

## Growing Closer

“Loving The Far Off”

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Message Notes: Aldersgate UMC



Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:13 (NLT)

Jesus said “For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16 (NLT)

## Big Idea: If you want to get closer to God, Love Those Who Are Far Off.

### 1. Pay Attention To Dissatisfactions.

After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. Luke 15:14 (NIV)

He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. Luke 15:16 (NIV)

### 2. Respond To Receptivity.

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!’ ” Luke 15:17 (NIV)

Your sins have cut you off from God. Because of sin he has turned his face away from you and will not listen anymore. Isaiah 59:2 (TLB)

### 3. Go For God’s Best.

“So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long distance away, his father saw him coming, and was filled with loving pity and ran and embraced him and kissed him. “His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and you, and am not worthy of being called your son—’ “But his father said to the slaves, ‘Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. And a jeweled ring for his finger; and shoes! Luke 15:20-22 (TLB)

### 4. Celebrate Spiritual Victories.

We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.’ So the party began. Luke 15:23-24 (NLT)

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away! Luke 15:7 (NLT)

Sing praises to the Lord! Raise your voice in song...rejoice in his presence. Psalm 68:4 (TLB)