

**SEASONS OF THE SOUL | Springtime — Repair | Week 3 | January 18 & 19**

Luke 15:11-20; Matthew 19:26; Luke 15:11-32

*These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.*

**Context:** We are looking at one of Jesus' most famous stories. We have explored the Father's letting go—his release of his son, and the son's demise and realization of the actions he has taken. Will he have the courage to repair the situation?

- Start out this week by reading this now very familiar story in a different translation than you normally do: NIV, NLT, The Message, ESV...
- Perhaps instead of reading, open up your favorite Bible app and listen to the story and see what stands out to you through this format.

**Seasons:** Pastor Dan calls us to consider, "Like the seasons of the year, we don't meet these themes just once in our life, but over and over again. A healthy life involves many experiences of releasing and recognizing, repairing and restoring."

- Share or journal through how you experience that statement?
- Share or journal through which season do you currently find yourself.
- Release? • Recognition? • Repair? • Restoration?

**Beyond Repair:** Perhaps our greatest despair comes when we think something is broken so badly that we can't fix it. We pride ourselves in functioning, in being capable to handle issues. When we come upon a situation that defies our best efforts we literally reach the end of ourselves. We can't make this happen.

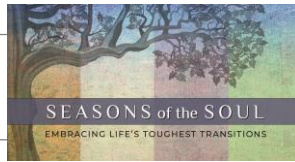
- Think of a situation that fits that description? Can you share it with your group?
- What are the underlying feelings? Failure? Despair? Frustration? Anger?
- Talk about what happened and what you learned (or are learning).

**Possible—What is Possible?:** Read Matt 19:26. How can we envision REPAIR in this unredeemable situation that we find ourselves in? Pastor Dan tells us, "...getting our body in shape or restoring our connection with another person or – most importantly -- with God. Repair is a journey that requires we take some steps".

- Have you ever felt paralyzed to act — fearful of the outcome of any "step toward" in a relationship?
- What were you thinking and feeling? What was your frame of reference?
- Think back to what God might have wanted, how does that change your perspective?

**At the Bottom:** Read Luke 15:16-18. Our boy has squandered his inheritance, has tried his own solution to survive by slopping pigs in the new land and he has reached bottom. He can't fix this. He resolves to take action.

- What do you imagine he is feeling? What do you think he is fearing?
- How does the decision to take action, to return home, sit with you?



- What would be going through your mind if you were him?

**The Humility of Repair:** Pastor Dan talked about FINITE vs INFINITE games. The first always crowns a winner, there is an end-point and you're on top. The infinite game keeps going. You come back, you grow together, you want togetherness--perhaps at the cost of ego and winning.

- What did the son give up to come home?
- Talk about his attitude and motivation as he decides to return home (vs. 18-19).
- Can you identify the INFINITE GAME in your life? Talk about it.
- Brainstorm as a group the choices we make in the INFINITE GAME.
- Which "game" do you tend to play? The infinite or finite? Why?

**Words of Repair:** John Gottman gives examples of words people use when they are seeking repair: *I am so sorry. My reactions were too extreme. I really blew that one. Can I try again? I want to fix this but I don't know how. I can see my part in all of this. I know that I hurt you and I feel terrible about that.*

- Do you struggle with these kind of words? How do you find courage to say them?
- What is your motivation in pursuing REPAIR?

**Practice of the week:** The metaphor of the parable pits our FINITE GAME ego and the world where we play that game against the INFINITE GAME of the Father-who-let-us-go, who waits for us to return and as we shall see next week runs to us in love. Lean further into playing the infinite game by prayerfully pondering how well you practice the following steps towards REPAIR. What hinders or promotes each step for you?

1. Truly care for repair.
2. Trust that the other is open to repair.
3. Speak words of repair.

**We'd love to hear from you!**

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you or your small group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these study guides in your lives.

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