

GOING DEEPER IN A GROUP OR WITH A PARTNER:

Gather with others to connect and learn together. Use the suggested template below and adjust based on your groups' preferences.

Opening "Community Time" Question:

How would you answer the question, "Share a time you or someone else diffused someone's anger with something unexpected or humor."

Get paper and a pen for this next time of reflection

Watch [5 Minute Bible Project Video](#)

Discussion Questions:

(pick whichever resonate with your group and you have time for)

- To say that God is "long of nose" is to say that he is patient—it takes him a long time before he becomes angry. He gives people time to respond to his gracious warnings. In your culture, what expressions are used to describe a patient person?
- In 2 Peter 3:9, we read one of the reasons behind God's patience. How would you interpret this passage? What does it suggest to you about God's character, and how does that change the way you see yourself and others?
- Let's consider how Jesus took the consequences of evil upon himself as we read Romans 5:6-11. Does Jesus' self-giving love help us see God's anger toward evil and his patient love for people at the same time? If so, how?
- Take time to discuss other themes or key takeaways from what you read together.

Spiritual Practices

Visio Divina

Below are the steps for Visio Divina. This is an artistic twist on Lectio Divina, which is a traditional practice that involves Scripture, Reflection, and Prayer. Visio Divina, involves reflecting on an image in addition to those three elements. This could be an art piece, or it could be walking outside in creation.

For this week we are focusing on Rembrandt's interpretation of the parable of the Prodigal Son. This story is a beautiful illustration of God's response based on God's mercy and love. Link to the [art work](#) here.

1. Prepare Your Heart for Prayer

Have the image visible – either have it printed out or have the image pulled up on your phone or computer.

Begin your time in prayer by reading or listening to the passage: Luke 15:11-32

Close your eyes, breathe, clear your mind, and ask God to enter into this time of prayer with you. Ask God to speak to you through this image.

2. Allow the Image to Speak to Your Heart

Open your eyes and look at the image. Let your eyes pause and focus on the part of the image they're first drawn to.

Gaze upon just that part of the image for a minute or two. Then close your eyes, still seeing that part of the image in your mind.

3. Reflect on the Entire Image

Open your eyes and now look upon the whole image. Gaze upon all of the image, allowing it to draw forth a word, an emotion, or an image in your heart.

What do you imagine? What thoughts or questions is this image raising? What emotions do you feel?

Continue to gaze and reflect as long as you need to, then briefly close and rest your eyes.

4. Pray Through the Image

Open your eyes. While looking upon the image, respond to God. Pray through the words, images, emotions, questions, and thoughts that are now on your heart.

Continue to look upon the image as you pray. Then, close and rest your eyes briefly.

5. Rest and Reflect in God

As you close out your time in prayer, open your eyes and gaze again upon the image. Rest in God's presence as you reflect upon this prayer experience.

Consider how you'll take this into your life. How is the Spirit inviting you to respond? You may choose to journal about your experience.

Lectio Divina

If you are unable to access an image, you could just do Lectio Divina. The steps are:

1. Prepare your heart for prayer.

Close your eyes. Take a moment to inhale and exhale. You may consider praying this prayer,

Inhale: Abba

Exhale: I belong to you

2. Read or listen to the passage the first time: Luke 15:11-32

3. Take a couple minutes to pause and reflect:

What do I imagine? What questions do I have? What emotions am I feeling?
You may consider setting a timer to help engage the practice.

4. Read or listen to the passage a second time: Luke 15:11-32

5. Consider:

What does this passage say about God?

What does this passage say about myself or those around me?

How is the Spirit inviting me to respond?

You may choose to journal, or discuss with others.

6. Pray to close:

Close your eyes. Take a moment to inhale and exhale.

Inhale: Abba

Exhale: I belong to you