

## Week 7: Can I Know God Personally?

### Before the Meeting...

- Talk with your group about continuing to meet. Attached are several great study options to use between now and the holidays. Meeting bi-weekly as the holidays approach is fine.
- Consider doing a mission/serving project as a group. Serving together truly connects a group! (See some attached ideas in the *2016 Group Mission Ideas* PDF.)
- Remember to combine the resources below with the [exploreGod.com](http://exploreGod.com) materials as desired.

### During the Meeting...

#### Break the Ice (choose one)

1. Did you ever run away from home? Where did you go? What happened?
2. Who was (or is) the “obedient type” in your family? The “wild one”? Which were (or are) you? How did (or do) these types get along?

#### Watch Video 1: Pulse of the World on Knowing God

#### Discuss from among the following:

1. Discuss the Explore God (EG) provided questions as applicable (see EG material).
2. One young lady said of God: “He’s the only stable relationship that you’ll have, because humans will come and go.” Does your experience cause you to agree or disagree? Why so?

#### Watch Video 2: The Curiosity Collective: Can I know God Personally?

#### Discuss from among the following:

1. Discuss the Explore God provided questions as applicable (see EG material).

#### Invite volunteers to read aloud Jesus’ Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32. Then discuss the remaining questions that follow:

2. Speaking of the rebellious son, Pastor Matt said: “the rebellious heart grows in the soil of ingratitude.” What does this mean? (*Invite responses such as “The rebellious son doesn’t understand the goodness of his father and cannot appreciate it.”*) How might this be true of us when we disobey our Heavenly Father?
3. Pastor Matt called the son who stayed home the “religious son” because he believed that following the rules perfectly was the key to relationship. How was he right? How was he wrong?
4. If you had been the Father, what would have been your attitude when your son returned? How is this like (or not like) God’s attitude towards us? (*Romans 2:4 God’s kindness is intended to lead us to repentance*)

Share this from Sunday if applicable: *God is not a God of fairness, because fairness and grace cannot coexist. Grace says, "I'll give you favor you don't deserve."*

5. In your life right now, do you identify most with the youngest (rebellious) son, the older (religious) son, or with the father? Why so?

## Inspire

### Invitation to receive Christ.

*Leader: Don't presume that everyone in your group is following Christ. Share the following as an invitation during your meeting and also to help group members know how to invite others to receive Christ.*

- **Consider using this video about Charles Blondin to encourage people to move beyond belief in Christ to putting their trust in Christ as Savior and Lord.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEHv1Rcn9YQ>

### Putting one's trust in Christ:

1. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says *"God made him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*
  - The *rebellious* need Christ's righteousness because they are unrighteous.
  - The *religious* need it because they are self-righteous.
2. **You may feel like you've gone too far in your sin, but you have never been outside of the reach of Jesus' love.** Ephesians 3:18 says that you can *"have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ"*
3. **Jesus desires to make His home within your heart.** In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says: *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."*
4. **If you sense God is drawing you to himself tonight, we can pray together. Here's what the Bible says:** Romans 10:9 *"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"*

## Prayer & Ministry

It might be that the above "Inspire" section is where you land. That's awesome! Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in this regard. Otherwise, consider the following:

1. Invite the group to spend some time thanking God the Father for his wonderful love for us.
2. Ask: **"Which of the Father's qualities do you most need tonight:** Willingness to let others make their mistakes, patience in waiting for change, increased capacity to forgive, understanding how to deal with both of his children, his ability to celebrate life?  
(Pray for one another accordingly.)

## After the meeting...

- Remind everyone that ExploreGod.com is always available and that they can mentor someone or start an Explore God group on their own at anytime!
- Confirm plans to share a meal together as a group soon!
- **Determine whether or not your group will continue to meet now that the Explore God series has concluded.** See attached file (After Explore God.PDF) for some ideas.

## Pastor Dwayne's Further Recommendations:

- Awesome EG article: What is the Gospel <http://www.exploregod.com/what-is-the-gospel>
- **Does God Speak to Us?** Great Explore God video (3 minutes)  
<http://www.exploregod.com/does-god-speak-to-us-video>