



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Deep – Exploring God’s Word, Part 4

Pastor Stephen Hayes

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**Main Idea** – God will reveal special, hidden mysteries to you in various ways. Your ability to understand those mysteries depends on how close you are to Jesus. One way Jesus revealed mysteries to his followers was through parables.

### God is calling you to a life of growth and knowledge of Him

- **1 Corinthians 2: 6-12 – However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory. But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.**
- From before time began, God set aside hidden things He wants to reveal to you. You have to seek those things; He will not drop them into your head unannounced.
- There are a number of ways God reveals His mysteries to us through the Holy Spirit. Some of those ways include: studying the Bible, worshipping, setting time aside for prayer, and meeting and having relationships with other believers in small groups.

### Jesus taught about God through parables

- The parables Jesus told were not simple stories. There are deep mysteries hidden beneath the surface.
- Those who are close to Jesus will learn those mysteries. In Matthew 13 Jesus explained some of the mysteries to his disciples.
- Today, the Holy Spirit will show you other hidden mysteries in the parables.

### **Five revelations from the prodigal son parable in Luke 15: 11-31**

1. The younger son had strayed too far from the life God had intended for him. (The reference to working around swine in verses 15 & 16 indicated to the Israelite audience of that day that the boy had, indeed, travelled very far from where he should have been.)
2. The younger son's true repentance was something that happened deep in his heart (verses 17-19).
3. Every return (sincere repentance) is a celebration. God, and all the saints, celebrate the return of someone who has strayed (verses 22-24).
4. In order to live a life of fulfillment and truth, we should first seek the Kingdom of God. The younger son's happiness was dependent on his father, and his father's possessions.
5. We should not rely on our own understanding, or try to get God's approval with our own ideas about what is right. (The older son had the wrong understanding of what was happening because he perceived through his own reasoning and self-righteousness.)

### **God will lift us up to understand things at His level**

- The Holy Spirit enables us to understand the deeper things of God.
- Discovery through parables is one way God reveals things.
- As we go deeper into the truths of God, He lifts us up to His level so we can accurately understand Him and the world around us.
- God reveals mysteries to us when we study the Bible, pray, worship, and have fellowship with other believers.
- God is always available to us and is ready to show us new things to discover.

### **Reflective Questions for The Deep – Exploring God's Word, Part 4**

- 1. How does the fact that God set aside mysteries to show you from before time began demonstrate His love?**
- 2. Why, do you suppose, God keeps these things hidden until we are sincere about discovering them?**
- 3. Which of the five revelations Pastor Stephen shared from the prodigal son story was most meaningful to you? Why?**
- 4. What other revelations do you personally see in the prodigal son story?**