LESSON 15

THE LOST SON COMES HOME



Aim: **To show the children how Jesus taught that God loves sinners and rejoices when we repent and turn to him.**

Scripture Reading: **Luke 15:11–32**

Memory Verse: **John 1:12a**
Yet [there were some] … who received him, … those who believed in his name …

Presenting the Lesson

Starting Point

Talk about what it feels like to be hungry. Most of the children probably will be only too familiar with this feeling.

Show Picture 14 and review Lesson 14, reminding the class why the young man in the picture was hungry. He realised he had done wrong and decided to go back to his father and beg for forgiveness (Lk 15:17–20). That is a hard thing to do!

Main Points of the Lesson

1. Describe how the young man walked many kilometres back to his home country. While he was still a long way from the family home his father, who must have looked out for him every day, ran to meet him and greeted him warmly. The son didn't even have time to say his whole prepared speech of how he knew he did not deserve to be received back in his father's house (15:20–21**). Show Picture 15.**
2. It was a very different welcome from what that young man deserved. **Describe how the father welcomed him (15:22–24).**
3. However, his older brother was very angry at all the celebrating. **Describe what he said to his father (15:28–30).**
4. The father explained that the older son was free to enjoy everything that belonged to him and that he could have a feast at any time. However, it is not every day that a person everyone thought was dead returns home (15:31–32)!

Our Response to the Story

A Sudanese family in Khartoum arranged a gathering to mourn the death of their mother, who they believed had been killed fleeing from the civil war. But the mourning turned into rejoicing when they received news that she was alive, safe and well in a neighbouring country!

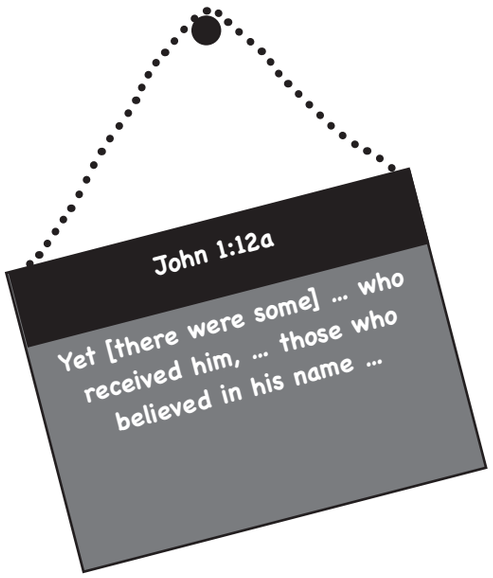
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Jesus told this story about the lost son to show us how God, who is the father in this story, loves repentant sinners. He desires to forgive them and welcomes them back into his arms with great rejoicing.

Jesus also told this story to teach the religious leaders something, for they were like the older brother in the story. They, who could enjoy God's love and abundance all the time, needed to rejoice when a sinner turned from his or her bad ways. Instead, they reminded the person again and again how wicked he or she had been. God's forgiveness and membership of his family is open to all who repent. Jesus Christ has paid for our sins.

Instil the Memory Verse



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