

A Far Country: Group Study

This Is Our Story: **Week 3**

Passage: Luke 15:11-16

Sermon Outline:

Fulfillment is **forfeited** when God is **rejected**.

1. **Squandering** → **Enjoying**
2. **Scarcity** → **Abundance**
3. **Slavery** → **Freedom**

The **fulfillment we search** for is found in the **house of our Father**.

Discussion Questions from “This Is Our Story” Booklet

Discussion helps are indented, italic, & blue.

Did you take a picture of something that you did last week? Show it off.

If not, share about something that you created last week.

The next question (below) is another good icebreaker question...

🏠 Discover & ❤️ Nurture

Read Luke 15:13. What does the allure of “a far country” feel like? Have you ever experienced a temptation like that?

You could phrase this the way that Pastor Ryan did in the sermon this week: “What were you searching for?”

Can you relate to this younger son? Have you ever squandered property, time or money on reckless living? What did you learn?

As a leader, come prepared to open up with a story from your own life. Some of us may have done this in big ways and others in minor ways. But be vulnerable and invite people to open up.

Read James 1:13-15. What do we learn about temptation in these verses? Is the temptation itself sin?

Here's the passage: ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."

Notice the progression that leads toward sin: Our own desires lure & entice us, then these desires "conceive" (what could that mean?) and lead to sin, sin leads to death.

Principles: God doesn't tempt us. It doesn't say that Satan tempts us (although he can). We don't need anyone else to tempt us, because our desires are what causes us to be tempted. Everyone has their own desires that have different strengths over us (for instance, I am not tempted by drinking soda, but some people are, etc.). Sin, if not dealt with can lead to death.

Read Luke 15:14. What must it have been like for this man, who had never been in need before, to suddenly experience poverty? Have you ever experienced anything like this?

Imagine what it would be like to be in his shoes. Have you ever been worried about where a meal was going to come from? Have you ever been without a home? Have you ever gotten to the cash register at the grocery store only to have your card declined?

Read Luke 15:15-16. How successful is the young man at trying to fix his problems by himself? Have you ever been in a situation where you failed in a similar way?

Have you ever tried to dig yourself out of a bad decision, only to make matters worse?

Read Genesis 3:23-24. God made humans to live in this Garden of Eden, but because of sin, we don't have access to it anymore (*we are now "East of Eden"*). What if this is what we are really longing for in this search for a "far country"? How does that change the way we see this temptation?

C.S. Lewis said, "If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."

Maybe the longings in our heart come from the fact that we were made for the paradise of Eden, and maybe they will all be fulfilled in Heaven.

○ **Act**

How do you treat people who are in jobs like this that no one wants? What do you tend to think about them? How might Jesus have treated them? What needs to change in us?

This message was a great one for us to think about our own motivations and to ask how we might be squandering and living in slavery. However, let's turn the tables to others for a bit. If we recognize that others are living this way as well, how might we develop more compassion for people in hard situations?

What is a practical way that I can stave off temptation today?

Make a plan together on what you can do to fight temptation.