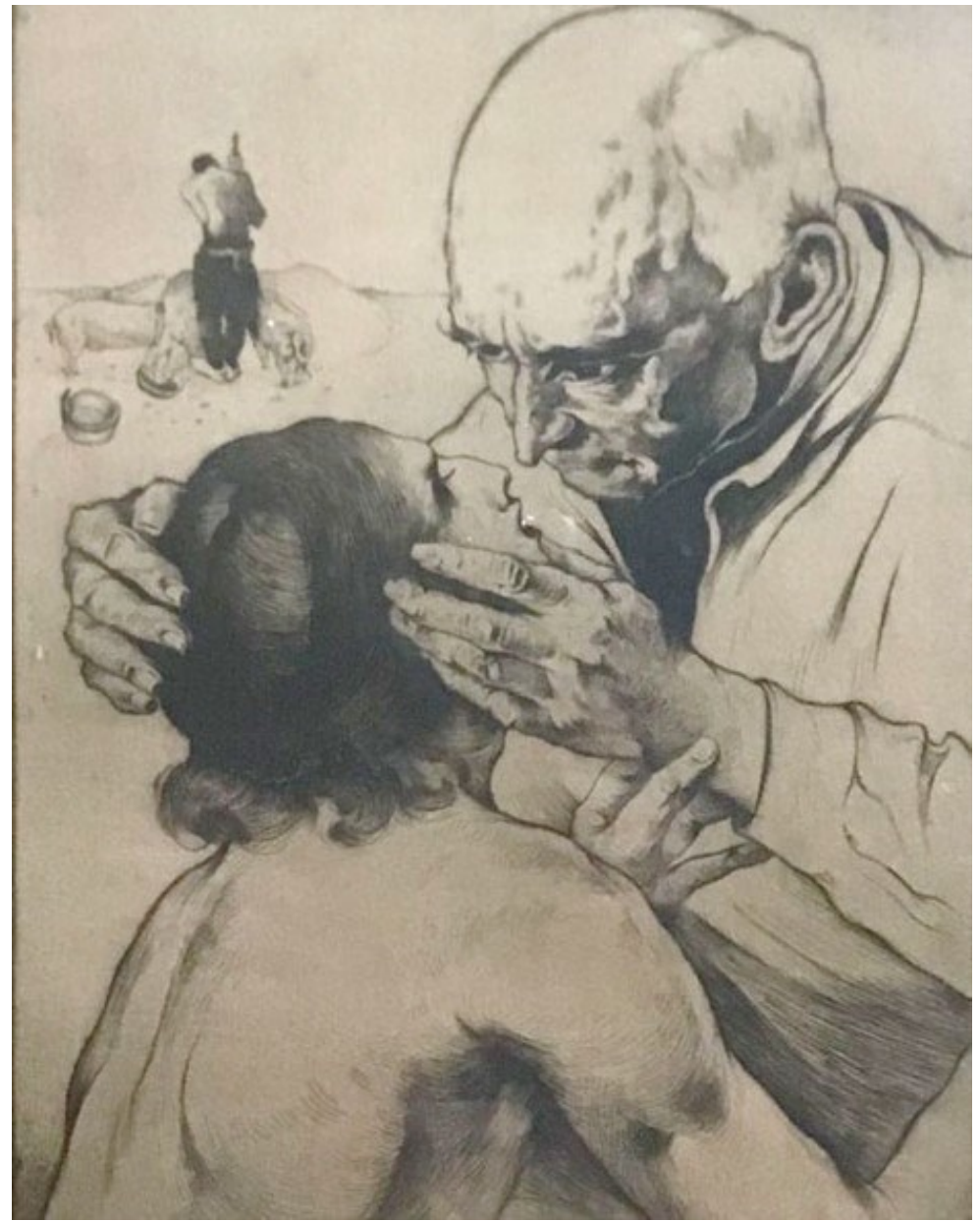


"This son of mine was dead and is alive again"

- Luke 15:24



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Go Deeper . . .

Use these questions for further study individually or in a small group

Read Luke 15:11-32 paying special attention to the father in the story.

Using your own words, how would you describe the father?

The father allows the sons to rebel against him and does not punish them but he also allows them to experience the consequences of their actions. In what ways does this challenge or confirm your understanding of God?

The young son left the father, and the older son refused to come in to the father. In both cases it was the sons who abandoned the father and not the father who abandoned the sons. What does this teach us about the nature and effect of sin?

In both cases it was not the father who needed to be convinced to welcome the sons back home, it was the sons who needed to be convinced to come back home. What does this teach us who are sinful about our relationship to God?

The father transforms the young son and gives him a new identity by dressing him in the father's clothes. How is this a picture for what God does for us?

Jesus challenges people's conception of God by telling this story. Is there any part of Jesus' revelation of God's true nature that is especially difficult for you to accept? Why? Why is it important to allow Jesus to re-shape our image of God?

Jesus reveals a Heavenly Father who has always wanted nothing more than to love us with the fullness of His love:

What stands in the way of our reception of God's love?

What would it look like to allow God to love you?

Engaging the Scriptures through Art and Prayer:

Use the engraving on the other side to enter into Jesus' parable in a new way. Begin in prayer and dedicate this time to Jesus, asking for his Holy Spirit to be present and to guide your heart, soul, and mind.

Spend a few minutes sitting with the picture. What do you notice? What do you see in the face and eyes of the father? What about his hands and body? What about the son? What about the other son? Pay attention to any feelings this picture evokes in you; explore them and bring them before God.

Sit in prayer and listen. What, if anything, might God be inviting you to notice about yourself or about God? Is there any other invitation from the Spirit?

Close your time by thanking God for his great love and compassion.

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