

Sermon for July 11/12, 2026
"The Prodigal Son" Guest Pastor Ricky Jenkins



SMALL GROUPS

Share Life | Pursue God | Invest In Others

THREE THINGS TO KNOW

DON'T MISS THIS. We believe that life is better together! Across our campuses, young adults (age 20s and 30s) gather in a variety of ways to grow their relationship with God and their connection to his church. This summer is the perfect opportunity to connect through our upcoming **GIVING TABLES – FILL THE BUS**. In July and August, Ada Bible Young Adults will take over the lakeshore for a beach night and hike. To learn more about how you can get connected, click [HERE](#).

GROUP VALUES. This month, we turn our attention to the group value of **TOGETHER**. At Ada Bible Church, we believe that growing together is a core component of a healthy small group. This means you are growing in your relationship with God alongside each other. Throughout July, we'll look at a few tangible expressions of what growing together looks like. This week, our focus is *encouragement* and *accountability*. Groups that encourage one another remind each other of God's truth. Accountability pairs with encouragement when we hold each other accountable to live out our faith through life's circumstances. As a group, how would you rate your ability to encourage and hold each other accountable?

GROW AS A LEADER. The parable of the prodigal son deals honestly with shame and the fear of "coming home" after wandering. It's a vivid story that clearly communicates the Father's heart toward us, as well as the ways we fall short in our sin. Some people in your group may be carrying real guilt over choices they've made. Create space this week for honesty without judgment, and remind your group that your gathering is a safe place to be known.

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

This week we continue our **Parables** series, where we're exploring the stories Jesus told to reveal his character and kingdom. This week, we explore the parable of the prodigal son and what it means to come home to a Father who's been waiting for us all along.

ICEBREAKER

Share about a time you came home after being away for a while (a trip, long day, college, etc.). What was it like to walk back through the door?

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Have someone read [Luke 15:11-24](#) aloud.

What words or phrases stand out to you in this passage?

What happens to the son after he leaves home ([verses 13-16](#))?

How does the father respond to his son's return home?

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

This week, guest Pastor Ricky Jenkins continued our **PARABLES** series by unpacking the parable of the prodigal son. As a group, recall some of the sermon's big ideas and main points.

Many people believe love, approval, worth, and belonging have to be earned through good behavior or having it all together. Where do you see this "earn it" mindset in our culture?

It's easy for our hearts to imagine a caricature of God rather than the God of the Bible. What are some common caricatures of God you've heard people believe or maybe believed yourself?

The father in the parable never got angry or went out looking for his son to give him a lecture. What does this say about God's posture toward us when we sin or wander from him?

One of the kindest things God does for us is let us hit rock bottom so we can turn back to him. Has there been a "bottom" moment in your life, or someone else's, that God used to bring about a turning point?

The father celebrated his son's return by fully restoring him rather than making him earn his way back into the family. Why is this such good news for people who feel like they have too much to overcome?

Where in your life are you tempted to think you need to clean yourself up before coming to God, rather than running to him as you are?

Who in your life is currently in a "far country," and how can you reflect Jesus's love and patience toward them this week?

WRAP UP

This week, we saw that no matter how far we've run, God the Father is watching, waiting, and ready to celebrate our return. What from this conversation or the sermon encouraged or challenged you the most, and why?