

# cell notes

A **meeting** of your cell community has four connected elements – **Welcome, Word, Worship, Witness**.  
**Luke 15v1-16v16 Authentic Spirituality is for repentant Sinners**

## Welcome

Introduce the meeting. Get to know each other. Share with each other stories from doing mission in the last week. What needs are there for prayer for peoples friends? How can you support each other as you seek to **live for Jesus** and **speak for Jesus**.

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## Word

Pray. Read the passage in two sections.

### Chapter 15v1-32

- What are the pictures in the parables in v3-24?
- What are they a picture of? (v7,10)
- Why the repetition?
- What would you expect v25 to say? (in view of v7,10)
- Why would it not say that?
- Who is being addressed and what is their attitude to Jesus? (v1,2)
- What do the parables say to the group in v1?
- How would the group in v2 respond to the parables in v3-24?
- How does v25-32 address the Pharisees and Teachers?
- How could they respond to the parable?
- Summarise the message to sinners, and to pharisees?

### Chapter 16v1-15

- What is the story of the parable v1-9?
- What is the point Jesus makes with the parable?
- What is the point in v10-12?
- What is the point in v13?
- Who is being addressed in v1-13? (v1)
- Who else is listening? How are they described?
- What is being said to the Pharisees here?
- What has Jesus said about the state of the pharisees in 15v1-16v15?
- What would be shrewd behaviour for someone who knows they're a sinner?

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## Worship (10mins)

Respond in prayer and praise to what you've studied.

**Next Week (Week 7)** > Cell Invitation Event

**Week 8** > Luke 16v16-18v8

## Witness (30mins)

Plan details of your Cell Invitation Events in weeks 7 and 10. What will you do with the reality that everyone is a sinner? What action will you take?

# word notes

This is a complex passage with some very familiar teaching. The danger is that we simply presume we know what it says. Odds on we'll miss the point if we approach it that way. There are also many potential red-herrings for us to avoid.

Things open with three very similar parables from Jesus in v3-24. The story of a lost sheep, a lost coin and a son who loses himself, in each case what is lost is found. The first two parables end with the conclusion "in the same way" there is rejoicing in heaven when sinners repent. The repetition emphasises the point.

You'd expect v25 to repeat the same conclusion but it doesn't. Instead we get a new development. This should draw our attention to who is listening. In v1-2 we're told that there are sinners who want to hear Jesus, and Pharisees who are muttering against him.

Its easy to see how the first two parables address the listening sinners. They are great encouragement – life is for such people as them! They should repent and receive eternal life. But the third parable appears to speak more to the Pharisees. They would consider themselves to be at home, not lost. And yet they are exposed as lost also. They are in need of repentance, if they repent they too could be received into eternal life with great celebration – they too are sinners. We're not told how the older son responds, there is no v33. The Pharisees can either get more angry and so be judged by the parable, or they can admit they are sinners and repent...

In chapter 16 we get a slightly confusing parable. A manager is exposed as having misused his position, but he's called to draw together his accounts. Fearing for his future he arranges for debts to be cut, so that he will have somewhere to go when he loses his job. Unexpectedly he is commended for his shrewdness. And Jesus seems to teach his disciples that shrewdness is a wise thing to do, to secure eternal life.

Likewise in v10-12 trustworthiness is commended. Trustworthiness with little leads to being given more. True riches are are on offer. In v13 we're told that when it comes to God and money you have to serve only one of them, not both. To love one is to hate the other. These teachings about shrewdness, trustworthiness and service seem obscure at first. Jesus is teaching his disciples, v1, but what is he teaching them?

Then we notice in v14 that the Pharisees are listening in. Jesus is teaching against them, they are described as lovers of money. Therefore from v13 they are God-haters. And the same is detailed in v15, as they are shown to love the things that God despises. They are not shrewd with what they have. They have been entrusted with much, but have failed to steward it well. They have appeared to serve God, but preferred money. Again they are shown bankrupt. They are sinners. They are not shrewd, instead they hate God.

And what would it mean to be shrewd and trustworthy? To take what knowledge of Jesus we have, even from these pages, and to repent. Sinners who repent get eternal life. Sinners who repent are rejoiced over in heaven. What do we with Jesus' diagnosis of us as sinners? What do we do with the offer of eternal life?