

The Prodigal Son & His Brother

Materials Needed

copies of *The Prodigal Son and His Brother* p. 2, copies of the Word or Bible (each pair can share one), pens or pencils

New Church Concept The Lord's Love

The Lord loves everyone, and wills to be conjoined to them, but He cannot be conjoined as long as the person is in the delight of evil for everyone who is in these is in companionship with the devils who are in hell. The Lord indeed loves them even there; but He cannot be conjoined with them, unless these delights are removed. And these cannot be removed by the Lord, unless the person examines themselves that they may know their evils, acknowledges and confesses them before the Lord, and wills to desist from them, and thus perform repentance. See *Apocalypse Revealed* 937:3

In this activity, students explore the actions of both sons, comparing their reactions to their father, and hopefully recognizing his love for both of them.

1. The parable of the prodigal son teaches us about various ways we can respond to the Lord's love and guidance, and also how He responds to us at different points in our lives.
2. The father represents the Lord, and the sons show two different ways we may sometimes respond to Him. Do you identify with one of the sons more than the other?
3. At times, we all move away from the Lord and make selfish choices that hurt ourselves and others. Like the father in the parable, our Heavenly Father is always ready to forgive and welcome us back with joy.
4. At other times we follow the rules, but feel like we aren't being valued—like the older brother. It may seem as if trouble-makers get all the attention. They have the “fun” of being rebellious, and get attention when they are sorry.
5. Working in pairs, have students look up the parable and fill out the chart (p. 2), describing qualities of both brothers. When the charts are completed, have students discuss their responses. See questions below.



Discussion Questions

- What do these comparisons tell us about what people are like?
- Do some people need the Lord more than others?
- Do some people deserve the Lord's love more than others?
- Does the Lord treat different people differently?
- How can we prepare to “make merry and be glad” with our heavenly Father?

The Prodigal Son and His Brother

Read the story from Luke 15:11-32 and complete the chart below with information on the older brother.

Qualities	Prodigal Son	Older Brother
Positive Qualities 	The younger son is sorry at the end of the story. He humbly asks his father's forgiveness (v. 21).	(see v. 29)
Negative Qualities 	The younger son is greedy for his inheritance and then wastes it all on his own pleasure (see v. 12-13).	(see v. 25, 28-30)
Turning Away 	The younger son rejects his father by going away to a far country (v. 13).	(see v. 28)
The Father's Love 	The father shows his love by running out to meet the younger son, kissing him, giving him gifts, and preparing a feast (v. 20, 22-24).	(see v. 28, 31)
The Ending 	Who is the father showing love for in v. 32—the younger or the older brother?	