

**THE SHEEP /
THE COIN &
THE SONS**

**Seeing God's Love
For Lost People**

...

Week #4: The Older Brother





PLAY TOGETHER

Play a game together.



PRAY TOGETHER

Spend time praising and thanking God in prayer.



GROW TOGETHER

Learn from Scripture about who God says He is and how we should respond to Him.

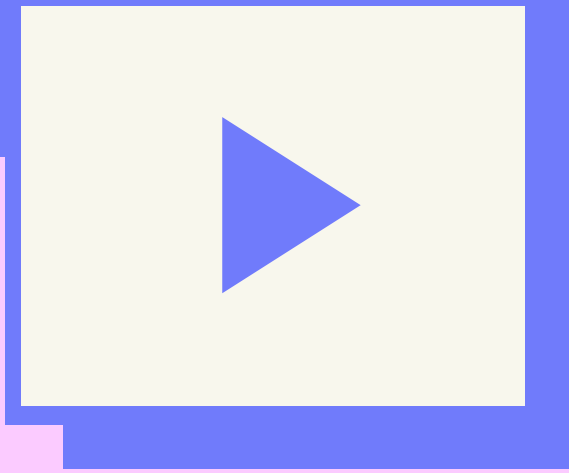


GO TOGETHER

Look for opportunities to share the Gospel, and serve others in your community with your YCI club members.

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How To Lead Your YCI Club



Have You Ever?

First, one person should be chosen to stand in front of the room, and everyone else in the YCI club should stand up at their seat. Next, the person standing up front should identify an interesting experience they have had (it should be an experience that others in the room could possibly have experienced as well). Every person that has also had the experience should remain standing, and everyone else should sit down. The person up front should keep sharing unique experiences until there is only one person left standing. The last person standing is the winner! This process can continue for as long as time allows.



ASK GOD FOR HIS WILL TO BE DONE IN THESE AREAS:



Club Time

Pray that God will speak to everyone in the room through His Word.



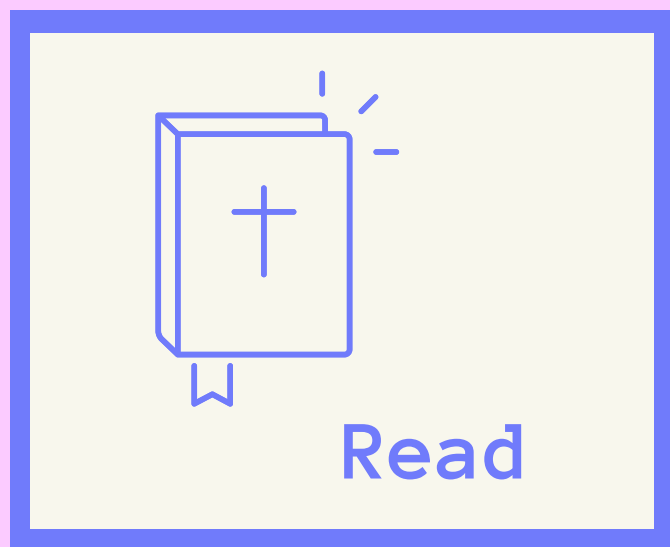
Group Needs

Take time to discuss and pray over the personal needs and requests of those in attendance.



School Community

Ask God to move in situations that are unique to your school and community.



LUKE 15:25-32 (ESV)

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“**25** “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. **27** And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ **28** But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, **29** but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. **30** But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ **31** And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. **32** It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”



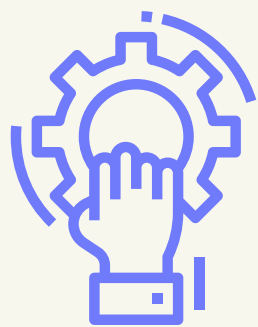


WHY WAS THE OLDER BROTHER SO ANGRY?



On the surface, it may seem to some readers that the older brother was being unreasonable. After all, why wouldn't you celebrate the fact that your brother has returned home? However, when we take a step back and consider the older brother's faithfulness, it's easier to understand the root of his frustration. His younger brother was entitled, lazy and selfish, and before he left home he managed to deeply hurt their father. The older brother, on the other hand, diligently remained with his father to work the land. He was far more focused on maintaining his status as the first born than he was in seeing his lost brother restored. Many followers of Jesus struggle with this same tension today. Rather than passionately sharing about the hope of Jesus Christ with lost souls, we would rather remain in the comfort of what we know in order to obtain favor from God. This common rhythm of complacency limits the church from doing what it was created to do.





Apply

WHAT CAUSES US TO LOSE PASSION FOR LOST PEOPLE?



We Value Projects Over People

The older brother missed the beginning of the homecoming party because he was working in the field (Luke 15:25). There is nothing wrong with working hard, but it is evident that the older brother found his *identity* in the work of his hands rather than the love of his father.

We Overlook What's Ours

In his rant to his father, the older brother complained that he received nothing for his obedience, while his younger brother's disobedience was awarded with a party. The father reminds him that all he has *already* belongs to him (Luke 15:31). When we always focus on what God is doing in the life of other people, it causes us to lose sight of what He has already done for us. Gratitude is key to living a selfless life.

We Forget What It's Like To Be Lost

We have no record of the older brother backsliding to the extent that his younger brother did. However, we can be confident that he *was not* perfect (only Jesus can claim that description). It's evident the older brother didn't understand the difficult circumstances his brother faced. As followers of Jesus, we too can forget what it's like to be dead in our sins. When we take a step back and reflect on what God has rescued us from, it reignites a passion in us to see others experience that same freedom.





LET'S TALK ABOUT THIS

(SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS
IF TIME ALLOWS)

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1. Can you think of a moment in your life when you acted like the older brother? Do you find it hard to be excited when God is clearly working in someone else's life?

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2. One of the primary reasons why the brother was frustrated is because he overlooked the blessings his father had already given him. What are some things in your life right now that you can choose to be thankful for?

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3. As a YCI club, how can we better celebrate the work God is doing in this group? How can we make sure that our focus is people, not just getting things done?



CONSIDER THIS BEFORE YOU LEAVE:



Big Idea

The older brother in Luke 15 paints a picture of what it looks like to lose passion for lost people. It happens when we: 1. Value projects over people; 2. Forget all that God has done in our life; 3. Lose sight of what it's like to live separated from our Father.



Sharing Truth

Who is someone in your life that needs to hear about what we discussed today? Pray for them, and find time this week to encourage them.



Meeting Needs

What is something your YCI club can do to show God's love this semester?

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