best displays or shares characteristics that God has? What characteristics of that character do you see that seem similar to God's?

In our lives, we might want to take things from others. Some ways that this might look like: sneaking, lying, stealing, teasing, bullying or cheating. But if we practice being aware of what God has given us, and we practice giving thanks for what we've received, then even though we might be tempted, like the older brother in the story, we will be less likely to act on the temptation (unlike the older brother in the video clip).