

# *Forgiveness: The practical thing to do*

## A Gospel Reflection on the Prodigal Son

### Brian Wigger

The parable of the Prodigal Son is one of the most well-known Gospel stories of Jesus. Interestingly enough, this weekend's Gospel is the Prodigal Son story. A story each of us can find ourselves in over in over the course of our lives for each character has something to teach us.

I recently re-read the book titled, *The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Henri Nouwen. He writes the book out of his own deep prayer and reflection upon the Rembrandt painting "*The Return of the Prodigal Son*". In it he shares his prayer before the painting and develops chapters on the various characters on this parable of Jesus: the younger son, the elder son, the father. He invites the reader to use one's imagination to find your place in the story. It has personally taught me so much about myself and the nature of God. His writing continues to be a great gift to the modern world, especially to those who seek truth, meaning and purpose in their lives.

I found this passage from his book and our gospel this weekend to be gracefully relatable. I would like to share the following excerpt which I think explains well a lesson for us all.

*"It might sound strange, but God wants to find me as much as, if not more than, I want to find God. Yes, God needs me as much as I need God. God is not the patriarch who stays home, doesn't move, and expects his children to come to him, apologize for their aberrant behavior, beg forgiveness, and promise to do better. To the contrary, he leaves the house, ignoring his dignity by running toward them, pays no heed to apologies and promises of change, and brings them to the table richly prepared for them."*