

God's Loving Grace

Our Father in Heaven, please use this study to help the children discover and appreciate your loving grace."

Learning Goal. Children will thank God for welcoming them when they return to him.

Select activities that fit your children's background, and local customs.

1. **Read or tell by memory the story of *A Wasteful Son*, Luke 15:11-32.**



A son wasted his father's wealth, but his father showed him grace.

If possible, prepare an older child to tell this story to the other children.

Before recounting the story, explain its purpose, which was to show how a young man was surprised when his father forgave him, even though the son had treated his father very badly.

After telling the story, ask these questions. Let several child one reply. Affirm what they say that is right, without reproofing them for what they say wrongly. Lastly, tell the right answer.

- What did the son ask his father to give him?
- What did the son do with his inheritance?
- What happened to the son when all of his inheritance money was wasted and gone?
- What did the son want to say to his father?
- How did the father treat the son when the son returned?
- How did the older son feel about his younger brother?
- What did the father explain to the older brother?

The children may wish to colour the picture on the last page of this study.



The father showed loving grace to his son who repented and returned home.

- Let the older children help the younger colour their picture.
- Explain to the adults: The pigs illustrate how God's grace reaches us no matter how far away from God we have run. He forgives us no matter how badly we have sinned, when we leave our sin, return to him and ask for his forgiveness.

2. Rehearse and dramatize *The Wasteful Son for the adult, Luke 15:11-32.*

- Arrange with worship leaders for the children to present the drama to the adults.
- When the narrator reads a part of the story, the actors say the words and do the actions of the person in that part of the Bible story.
- Let the children prepare questions about this story to ask the adults, following the drama.
- Practice until everyone knows what to do and say. Be creative, without making the drama too long.
- Participants:

Narrator	Read those parts of the story in Luke 15:11-32 that are not spoken by other actors. Pause to let them act and say their parts.
Wasteful son	Say the words of the younger son. Add motions or words that clarify what happened.
Father	Say the words and do the actions of the father.
Older son	Say the words and do the actions of the older son.
Bad friends	If there are enough children, you might let some of them act as bad friends who help the younger son waste his money in a distant land.
Servant	Say the words and do the actions of the servant, including catching and killing the fattened calf.
Calf	<i>(Optional)</i> To add a bit of fun, have two boys play the part of the calf. They bend over, with a blanket thrown over their backs.



Besides forgiving his wasteful son, the Father celebrated his return.

3. Psalm 103, verses 2, 3, 4 & 11

- Let two children say the two parts.
- They may say this poem for the adults.

Part 1

Praise the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.
He forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases.

Part 2

He redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion.
As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

4. Memorize Ephesians 2:8–9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

5. Let an older child read this prayer.

“Lord, our lives are full of sin, and without you, we would be lost.
Thank you for forgiving us the bad things we have done.
Thank you for welcoming us again when we turned back to you.
We rejoice that you are happy when we come back to you.
Help us also to rejoice when lost people come back to you.
We ask this in Jesus’ precious name. Amen.”

Download a scripted version of the story of the Prodigal Son:
<http://biblestoryskits.com/category/jesus-life/> (Scroll down to #16)



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