

What is a prodigal?

Someone who has already accepted the Lord as Savior and for whatever reason walked away.



Reasons for becoming a prodigal

- **They were wounded by the body of Christ**
- **Children of pastors and leaders sometimes leave the church because of things they see behind the scenes of the church**
- **They were not grounded in the Word when they first accepted Christ.**
- **They were thrust into leadership before they became mature in their Christian walk and were disillusioned.**
- **They wanted to be a part of the World and felt they were missing out by living a Christian life.**
- **Some in leadership get burned out and leave the church**
- **Some people just drift away for no apparent reason.**
- **Some commit sins that they believe that God can not forgive**

Praying the Prodigal Home

God sent us a life preserver, Jesus Christ to save us. If we grab hold we will never go completely under and will find safety with Jesus.



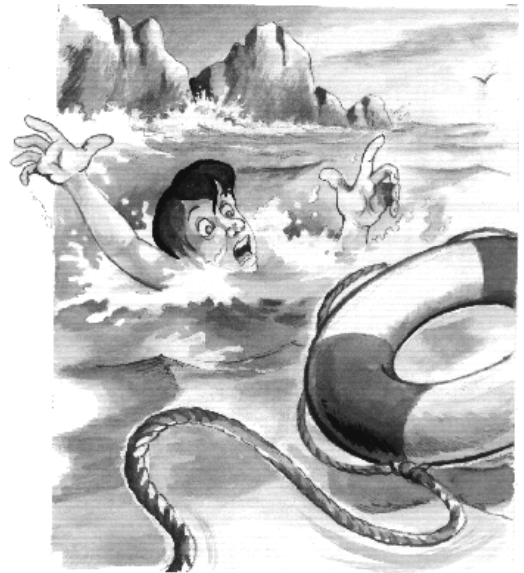
The Lord throws out life preserves to all of us. If we choose to grab hold then Jesus will be there in the storms of life pulling us to safety.

Sometimes we choose to let our hold loosen and when we do we began to sink. Then we grab hold again. Through out our Christian life we may do this many times sometimes holding tight and sometimes loosely holding on. Sometimes we loosen

our hold because things are going so great that we think we don't need the Lord and other times the storms of life may become overwhelming and we get angry at the Lord. But then God reels us in by our life preserver and we tighten our hold once again.

But then sometimes we choose to completely let go and turn our back on Jesus. There are many reasons for this but one big reason especially for our youth and college age children is that the world begins to look better, more "fun" we see what the world is doing and we want to be part of that.

Sheila is going to a bar, She is making friends and even met a cute guy that asked her out. Randal is having sex with his girlfriend, Suzie is going to the boats and gambling and it looks like so much fun we wonder why we have to be different. We don't see behind the façade, Sheila is lonely and is trying to find friends in all the wrong places. Last week she was date raped, but she is too embarrassed and ashamed to tell anyone. Randal's girlfriend thinks she might be pregnant and if she is they will have some difficult decisions to make. Suzie is broke and her landlord is evicting her. What seems like such fun is really a pigsty.



But we don't see the pigsty we only see the "fun" everyone else is having. We want what they seem to have, why do we have to be different?

So. We turn our backs and walk away. We have become a prodigal a convent son or daughter who once loved and accepted the Lord but now has turned their back on their life preserver.

Our job as Christians is to pray the prodigals in our life back home.

When the prodigal returns home the church will be in the role of the big brother. How will we react?

Will we follow the example of Our Father, loving compassionate, forgiving and receive them with joy or will we be jealous and resent the fact that we have stayed faithful and worked for the Lord and no one seems to notice, but when the Prodigal returns it seems like everyone rejoices.



Will we open our arms to the Prodigal if he looks or acts different from us? He may still smell a little of the pig sty that he has been in. As a church we should receive them just as they are and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

Get Ready the Prodigals are coming home.!

Let's throw them a party to show how glad we are that they have come home.

We also need to look at the young people in our lives. Those in our families and our churches, any one that we have any influence with. To keep them from becoming prodigals we need to reach them when they are young. Ground them in God's Word and help them to develop a close personal relationship with the Lord. We also need to be the right kind of example for them. What do they see when they look at us. Are we consistent in our Christian Walk? Do we view our Christian life as fun and challenging and worth going the extra mile for, or do we make it look like hard work and no fun? Do our children see us complain and judge others or do they see us trying to bring peace and love to our homes and churches. It

makes a difference in someone's life. Ask the Lord help your search your heart and show you how you can touch someone's life and help keep them from becoming a prodigal son or daughter. Each one of us is responsible. If you don't know any of the children in church, volunteer for Children's church, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, youth on Sunday night, youth week or as a chaperone for a field trip. Get to know them.



You have heard the saying it takes a village to raise a child? It can also be said that it takes a church to raise a Child. Everyone of us, no excuses. Pray for a child or youth, pray with a child or youth, be a part of their lives and make a difference in the Kingdom of God.

Remember that God is our Rescuer and Jesus is our Life Preserver but he uses us to get the life preserver in the hands of our prodigal sons and daughters as well as those that have never known Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Your sister in Prayer

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