

# VALUABLE FACILITATOR GUIDE

## CPC HAPPENINGS... [announce these upcoming events]

**CONNECT Women's Conference**—Check out the info and registration for this conference on the church website, on the events page. [yourcpc.church/events](http://yourcpc.church/events)

**FALL-O-WEEN**—Don't miss the Fall-o-wseen celebration for “kids” of all ages on Saturday, October 30. Please consider giving candy donations for this event.

**BIG DADDY WEAVE**— This group will be at CPC in concert on November 11. Get your tickets now. [yourcpc.church/events](http://yourcpc.church/events)

**CPC LIFE**— We are launching new short-term studies for this October and November. Download the **CHURCH CENTER** app to check out and sign up for our groups. Register for a group by hitting the **JOIN** button.

## LOST THINGS

In London, there is an official governmental office for lost and found items. It has been there since 1933, and it is where all the lost items found on or in any of London's transportation systems, subways, buses, cabs, etc. are brought. Every year between 150,000 and 200,000 items are found and turned in to the officials. They then attempt to locate owners and return their lost items. Items found included wheelchairs, false teeth, urns with human remains, a suitcase full of money, a human skull. and a lawnmower.

As humans, we misplace many things, but one of the worst things we could lose is our passion for seeing others come to Christ. Jesus had a passion to help people understand how much He and the Father loved them. Through this 15th chapter of Luke, He tells three stories to progressively show His audience the heart of the Father.

Let's look at the third parable in this series. We will divide the long passage up to unpack it in portions.

### **Luke 15:11-12**—

He [Jesus] also said, “A man had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate I have coming to me.’ So he distributed the assets to them.

The Greek word for “estate” is a word that means **LIFE**.

### **Owning land was essential for:**

1. Earning a **LIVING**. [It was a way to feed your family, the families of the servants, and sell at the market for money.]
2. Building a **LEGACY**. [The land was often passed down from generation to generation. A family might own a piece of property for many years.]

If you didn't own the land, then you worked as a servant on another's property.

Notice, the phrase "So he distributed the assets to them."

**What does this phrase indicate? [The father was not only forced to give up the inherited portion to the younger son but also give the older son his double-portion of property that was coming to him. The father would have been left with nothing and living on the land now as a servant to the older brother.]**

**How might the father be viewed in the community? [His neighbors may call him the "crazy old man with the ungrateful children." He may be considered "crazy" for giving in to such a request. The community may see him as one who needs pity.]**

**How many lives were affected by the younger son's demand? [Many—his father, his brother, the servants and their families, etc. When we impose our demands on others, we need to take into consideration the ripple effect that it may have on others.]**

**Luke 15:13-19—**

Not many days later, the younger son gathered together all he had and traveled to a distant country, where he squandered his estate in foolish living. 14 After he had spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he had nothing. 15 Then he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to eat his fill from the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one would give him anything. 17 When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food, and here I am dying of hunger! 18 I'll get up, go to my father, and say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. 19 I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers.'"

**How desperately did the wayward son become after he lost his money? [Desperate enough that he thought the pigs' food looked good to eat. Pigs were considered "unclean" by Jewish law. Touching one would have made the son unclean in the eyes of his fellow Jews.]**

**Have you ever had to make a sincere apology for a bad choice you made?**

**How hard was it?**

**Did you rehearse what you were going to say like the son did?**

**What were the conditions the son intended to make to his father? [He'd come back to work as a servant. Technically, he had surrendered his legal sonship when he asked for his inheritance. The father didn't have to take him back as a son.]**

### **Luke 15:20-24—**

So he got up and went to his father. But while the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. 21 The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But the father told his servants, 'Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Then bring the fattened calf and slaughter it, and let's celebrate with a feast, 24 because this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' So they began to celebrate.

**Have you ever been so happy about something that you embarrassed yourself in the celebration of it? If so, what did you celebrate?**

**Did anyone ever hurt you so bad that you walked away from them, disowning the relationship?**

**What tells you that the father never gave up on his child? [The father was watching in the distance for the son. Perhaps he had watched for days on end, hoping to see his son come home. He had compassion for him. He ran to him and kissed him—embarrassing himself in the celebration of his child. He put a ring on his finger and new clothes, then threw a big party! ]**

The father in this story had every legal right to disown his son. Yet, he did not ban him from the property, which was his right. He didn't lecture him on the sinful journey he went on. He didn't tell him he was stupid or foolish.

**The father did EVERYTHING in his power to make it POSSIBLE for his son to return home—even bearing the pain and financial loss upon himself. This is a picture of THE LOVE OF GOD.**

## **THE OTHER BROTHER**

### **Luke 15:25-32—**

25 "Now his older son was in the field; as he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he summoned one of the servants, questioning what these things meant. 27 'Your brother is here,' he told him, 'and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

28 "Then he became angry and didn't want to go in. So his father came out and pleaded with him. 29 But he replied to his father, 'Look, I have been slaving many years for you, and I have never disobeyed your orders, yet you never gave me a goat so that I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.'

31 “Son,’ he said to him, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Take a closer look at these verses and fill in the blanks.

28 “Then he became angry and didn’t want to go in. So **HIS FATHER CAME OUT**....

**Have you ever been mad about something and refused to go to the place where you had to confront your issues?**

**Who did your absence hurt—your opposition or you?**

29 But he replied to his father, ‘Look, **I HAVE BEEN** slaving many years for you, and **I HAVE NEVER** disobeyed your orders, yet **YOU NEVER** gave me a goat so that I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when **THIS SON OF YOURS** came, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’

**Have you ever felt like the world was ganging up on you?**

**Have you ever expressed these same feelings to God as you prayed?**

32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this **BROTHER OF YOURS** was **DEAD** and is **ALIVE** again; he was **LOST** and is **FOUND**.”

The father had to remind the older son that the one who come home was, in fact, **HIS BROTHER**.

### **3 Symptoms of Older Brother Syndrome:**

1. **ANGER** — He refused to go to the party. “Older brothers” can’t celebrate.
2. Lives in **RESENTMENT** and a sense of **ENTITLEMENT**. “I never received...” “You never gave me...”. This is seeking the father’s **STUFF** instead of the father’s **HEART**.
3. **Underestimates the power of GRACE**. When you underestimate the power of grace to others, you underestimate how much grace you need.

Two sons were lost: One was convinced he was too far gone to be saved and loved by the father. The other was convinced he was too good to need rescuing by the father.

Both sons had a wrong belief that **WORKING HARD** and **BEING GOOD** would somehow make them “good enough” to be accepted by the father. The father (God) isn’t good because of our goodness, but we are made good because of His.

## **PRAYER TIME**

- Thank God for looking beyond the selfishness and anger of your past. Ask Him to forgive you for the wrongful, hurtful thoughts that keep you at a distance from the Father.
- Think of the situations where you might be playing the part of the younger brother. Think of the situations where you might be playing the part of the older brother.
- Ask God to help you have characteristics of the Father’s grace.
- Ask God to help your family and the families of your group members would make the kind of choices in their life that would bless their family and be kind to others.

