

# THE PRODIGAL SON - THE LOVING FATHER PARABLE

(based on Luke 15:11-24)

## YOU WILL NEED:

- 2D laminated figures of prodigal son, brother, father, 2 or 3 other characters, pigs
- a long piece of cloth or felt that could be rolled out to make a road
- a simple cut out shape to represent the Father's house and popsticks or cloth strips to form a pigpen

*Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story. When the children are settled, go to the shelf and carry the materials as you would the Bible. Place these beside you.*

*Roll out the road, place the Father's house at one end and the pigpen past the other end of the road but off to one side as you say:*

Jesus once told a story about a boy who was away from home for a long time. Jesus told this story to help us understand what God's love is like.

*Bring the Father out and place on one side of the house. Bring the two sons out and place on the other side of the house as you say:*

The story is about a father who had two sons.

*Move the younger son over next to the father.*

One day, the younger son asked his father to give him a lot of the family's money so he could leave home and go far away. The father gave him the money.

*Move the younger son a little way along the road. Move the father in front of the house as if looking up the road. Move the older brother off to the side (almost out of the scene).*

So, the younger son packed his things and went away.

*Continue to move the younger son towards the end of the road.*

*Bring out one of the extra characters and put him with the younger son.*

He spent his money on wild parties and having a good time.

*Remove the extra character and move the son into a space by himself.*

Soon he had spent all the money the father had given him and he had nothing left. Now, he was hungry and poor.

*Move the son next to pigpen and bring out the pigs.*

He got a job feeding pigs. He was so hungry he could have eaten the pigs' food.

*Move the son to the end of the road facing the direction of his father's house.*

He thought for a long time and made up his mind to go back to his father. He was going to ask his father to take him back, not as a son but as a servant.

*Move the son slowly down the road. Stop on the road, just over half way*

He started the long journey home.

*Move the son on a little further and stop a short distance from the house. Move the father along the road towards the son. Have father and son facing each other.*

One day his father saw him in the distance and ran to meet him. He hugged him and kissed him.

*Walk father and son back down the road together and stand next to the house. Bring in the other extra characters and place around them.*

The boy was trying to say sorry, but the father quickly called his servants to get a party ready. All the father wanted to do was celebrate and welcome his son home.

*Bring father to the front as if addressing the crowd and hold your hand over him to indicate he is speaking.*

'My son was lost,' he said, 'and now he is found. He was dead and has come back to life!' And they began to celebrate.

*Engage with 'I wonder',*

**I wonder...**the father might have felt when the his son went away...if you would like to work all day feeding pigs...what it would belike to eat pig's food...how the son felt after going back to his father after having spent all his money...how the father felt when he saw the father coming home...if it is easy to forgive someone who as upset you...if you knew someone who is like the father in this story...if you have ever had a welcome home party.