



## Study Guide - Week 2

### Ice Breaker

Choose one:

**Goofy Question:** If you could travel back in time to witness any historical event, but not change it, which event would you choose and why?

**Improv:** Take turns inviting people to made up events, and respond by coming up with the most hilarious excuses you can think of.

### Sermon Recap

What if the chains holding you back aren't external circumstances, but the excuses you've been clinging to? Josh challenges us to imagine waking up tomorrow completely free from self-imposed limitations. Through the powerful story of the prodigal son, he reveals how our true identity isn't found in performance, past failures, or others' labels—it's secured in Christ's love. Drawing on Jesus' radical picture of the Father who runs to embrace His wayward child, Josh shows how God's grace outruns our shame every time. Whether you're exploring faith or following Jesus, this message

invites you to stop hiding behind excuses and embrace your God-given identity. Don't miss this transformative truth about who you really are!

## Discussion Question

▼ Josh talks about how excuses often feel like protection but actually become chains.

- What are some common excuses people use to avoid fully following Jesus, and why do these excuses feel safe at first?
- What personal excuse have you been using that might be holding you back from experiencing true freedom in Christ?

## Read Scripture

### ***Luke 15:11-24 NIV***

<sup>11</sup> Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

<sup>13</sup> “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup> After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

<sup>17</sup> “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup> I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

<sup>21</sup> “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

<sup>22</sup> “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

## Discussion Questions

▼ In Luke 15:20, we see the father running to meet his prodigal son before he reaches home.

- How does this demonstrate God's response to us when we're still 'a long way off' from Him, and what does this tell us about His character?

- When was a time you felt unworthy to approach God, and how does this passage challenge that feeling?
- ▼ Our identity in Christ is more fundamental than any other label or role we might have.
- How can focusing on our work, relationships, or achievements as our primary identity lead to exhaustion or disappointment?
  - What false identities have you been carrying that you need to surrender to embrace your true identity in Christ?
- ▼ Discipleship starts with freedom and leads to identity, which then changes everything.
- How does understanding our true identity in Christ lead to transformation in our daily lives?
  - What would look different in your life if you fully embraced your identity as a child of God?

## Final Thought

When it comes to our identity, our faith, we need to **own it**. This week, accept the challenge. Name one excuse and surrender it. Replace it with one truth about who you are in Christ.

## Prayer

- Ask for any specific prayer requests group members might have.
- Pray for clarity and courage to face areas in life where excuses are holding you back.
- Ask God for strength to remove self-imposed shackles and to trust in His plan.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your group in taking ownership of personal growth and faith.
- Pray for one another to shift focus from excuses to the potential God sees in you.

## Rewatch the Sermon

Visit [victorycc.life/watch](https://victorycc.life/watch) for on-demand access to all of our sermons.