



Jesus' Personality // Jeff Brodie // September 7, 2025

Most people think God is mad when they wander. Jesus said the opposite: God throws a party when lost people come home. If that's God's heart, shouldn't it be ours too? Come discover why Jesus' personality drew in the very people religion pushed out.

Scripture: [Matthew 16:17-18 NLT](#); [Luke 15:11-32 NLT](#)

Bottom Line: The church isn't a club for the found, it's a search party for the lost.

Digging In:

Reminder: The goal is a good discussion, not completing every question. Use these as a tool to help.

1. When you hear the word "church," what feelings or images come to mind? What do you suppose most people in our community think about church?
2. Have you ever had an awkward or funny experience when someone found out you go to church?
3. Why do you think people often feel more comfortable talking about Jesus than about church?
4. Read Matthew 16:17-18. Jesus declares, "I will build my church." What does this tell us about who really owns and leads the church—and how Jesus feels about the church?
5. In Ephesians 1:22-23, the apostle Paul describes the movement of the church as a body with Christ as the head. What makes you excited (or cautious) about being part of Jesus' movement rather than just an institution?
6. Read Luke 15:11-20. What stands out to you in the way the father responds to the younger son? What does this teach us about God's personality and heart toward people who feel far from him?
7. If the church is "a search party for the found, not a club for the lost," what's one practical way you can help make it easier for someone you know to explore faith?
8. Read Luke 15:25-32. What do you notice about the older brother's reaction? How might "older brother attitudes" (self-righteousness) creep into churches today?
9. Tim Keller says the younger brother was lost in his *badness*, while the older brother was lost in his *goodness*. Which one feels easier for you to relate to? Why?

10. Have you ever felt more like the younger brother—living far from God and hoping he'd take you back? Or more like the older brother—trying to control God by doing the right things but not experiencing his love? Explain.
11. What would it look like for a church to reflect the Father's embrace in the way it treats guests, neighbours, or outsiders?
12. Jeff challenged us with this question about our faith in Jesus and the goodness of God in our lives: "Is it just *true* for you? Or is it *real*?" What's the difference? How would you respond?

Looking Forward:

This week, who is one person you could invite, encourage, or pray for—someone who may need to know the Father runs toward them with love, no matter how messy? What small step can you take to open yourself up to truly experience the love of the Father in your life? Consider sharing your desire to know that love with someone you trust, so they can encourage and be praying for you too.