



Lesson 17

Welcome to the Family of God

Large Group Lesson & Games

<p>Bible Story</p> <p>The Prodigal Son</p> <p>Luke 15:11-32</p>	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Bible• 60 small paper cups• A beach ball• A device to keep time
<p>Bible Verse</p> <p>“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”</p> <p>Ephesians 2:19, <i>New Living Translation</i></p>	
<p>Key Teaching Point</p> <p>Receive welcome into God’s family.</p>	



Large Group Lesson

(15 Minutes)

This is a dramatic telling of the story of the Prodigal Son using multiple characters' points of view. The presentation can be done with three volunteers who perform character monologues. (Another option is to present the three character monologues in a puppet show format.)

The Younger Son

I am living the LIFE! My dad always made me work hard and be responsible, but I had enough of that. I want to live MY life, my way. Enough of rules that took all the fun out of life. I told my dad, "enough of this! I'm old enough and independent, so just give me my inheritance. It's going to be mine one day, so why not now? And he gave it to me! Whoo hoo! Now I'm on my own and it's awesome! No one to tell me what to do anymore.

The Father

I was shocked when my youngest son came to me a few weeks ago and asked me to give him his inheritance. Did he want me dead, so he could get all of my money? I gave it to him, and it broke my heart when he took all the money and ran off to waste it all on fun and games. He ran with the wrong crowd and made foolish choices! I haven't heard from him in weeks, and I'm worried sick about him. What's he doing? Who is he with? Is he okay? Will I ever see him again?

The Older Brother

My selfish little brother! I can't believe he had the nerve to ask dad for his inheritance and go waste it all on himself. He'll get what's coming to him, and he'll be sorry when he realizes what a fool he's been.

The Younger Son

Oh man, I really messed things up. I hung around with people I thought were my friends, but they didn't really care about me. They disappeared as soon as my money started running out. I spent all my money on partying and nice stuff that made me look cool. I didn't think about the future. Now it's all gone, and I don't even have money to eat! The best I can do is this job as a farmhand, feeding pigs. Man, even the pigs slop looks good to me now, I'm so hungry. My father's servants are better off than this! I was so foolish! I don't deserve to go home now...but maybe if I offer to be a servant in his house, he'll forgive me and let me come home.



The Father

I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw my son coming down the road this morning. He has returned! My own son whom I love, returning safe and sound! I didn't even stop for a moment to think about how he'd hurt me. Instead I ran down the driveway to meet him. I wrapped him in my arms and forgave him. He tried to offer to be one of my servants, and pay me back for the wrong he'd done. I wouldn't have any of that, no way! He's my SON!

The Older Brother

Can you believe this? My father is throwing a party for that lazy brother of mine who caused all this family drama. He deserves to be in the hole he got himself into! This is totally unfair? What about me? I've been responsible, I've never disobeyed my father. And yet, HE gets a party?

The Father

I'm so filled with joy that my son changed his mind and his heart and came back home! It's like he was dead and has come back to life! My son who was lost is now found. Won't you join us for the celebration we're having? Come on!

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God's love for us does not depend on how hard we work for God or how faithful we are. Even after we've rejected him or gone our own way in disobedience to God, God forgives us and welcomes us back with open arms if we turn back to him.

In this story, the son returns to his father expecting to become his father's servant, because he didn't think he was worthy to be God's Son. Instead, his father puts a ring on his finger and a robe on his back, honoring him as his son who has come home. In the same way, God delights to welcome us into his family, as his daughters and sons.

We'll talk more about what it looks like to be members of the family of God in our small groups today.

Dismiss children to their small groups.



Large Group Games

(25 Minutes)

CUP CAPTURE

Materials: 60 small paper cups

Preparation: Designate two equal sides of the playing area with cones (or a similar substitute).

Disperse 30 paper cups evenly on one side of the playing area, and 30 cups on the other side of the playing area.

Divide the participants into two teams. Identify where the *jail* will be on each side for those who get “out.” Additionally, identify someone to be the “Keeper of the Cups” for any cups that are captured once the game begins.

On your GO signal, players can run into the other team’s territory to grab cups and bring them back safely to the other side, giving the cup to their team’s “Keeper of the Cups.” Players can only capture ONE cup at a time. If players are tagged in the other team’s territory, they need to head directly to jail. The game leader can call out “Jailbreak!” at any time. The only other way to get out of jail is if a teammate runs to the jail without being tagged, and then both players can safely return to the other side. The team with the most captured cups at the end of the game wins.

GIANT BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Materials: A beach ball, and a device to keep time

Setup: Set up the cones or markers to designate the opposing sides of the “court.” Divide the students into two teams and assign them each to one side of the “court.” Set a timer for 10 minutes. The game will end when time is up.

Participants may hit the ball back and forth using only their hands. If the ball touches the ground on one team’s side, the opposing team gets a point. Set a reasonable “out of bounds” limit (doesn’t necessarily have to be marked by cones, but participants should be informed that if the ball is way beyond any player’s reasonable reach, it doesn’t count.) Play until time is up. The team that has the most points wins.

