

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.
Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

February 8, 2008—The Prodigal Son—Part I—the Younger Son

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Context of the parable—what is the precipitating event? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Lk 15:1-3 2) The Prodigal Son <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Luke 15:11-32 3) Rembrandt's <i>The Return of the Prodigal Son</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Brief reflection on the painting 4) The Younger Son <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Leaving Home <p><i>A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Historical context ii) Why did the younger son leave home? iii) Where is our spiritual home? iv) In what ways do we leave home? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Think in terms of our distorted need for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Love (b) Security and survival (c) Power and control b) Away from home <p><i>And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Historical context ii) How was life away from home for the son? iii) How is life for you when you are away from home?

	<p>c) Returning home <i>But when he came to his senses, he said, How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."</i></p> <p>i) What prompted the younger son to want to return home? ii) How is our identity rooted in our Father, God? iii) How is our loneliness abated by being in community with fellow believers?</p> <p>5) Questions for personal reflection</p> <p>a) How are you constantly developing strategies to defend yourself and seek the love, security and survival, power and control that you think you need? b) Do you behave (more than belief) as though your identity is rooted in God? c) Describe a time when you felt at home with your Father (God) and your family (believers)?</p> <p>6) Journey together</p> <p>a) With a partner, talk about some of the things that came to your mind. b) Ask each other how you can pray for the other. c) Pray for each other.</p>
7:00	Closing Prayer

Further reading:

- *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*, Henri Nouwen
- *The Better Part*, Thomas Keating