

**THE BIG IDEA CURRICULUM**  
**The Prodigal God**  
**Sermon 27.6.09**  
**Wayne Krause**

**Small Group Study for Week of June 27- July3**  
For more reading see *The Prodigal God* by Tim Keller

**The Big Idea**

**The parable of the prodigal son found in Luke 15 illustrates two different ways people find happiness, meaning, self-fulfilment, even salvation. The younger brother uses self-discovery while the elder brother uses moral conformity. God is saying both are wrong and the only real meaning in this life or the next comes from allowing God to be the centre of our lives and allowing His love to save and motivate us.**

**If you're running out of time, answer the key questions with the asterix next to them.**

**Group Reads: Luke 15:1,2, 11-31**

**Question:**

- \*1. The younger brother said in verse 18 and 21, "I have sinned against Heaven and against you?" What sin had the son sinned against God and his father? Is sin always actions?
  
- 2. Discuss the statement that a person can only change when they "come to themselves," hit rock bottom or are willing to face the pain it will take before they can change?
  
- \*3. In Luke 15:1,2 there are two types of people who are both the audience and the two groups portrayed in the story with the two brothers. Who are these groups, and do we see them today? Where? Are both groups represented very much in church? Why or why not?
  
- \*4. We know sinners knew that Jesus wouldn't condemn them, but why did they flock to Him? It is one thing to know this person will not condemn us, but why would we want to flock around Him and listen to Him?
  
- 5. God, typified by the Father in this story, loved both sons. Do you love both types of people represented in this story, or do you identify with one more than the other. Why?
  
- \*6. Why is it dangerous to try and get meaning out of life by self-discovery? (The younger brother?)  
Why is it dangerous to try and get meaning out of life by means of moral goodness (the older brother?) Which one are you?
  
- \*7. According to the Merriam- Webster's Collegiate Dictionary the word prodigal means "reckless spendthrift." It means to spend until you have nothing left. The person who

did this the most in the story is the Father. Describe the ways the Father is extravagant (prodigal) both to the boys and to us?

8. Some think Salvation (the elder brother) comes through what God does and what I do, by my moral goodness. If this were true we would have a right to bargain with God, Discuss.

\*9. If my salvation comes entirely from what God has done and is doing then I cannot bargain with God. He can ask me to do anything. What are the implications of this for my day to day life?