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Putman and Putmans' "Hope for the prodigal: Bringing the lost, wandering and rebellious home" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Putman, J. & Putman, B. (2017). *Hope for the prodigal: Bringing the lost, wandering and rebellious home*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 267pp. \$15.99. ISBN 9780801019081

Hope for the Prodigal: Bringing the Lost, Wandering and Rebellious Home by Jim Putman with Bill Putman is an incredible book that really dives into the story of the Prodigal Son and how it applies to families and the church. Jim Putman is the founder and senior pastor of Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho. His father, Bill Putman, is a long time pastor, church planter, and executive pastor who is currently working with Real Life Ministries in leadership development and follow-up ministries. These two men include many personal experiences and hardships faced as Prodigals and as fathers' of prodigals within this book. Reading *Hope for the Prodigal* helps one to understand the true definition and scope of a prodigal and clarifies the role of parents, family, church, and friends and the role of God in the prodigal's life.

Guilt, doubt, fear, anger, hopelessness, shame, and other negative and painful emotions are often associated with prodigal people and the lives affected by them and the chaos they can bring. This book does not shy away from addressing these and other emotions and from helping loved ones see and understand the lies, truths, and causes of these emotions. Furthermore, this book takes the reader step-by-step through the process of recognizing prodigals, understanding the foundations and environments necessary to draw prodigals home (possibly even prevent them from ever becoming prodigals), steps to help live through the chaotic impact of a prodigal, and how to encourage healing, redemption and restoration when a prodigal does come home.

Not only does this book give great clarity and understanding of the hardships and hurts brought on by a decision a Christian makes to turn away from God, it also gives a better understanding of the amazing amount of forgiveness and grace God has for each of us and the amazing redemption available to all His children. Whether you are a prodigal recently come back to Christ, have a child or relative who is a prodigal, or are a pastor or member of a church who may unwittingly know prodigals, this book is a valuable tool for you and worth reading. The wisdom and insight shared through personal redemption stories and current struggles and the constant ties to scripture help one to relate to and understand the vision, purpose, and heart the Lord has for Prodigals.

Reviewer

Kristina Elizabeth Claunch, Delta State University