



## Small group study materials, March 2020

### Chapter & verse – Stuart Dew (page 21)

Read Luke 15:11-32, followed by Stuart Dew’s article.

1. The article begins by examining the word ‘prodigal’, and the different titles given to describe this parable. After reading it in the Bible, what title would you give this parable? Does your title change after reading Stuart’s article?
2. Stuart describes the parable as ‘one of Jesus’ most enduringly relevant’. What relevance does it have in your life? Does it remind you of your familial and spiritual relationships?
3. The article’s third and fourth paragraphs discuss the element of confession in Jesus’ parable, noting that saying sorry can be hard and complex. Was the son’s apology ‘cupboard love’, as Stuart describes? Is there a right way to be, or say, sorry?
4. Referencing Shamima Begum’s case, Stuart argues that society could be more forgiving. Who, or what, would you have society forgive? What about the Church?
5. The article’s seventh paragraph concentrates on the vigour of the father’s welcome, running to meet his son. How proactively does your church welcome? What practical steps could ensure that more people are as vigorously embraced as the son in this parable?
6. ‘Verse 29 raises questions for me,’ says Stuart in the tenth paragraph, and he explains, over two paragraphs, what some of those questions are. Review and discuss those questions.
7. Stuart’s final question addresses those who might feel underappreciated in church. Who do you take for granted in your church, and wider life? Are there ways we can better appreciate church volunteers?

**For further reflection:** ‘You are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.’ from Nehemiah 9:17



Chapter 4 verse

### Stuart Dew Chapter & verse

'Why did Jesus tell this parable? The answer's better than you think'



While he was still off his father's back and was filled with compassion for us...  
Liam 10/18/18

Why did Jesus tell this parable? It's a question that's been asked for centuries. The answer is better than you think. It's not just about the parable itself, but about the heart of Jesus that we can see in the story. The parable of the speck and the log is a powerful illustration of the danger of hypocrisy and the need for genuine repentance. Jesus uses this story to show us that we must first deal with our own sin before we can help others. It's a message of grace and mercy, but also of truth and challenge. The parable is a call to self-examination and to a life of authentic faith. It's a message that is as relevant today as it was in the first century. The parable of the speck and the log is a powerful reminder that we are all sinners, and we all need God's grace. It's a message of hope and redemption for all who are willing to listen. The parable is a call to a life of love and service, and it's a message that is as powerful today as it was in the first century. The parable of the speck and the log is a powerful illustration of the danger of hypocrisy and the need for genuine repentance. Jesus uses this story to show us that we must first deal with our own sin before we can help others. It's a message of grace and mercy, but also of truth and challenge. The parable is a call to self-examination and to a life of authentic faith. It's a message that is as relevant today as it was in the first century. The parable of the speck and the log is a powerful reminder that we are all sinners, and we all need God's grace. It's a message of hope and redemption for all who are willing to listen. The parable is a call to a life of love and service, and it's a message that is as powerful today as it was in the first century.

**Prayer:** Father, how unfailing and unquenchable your love is for each one of us in our lostness. We thank you for the grace that accepts us and reaches out to us, however far away we are, and however little we deserve it. Help us to welcome, forgive and help one another, as you welcome, forgive and help us. Amen.

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