

## ALLEY Rundown March 25-27, 2023

**Today's Bible Story:** Homecoming (The Story of the Lost Son) • *Luke 15:11-32*

**Today's Key Question:** When is it hard to ask for forgiveness?

**Today's Bottom Line:** God will always forgive you.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13 (NIRV)*

### SLIDE: Theme

“Hey, everyone! So great to see everyone today as we wrap up another great month in the Alley! We like questions around here, and I have a few I'd love for you to chat about with the person next to you. Here they are: Have you ever lost something important? If so, how did you find it? And how did you feel when you found it? Okay, take a moment or so and share a story with your friends from Small Group.

*Have kids turn and talk to each other. Allow some kids to share their responses as you have time. Optional: share an appropriate personal story of a time when you lost something and how you felt when you found it.*

“Those are some great examples! We lose things all the time like favorite pens, house keys, or our wallets. Some of those things don't really matter. It's not too hard to find another pen. But when we lose our wallets, that's a very different story, right?”

“Let's think about losing things from a different angle. Maybe you haven't lost something but you've actually been lost yourself! Maybe you were lost in a place like the grocery store or maybe you got lost with a parent when you tried to go somewhere, OR maybe you were lost in your understanding of something, like a difficult math problem.

“There's one more idea about being lost. Maybe you got in trouble or did something wrong and you feel lost and separated from your family or friends. That's a whole different sort of lost, right? It's in these moments when we might wonder how we can ever be FOUND when we feel LOST like that.

“If that's you, first, please know you're in good company. Lots of people feel lost in their lives. Thankfully, we have each other to help us through those moments. On top of that, we can trust God no matter what and discover how to face these moments in our lives when we read the Bible. In fact, Jesus had something really important to say about being lost and found.

“Before we jump into the story, let's do a quick recap:

“We've seen God's plan throughout every single story we've learned—from Abraham to Joseph to Moses to David . . . and now to Jesus! God promised to send a Savior to the Israelites . . . and when the time was right, Jesus was born to Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem.

“When Jesus grew up to be an adult, He traveled around, teaching, telling stories, and performing miracles. Jesus changed people's lives, and He changed their minds with the things He said about God and how we should love one another.

“Last week we talked about a parable, or story, Jesus told to help people understand why we should forgive. This week, we're looking at another parable Jesus told that helped people understand how much God loves and forgives US. Take a look...

**Video: The So and So Show 17:46**

“Jesus really knew what He was doing by telling that story. It really packed quite a punch. You can almost imagine yourself being the younger brother . . . only to realize at the end we sometimes are more tempted to act like the older brother. We love the idea of being forgiven, but sometimes we might think that same forgiveness is unfair when it is offered to other people. Think about the younger son in this story. Was he in the wrong? For sure! He needed to be forgiven. He knew it, too. It must have been so hard to walk those long miles home, rehearsing that same speech, ‘*Father I have sinned against heaven and against you.*’ And the amazing thing was that his father didn’t even let him get to the end of all he had rehearsed. He didn’t welcome him back as a servant like the son was planning on asking for. The father welcomed him back as his precious son. It was almost like the father couldn’t WAIT to forgive him.

“Remember, Jesus told these stories to help people understand something about God. And in the story, Jesus is helping people see that God is like the father in the story. God loves each one of you so much. And even when we do something wrong, God still longs to see us walking the road back home. God can’t wait to forgive us and welcome us home.

“But also, think about the older brother for a moment. It’s important for us, now that we have been forgiven like the younger son, to avoid the older brother syndrome, where we start to think there are others who are not worthy of God’s love! We can forgive others like God forgives us and celebrate when others experience God’s amazing love. But it can be hard, and we need God’s help with this, for sure!”

“Today as you go to groups, think about this:

**SLIDE: Key Question**

“**[Key Question] When is it hard to ask for forgiveness?** Has there ever been a time you felt like the younger son walking back home with your rehearsed story? You might have a hard time asking that question, but don’t worry. You get the chance to chat all about it with your Small Group Leader. But before you head out, let’s pray and thank God for His incredible forgiveness! Let’s pray!”

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.*

**OFFERING:**

As some of you may already know, we are highlighting some of our Parkview Global Missionaries from the beautiful country of Mexico. Here is a picture of our Missionary Friends Eli and Mandy Garcia!

**CG: Eli and Mandy**

Parkview has spent many years developing a very important partnership with an organization called Vida Nueva Ministries in Mexico. This group has been working in many of the under-resourced areas to plant churches, start schools, and care for the amazing people of Mexico. Here’s a picture of some of the kids at the school down in Mexico.

**SLIDE: Kids at School (Image 6620)**

So if you brought an offering today, you can bring it up now knowing that it is going to help a lot of people just like you in the great country of Mexico!

*Dismiss to small groups*