

Steve's Newest Release

STONE COLD HEART

A Powerful Story of Desperation and Deliverance

What does it feel like to be lost in a web of lies, stealing and hardcore drug abuse? Take a moment to walk with me through the desperation of someone who wanted out — but couldn't find the door. The stronghold of addiction, the power of fear and paranoia, and constant feelings of hopelessness held me captive like a caged animal for years.

Perhaps for the first time you will feel the agony of a life being destroyed from the inside out. Or, maybe you're trapped like I was, and you know firsthand what I'm talking about.

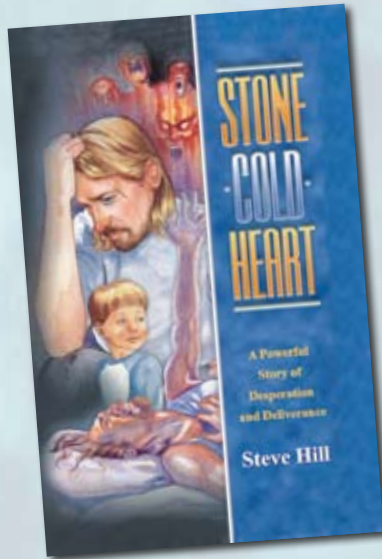
Either way, this book is sure to speak to your heart, and may even change your life.

This is my story — an inside look at total bondage and the thrilling experience of complete deliverance and a brand-new life.

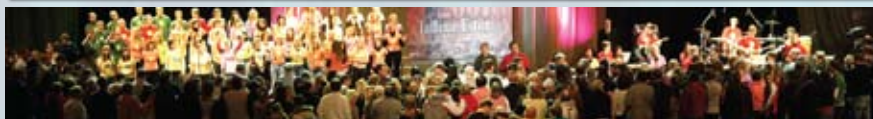
~ Steve Hill

Hardback, Color/Illustrated

\$18 (includes shipping)



Upcoming Crusades & Meetings



<p>July 9-10 Baton Rouge, LA Bethany World Prayer Center 220 Youth Conference Pastor Larry Stockstill</p>	<p>August 7-8 Richmond, VA New Life Outreach Int'l Church Pastor Victor Torres</p>	<p>October 4 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Camp Grande</p>
<p>July 16 Powder Springs, GA Trinity Chapel Bishop Jim Bolin</p>	<p>September 4-5 Houston, TX New Life Church Pastor Dusty Kemp</p>	<p>October 5-6 Rio De Janeiro, Brazil Flamengo</p>
<p>July 24-25 Mobile, AL Church Of His Presence Pastor John Kilpatrick</p>	<p>September 20-21 Minneapolis, MN Emmanuel Christian Center Pastor Dwight Denyes</p>	<p>October 15-17 Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX Heartland World Ministries Church Pastor's Conference</p>

For more information, onto our website www.stevhill.org



STEVE HILL
MINISTRIES

Calling the lost to Jesus.
Challenging believers to go after God.

www.stevhill.org

Free Downloads | Online Giving
Product Specials | Ministry Updates
A (free) Daily Devotional with Steve and so much more.

P.O. Box 612288 • Dallas, TX 75261 • 817-849-8773

STEVE & JERI HILL

Visit Pastor Steve and Jeri at Heartland World Ministries Church when in Dallas/Ft. Worth. www.heartlandfamily.com

The HEART OF THE MATTER

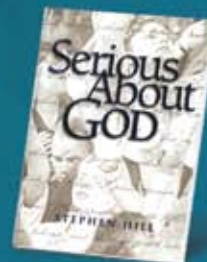
If you are a true prodigal, then you once knew the Lord. But now you're so far away from Him, everyone knows it. Or, you may be a backslider who's drifting away from the Lord. You're heart has grown cold and indifferent towards the things of God. My friend, NOW is the time to turn around.

If you're a prodigal, a backslider, or someone who has never known the Lord, know this: your heavenly Father is waiting with His arms open wide, to welcome you home.

No matter what you've done, Jesus is ready, right now, to forgive you, to wash you clean and to make you new. If you need forgiveness, pray with me now:

"Dear Jesus, thank You for your love and mercy. Thank You for not leaving me alone. I have sinned. I've hurt You. I've hurt others and I've hurt myself. I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Wash me, cleanse me and make me new. Jesus, come into my heart. I confess You as my Lord and Savior. From this day forward, I am yours and You are mine. Jesus, come live your life in me."

