

# WEEK 6 / DEVOTION



## Read Luke 15:11-32

Somehow, by the grace of God, the prodigal son “came to himself” and realized that the only way he was going to survive was to go home. Some might say he hit bottom and had no where else to go. When he was still a long way off, his father ran out to meet his long-lost son and invited him back into the family.

Today, once-lost sons and daughters are being found and coming home. They are detoxing from opioids and completing rehabilitation programs. At this point in their lives they desperately need our love and support as they begin their lifelong journey of recovery. We do not know what happened to Jesus’ prodigal son the day after the homecoming celebration. Did he live happily ever after at home, or did he—for whatever reason—leave home again?

Today when you fast, pray, listen, and respond, ask God to show you how you can help support, encourage, and love those struggling everyday in recovery in our neighborhood. Ask God to show you where they are and how we can get to know them by name. Ask God to show you how to walk beside a person who is in recovery so they will know they are welcome in our church family.

It is not enough to open our church doors and hope that the prodigal sons and daughters will come in and stay. We must leave our sanctuaries and find these persons while they are “still a long ways off” and walk with them all the way home...step by step.

# WEEK 6 / DEVOTION



## Read Luke 15:11-32

Somehow, by the grace of God, the prodigal son “came to himself” and realized that the only way he was going to survive was to go home. Some might say he hit bottom and had no where else to go. When he was still a long way off, his father ran out to meet his long-lost son and invited him back into the family.

Today, once-lost sons and daughters are being found and coming home. They are detoxing from opioids and completing rehabilitation programs. At this point in their lives they desperately need our love and support as they begin their lifelong journey of recovery. We do not know what happened to Jesus’ prodigal son the day after the homecoming celebration. Did he live happily ever after at home, or did he—for whatever reason—leave home again?

Today when you fast, pray, listen, and respond, ask God to show you how you can help support, encourage, and love those struggling everyday in recovery in our neighborhood. Ask God to show you where they are and how we can get to know them by name. Ask God to show you how to walk beside a person who is in recovery so they will know they are welcome in our church family.

It is not enough to open our church doors and hope that the prodigal sons and daughters will come in and stay. We must leave our sanctuaries and find these persons while they are “still a long ways off” and walk with them all the way home...step by step.

## Dangers of Opioid Addiction

The person suffering from addiction to opioids faces many dangers. There is the obvious danger of taking too many or too strong a dose and dying from an overdose. Opioids are depressants, which means they slow down a person's breathing and heart rate. Take too many or too strong a dose, and the user can just stop breathing. If an overdosing person is revived and survives, their brain has endured a time of low oxygen, which can result in brain damage in very little time.

Heroin is mixed or "cut" with a multitude of products in order to make it less expensive for the dealer. A heroin user injects or inhales heroin and whatever else it may be cut with. The cutting agents can be: Benefiber, baby powder, baking soda, meat tenderizer, sugar, corn starch, etc. The blood stream is not built to handle these chemicals and flush them out of the system without some damage. The user has no idea what their heroin has been cut with. The cutting process usually starts before the heroin enters the country, and is continued with every subsequent dealer that touches it. Recently, the trend has been to cut the heroin with the very powerful but inexpensive Fentanyl or Carfentanyl to increase the potency of the heroin. Again, the user has no idea how much Fentanyl or Carfentanyl is in their heroin, and their next dose could kill them.

When an addicted person is injecting their dose of opioid and sharing their needles, they are exposing themselves to follow-on diseases. Follow-on diseases like MRSA, hepatitis, or HIV are highly infectious diseases that can kill the addicted person while actively using or even after they have been in recovery.

Because addicted persons have to participate in illegal activities to support their addiction, they expose themselves to a world of violence. Addicted persons are constantly in danger of being the victim of violence or in causing violence in order to supply their need for opioids.

Addicted persons soon separate themselves from their families and communities because of their lone focus on obtaining opioids. The very people who would give anything to see the addicted person healthy again are cut off by the addicted person.

An addicted person is risking their health everyday, be that by overdose, gunshot, or follow-on diseases, and are facing these threats by themselves. The addicted life is miserable and dangerous...not a life anyone would choose.



# WEEK 6 / EDUCATION

## Dangers of Opioid Addiction

The person suffering from addiction to opioids faces many dangers. There is the obvious danger of taking too many or too strong a dose and dying from an overdose. Opioids are depressants, which means they slow down a person's breathing and heart rate. Take too many or too strong a dose, and the user can just stop breathing. If an overdosing person is revived and survives, their brain has endured a time of low oxygen, which can result in brain damage in very little time.

Heroin is mixed or "cut" with a multitude of products in order to make it less expensive for the dealer. A heroin user injects or inhales heroin and whatever else it may be cut with. The cutting agents can be: Benefiber, baby powder, baking soda, meat tenderizer, sugar, corn starch, etc. The blood stream is not built to handle these chemicals and flush them out of the system without some damage. The user has no idea what their heroin has been cut with. The cutting process usually starts before the heroin enters the country, and is continued with every subsequent dealer that touches it. Recently, the trend has been to cut the heroin with the very powerful but inexpensive Fentanyl or Carfentanyl to increase the potency of the heroin. Again, the user has no idea how much Fentanyl or Carfentanyl is in their heroin, and their next dose could kill them.

When an addicted person is injecting their dose of opioid and sharing their needles, they are exposing themselves to follow-on diseases. Follow-on diseases like MRSA, hepatitis, or HIV are highly infectious diseases that can kill the addicted person while actively using or even after they have been in recovery.

Because addicted persons have to participate in illegal activities to support their addiction, they expose themselves to a world of violence. Addicted persons are constantly in danger of being the victim of violence or in causing violence in order to supply their need for opioids.

Addicted persons soon separate themselves from their families and communities because of their lone focus on obtaining opioids. The very people who would give anything to see the addicted person healthy again are cut off by the addicted person.

An addicted person is risking their health everyday, be that by overdose, gunshot, or follow-on diseases, and are facing these threats by themselves. The addicted life is miserable and dangerous...not a life anyone would choose.



# WEEK 6 / EDUCATION