

# Week Four: Return to Me

## Leader Meeting Outline

### Group Begins

- (Welcome group members)
- This week we are reviewing chapter 4, which gave us some interesting perspectives on how our hearts are prone to wander from the Lord, but also encouraged us in our Father's relentless pursuit of rebellious runners.
- Let's read the quote from author Tullian Tchividjian at the beginning of the chapter and then we'll pray.
- (Read Tullian Tchividjian quote on pg. 30 of *Clean Home, Messy Heart*)
- (Lead group in opening prayer)

### Chapter 4 Group Review

#### Opening Questions

- How did you relate to the opening story of this chapter?
- Would someone please share a part in the "Messiness of Running" section that really spoke to them?

#### Washing with the Word Reflections

- Let's briefly discuss how being a mother has given us perspective on the hurt that results when our children run away from us. Are we able to see ourselves from God's point of view, as renegade runners, just like our children can sometimes be?
- To take a closer look at how we're tempted to run from the Lord, let's read the parable of the lost son, Luke 15:11-32.
- (Turn bibles to Luke 15:11-32 and read aloud to group)
- Let's focus on Luke 15:25-27. The older son was in the fields, working hard, and he came home to a party being thrown for his wayward younger brother, who had run away but now returned. How does the older son's attitude toward the father's welcome of his brother show us a more discreet way of running from the Lord? Do we see this sort of running from God's grace in our own hearts?
- Is there anything else in this section that someone would like to share with the group?
- We have such great reason to repent of our running and flee toward the safety of our Father. Let's hear from the Lord as we read Isaiah 44:22 together.
- (Have a group member read Isaiah 44:22 aloud to group)
- How does it make you feel to hear the Lord speak to you in this way?
- Would someone like to share a comment from this section that encouraged or challenged them?
- Let's hear more from the lips of our Father by reading together Hosea 11:1-4.
- (Have a group member read Hosea 11:1-4 aloud to group)
- What parts of this passage show God's tender compassion toward his children?

- The author asks, “Has all of our running ever found us a greater consolation than the living hope we have in Jesus?” What is the hope we have in Christ? Can it be found through other pursuits?
- Let’s take yet another look at how being in community with other believers can help us run from the Lord less and less over time. Turn to Lamentations 3:40.
- *(Read Lamentations 3:40 aloud to the group)*
- In this section, what did you read that encouraged or convicted you?
- Why do you think examining our ways is best done in the context of fellowship in the body of Christ?
- There’s a group of three Scriptures on page 37 of the book that I want us to take a look at. Let’s read together Zechariah 1:3, 1 Peter 5:6–7, and Jeremiah 3:12 *(assign passages to group members to read)*.
- As we consider these scriptures, and this entire chapter, how have our hearts been convicted regarding our own running? What have these Scriptures revealed about the heart of God?

## *Hanging Hearts Out to Dry | Page 38*

### **Study Reflection**

- Often times we run from the Lord because of our confidence to handle situations on our own, or our prideful tendencies to believe we don’t need his instruction. This exercise had us search the Scriptures to see what they have to say about the pride in our hearts. Let’s each share with the group the Scriptures we found and what the Lord revealed to you as you were reading them.

### **Scripture Memorization**

- Now let’s test ourselves on this week’s memory verse.
- *(Note: the method how you do this should be pre-determined by the preference of your group. See Small Group Leader Kit Introduction for suggestions).*

### **Prayer**

- This exercise had us read parables from Luke 15. How were you reminded of God’s love as you read through these parables this past week?

**Reflection Journal Users:** You may or may not choose to review the 5 Scriptures from this week’s reflection journal. If you would like to, take turns reading the verses aloud and discuss how the Spirit convicted and/or encouraged them through their reflection journaling time.

## *Group Ends*

- *(Conclude meeting by asking for prayer requests and prayer reports. Then lead group in closing prayer.)*