

**PRAYING FOR YOUR PRODIGAL
EPHESIANS 1:18 / 8-19-20 / WED**

I. THE FIRST THING WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT PRODIGALS HAPPEN.

- A. The story of the prodigal son is found in Luke 15:11-32.
 - 1. We usually think of prodigals as being our kids, but the definition is broader than that.
 - 2. A prodigal refers to anyone who has ever drifted away from their faith.
- B. We can't always know whether these prodigals ever had a faith.

II. WE ALSO NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE HEART IS THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM.

- A. This is what the Bible tells us--Proverbs 4:23 and Eph. 1:18.
 - 1. The Biblical word for "heart" doesn't refer to the organ in our chest that pumps blood.
 - 2. The heart, as the Bible uses the word, refers instead to the "real you."
- B. The eyes of our hearts can be either open or closed.
 - 1. When they are closed we are closed to the light and direction of God.
 - 2. When our eyes are open, however, we are open to God's light in our lives.

III. HOW SHOULD WE PRAY FOR OUR PRODIGALS?

- A. We should pray that the eyes of their hearts will be open--Luke 15:17-18.
- B. This is what Ephesians 1:18 tells us to do.
 - 1. Since we usually can't argue prodigals back, shame them back or force them back we need to pray them back.
 - 2. This isn't something we can do ourselves. Only God can open closed eyes.
- C. The first change, however, that needs to be made in our prodigal's life might surprise you. We are the ones who need to change first.
- D. Finally we need to be sure our eyes are open too.