



Week One

Luke. 15:1-3; 11-24

General:

- When you think about a church's "culture," what comes to mind?
- Enculturation is how where you grow up, what you consume, and who you listen to shapes how you see the world. What voices or influences do you think have shaped your worldview the most?
- How have politics, media, or social platforms influenced the way you think about people who are different from you?
- Pastor Chip said: "The average person in America is being discipled by algorithms." How much of what you believe, fear, or react to has been shaped more by media than by Scripture?
- What happens to the mission of Jesus when political identity becomes stronger than spiritual identity?
- Where do you feel tension between following Jesus and fitting into today's cultural norms?
- Anachronistic reading means we project our modern assumptions back onto Scripture instead of letting Scripture challenge us. How might misunderstanding the culture of the Bible lead to misunderstanding the heart of Jesus?
- In verse 1, the furthest away from God were drawing near to hear Jesus. What does that say about the kind of presence Jesus had? What does that say about how people should feel around us?
- In verse 2, the religious leaders are grumbling. Why do you think people who are "close" to God sometimes struggle most with welcoming people who are far from Him?
- Pastor Chip emphasizes the character of the father in the parable (giving the inheritance, watching, running, restoring, celebrating, etc.) How does this reshape the way you see God's heart toward people who have messed up, wandered, or failed?

Take Home 1: Whatever culture we live in should never dictate to us how we should live, think, or act towards others and especially those far from God

- Where do you feel culture pressuring you toward anger, judgment, or suspicion of others?
- Who do you find hardest to show grace to, and what might that reveal about the voices shaping you?
- Pastor Chip compared our life here to living in a hotel room. What would change about your priorities if you truly lived like this world is not your permanent home?

Take Home 2: If we are not creating environments and space for those who are far from God to feel welcomed, we are not doing what Jesus did (Lk. 15:1)

- Do you celebrate when you see people coming through the doors of the building?
- Do you see the church more like a courtroom (where people are judged) or a triage center (where people are healed)?
- What could you do this week to help someone feel more at home at Grace?

Take Home 3: There is absolutely nothing we can do to earn our salvation, so don't make it difficult for others (Lk. 15:22-24)

- The father clothes his son before the son can clean himself. What does that teach us about how grace works?
- Acts 15 shows the church refusing to burden new believers with unnecessary rules. What expectations do Christians sometimes place on people that Jesus never did?
- The Casting Crowns lyric says: "The world is on their way to You, but they're tripping over me." Is there anything about your attitude, tone, or posture that might be making it harder for someone to come to Jesus?