Brockley Homegroup Study April 2024
NOTES

Thank you homegroup leaders. I appreciate all that you do. Now that the clocks have changed we will be trying to arrange a short evening where all the homegroup leaders can get together and have a chat about how things are going. I need your feedback to make these studies and our homegroups as helpful as possible. The plan is to find a date and invite you all for a curry or a barbecue. The business side won’t take too long. It will be very much a social too.

**The Parable of the Lost Son**

***11****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.*

***21****“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’*

***22****“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.****23****Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate.****24****For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.*

***25****“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.****26****So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.****27****‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’*

***28****“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.****29****But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.****30****But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’*

***31****“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.****32****But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’” Luke 15*

Q1
Have you got a story where you got ‘let off’ when you should have been punished? How did it make you feel?

Q2
Why do you think Luke starts verse 11 with the words ‘Jesus continued”?

Q3
What do you think motivated the younger son? Have you ever felt like that? What did you do?

Q4
If you have children and grandchildren (we don’t) are you less worried about the behaviour of the grandchildren than you were of your children? And why?

Q5
The NIV titles this story “The Parable of the Lost Son” and it is often called The Prodigal Son. (a) What does prodigal mean? (b) Do you think that is a good title? (c) is the younger son the most lovable character in the story?

Q6
What role does repentance play in the younger son's return?

Q7
What does the older brother do, think and feel? Who does the older brother represent? Do you ever feel like that? What did you do?

Q8
Who does the father represent? Make a list of the good things about the father’s attitude, speech and behaviour? If this is what a father should be like – how does this match up with your experience of your human father?

David Beckham said in an interview this week that his father pushed him very hard and never gave him a word of praise until he had played for England 100 times.-----------------------------------------------------------------------

**For further thought?**

Was the father wrong to give his younger son his share of the inheritance when he asked for it?

**Main point**
The father exhibits qualities of patience, compassion, and unconditional love. His willingness to forgive and welcome back his wayward son demonstrates God's boundless grace towards repentant sinners.

**Challenge**
Are there places in myself, or my past where I need to accept grace and forgiveness? Are there people / places where I need to show / extend more grace and forgiveness than I do?

**Prayer and reflection**
As we conclude, let's take a moment to thank God for his unconditional love and boundless grace, as demonstrated in this story. May we receive that love and forgiveness and remember that Go is for us in everything. Let’s resolve to reflect God’s love in our relationships and extend forgiveness and grace to others, just as we have received it from him. Amen.