

Leader Guide

Revive, Repent

Spring 2026 | Week 4

Message Date 4/26/2026

THE GOAL

This week Pastor Craig is kicking off a brand-new 5-week series. We have been through a stretch of campaign, then Easter, followed by a 2-week discussion of the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in our life. This week we're going back to the basics.

One important thing that affects much in life is, if you want to become a master of something you have to be a virtuoso at the basics. When I work out at the gym, the better I am at the mechanics, or the basics, the less likely I am to injure myself. Similarly, the more I walk with Jesus the more important it is to not rush past the basics and try to become the master of everything. Instead, lean into the things that He has given me and master those. The goal this week is for each person to honestly examine their heart—identifying areas of unconfessed sin, bitterness, resentment, pride, or independence—and take a step toward confession and return. As we repent, we remove what creates distance and position ourselves to be revived, restored, and filled again with Spirit-led boldness.

MY STORY

- 1) What's something you were absolutely convinced you didn't need and had been holding on to and then got rid of—but later realized you actually needed it?
- 2) You can “pause” one part of your life permanently (like traffic, group texts, or waiting in lines). What are you freezing forever?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Luke 15:11–32 (NLT)

¹¹To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: “A man had two sons.

¹²The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

¹³A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. ¹⁴About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. ¹⁵He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.

¹⁷When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, ¹⁹and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant." '

²⁰So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. ²¹His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.'

²²But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. ²³And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.

²⁵Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, ²⁶and he asked one of the servants what was going on. ²⁷'Your brother is back,' he was told, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.'

²⁸The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, ²⁹but he replied, 'All these years I've slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. ³⁰Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!'

³¹His father said to him, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. ³²We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!'

4) What caused the younger son to come to his senses?

It wasn't a sermon—it was hitting the end of himself. His independence collapsed, his resources ran out, and his situation forced him to see reality clearly. Repentance often begins when I stop managing my life and finally see my need for the Father.

5) What does the younger son's confession teach us about repentance?

He doesn't soften it, spin it, or blame anyone else. He names it clearly: "I have sinned." True repentance is honest, direct, and humble. It's not just feeling bad—it's owning the reality of what I've done and turning back toward God.

6) What does the father's response reveal about God's heart?

The father runs to him before the son can prove anything. That means restoration is not based on performance—it's based on relationship. God is not waiting to evaluate me; He is ready to receive me. Repentance doesn't convince God to love me—it puts me back in position to experience His love.

7) How does the older brother reveal a different kind of distance from the Father?

He stayed close physically but drifted relationally. His language exposes it—he sees himself as a slave, not a son. His resentment toward his brother and frustration with the father show a heart that has grown hard over time. This is what slow drift looks like.

8) Why do both sons need repentance?

The younger son ran away, the older son stayed—but both were disconnected. One was lost in rebellion, the other in pride. Repentance is not just for obvious sin—it's also for the quiet buildup of bitterness, entitlement, and self-reliance.

9) What creates distance between us and God?

Unconfessed sin doesn't disappear—it stays unresolved. Bitterness, offense, jealousy, pride, and independence slowly create distance. These things don't just affect behavior—they affect relationship. Over time, they dull our sensitivity to God.

10) How does unconfessed sin affect boldness?

Distance from God leads to a lack of confidence in Him. When I know something is unresolved, I shrink back. Boldness comes from closeness. When repentance removes distance, boldness returns naturally because I'm back in step with the Spirit.

11) What does "coming to your senses" look like in your life?

It's the recognition of where I am and what I've been doing. It's the humility and the acceptance of the reality of my behaviors. Every time I've been in this real situation where I've had to come to my senses it's because I've been living in a delusion that I could manage my sin and the consequences. And I've forgotten the kindness of Jesus.

12) What does the younger son's journey teach us about how repentance actually happens in real life?

Repentance is rarely instant—it's usually a process. The younger son didn't wake up one day and randomly decide to go home. He hit the end of himself. His independence failed, his resources ran out, and his situation forced him to see reality clearly. That's often how it works in my life too—God allows me to feel the weight of my choices so I can see my need for Him again. Repentance begins when I "come to my senses," recognize that life apart from the Father isn't working, and choose to return. It's not just feeling bad—it's a decision to turn around and move back toward Him.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Ask God to search your heart—what needs to be confessed or brought into the light this week?
- 2) Is there any bitterness, resentment, pride, or independence that has created distance between you and the Father or someone else?
- 3) Pray Psalm 80:17–19 daily this week. Ask God to revive your heart, restore your dependence on Him, and bring you back into close relationship.