If you prayed this prayer, email me at praise@stevhill.org and tell me about it. And when you do, be sure to request a free copy of my booklet, *Serious About God* that I wrote to help you in your walk with God.



©2008 Steve Hill Ministries.

STRAIGHT TO THE HEART

A TIMELY MESSAGE FROM STEVE HILL

Prodigals

by Steve Hill



"If you have a prodigal in your life, expect miracles to take place..."

"When [the prodigal] came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father...' So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, '...this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate." Luke 15:17-24

There's been a deep stirring in my heart over the past few months about a certain group of people who need Jesus. The Bible refers to them as people who have left the family of God and gone their own way. We refer to them as prodigals.

The word *prodigal* comes from a Latin word meaning "to drive away." Prodigals are not like backsliders. Backsliders often go to church on Sunday, and then do whatever they want during the week. Of course, many backsliders have stopped going to church altogether, yet oftentimes they still play religious games.

Prodigals on the other hand, have made the break. They've said, "You know, I've had it with Christianity. Don't shove the Bible in my face. Don't talk to me anymore,

Mama, about your Jesus. I don't want to sing another hymn or chorus. I don't want to go to another Christian concert. I'm done. I want to drink, and party. I want to do *my* thing." These are prodigals. They have left Christianity. They have been driven away by their lifestyles. They're gone.

We're all familiar with the story of the prodigal son found in Luke chapter 15. A man had two sons. One of the sons came to him and said, "Give me my share of the estate, Dad. I'm out of here." Some theologians say the father divided the land between his sons, and youngest sold his portion of it. It doesn't really matter. The bottom line is that he left. Luke 15:13 tells us that he took the money and went off to a distant country.

You may know from personal experience what that's like. Maybe you made the break. Or perhaps a loved one or dear friend once had a relationship with Jesus, but then turned and walked away. Now they're gone—far, far away.

Throughout this message, I'm going to define more deeply what a prodigal is, and as I do, if there are some prodigals in your life — perhaps a wayward child, spouse or friend — I want you to expect miracles to take

place in their lives!

I've got tear-stained cards in my office from parents and even children, telling me that their prodigals have come home. I've had people hug me and say, "Thank you. My husband just got saved in your meeting. For thirty-two years he's wandered and been away from God..." Or, "My daddy just gave his life back to Jesus..." The list seems endless.

Prodigals want to get home immediately. But sometimes it takes awhile.

God knows how to prepare the heart for the message and the message for the heart.

~ Charles H. Mackintosh (1820-1896)



“The Bible gives us the pattern on how to come back to God.”

1. A true prodigal has EXPERIENCED a life of SECURITY.

You can't be a prodigal unless you were at one time in your father's house. A prodigal (the definition of the biblical prodigal) is someone who once walked with Jesus, who used to feel at home in the Lord's presence. Perhaps you used to sit in a church pew as a child listening to *Amazing Grace*. You remember a time in youth camp when you shed crocodile tears as the evangelist preached. You ran to the altar and poured your heart out to Jesus, giving your life to Him. You were so in love with Jesus. But as you grew older, your heart grew cold. You got into sin. And you walked away. It's been years since you've wanted anything to do with living for Jesus. But you remember.

The prodigal, while living in the pignen, *remembered*. He said to himself, "Dad's servants are eating better than I am. They don't have to worry about where their next meal is coming from. They have a nice place to lay their heads at night..."

2. A true prodigal has ENJOYED a life of SIN.

If you are a Christian who has lived for Jesus all your life, let me tell you something about sin: sin is pleasurable. The Bible says that the prodigal went and partied his heart out. He spent everything. Why? Not because he was having a bad time. No, he was enjoying his sin.

After I got saved, secular high schools used to bring me in to hold drug addiction seminars because I was a former addict and alcoholic. I would stand in front of an auditorium filled with hundreds of students and say, "I just want to say to everyone that drugs, alcohol, smoking dope, and partying can appear to be a blast." The crowd would often holler out in approval. Teachers would look at each other and say, "Why did we bring him here?" But suddenly I had everyone's attention. They knew their friends weren't having a bad time smoking dope. They weren't out there

We are entering some of the most incredible days of healing and restoration.

drinking keg after keg of beer because they *bad* to. No, they *wanted* to.

So the prodigal enjoyed his life of sin. According to the Bible, sin is pleasurable *for a season* (Heb 11:25). But the end result is death — both spiritual and physical. If you don't believe that, walk through your local graveyard. Look at the dates on the tombstones and ponder, "Seventeen years old...why on earth is he dead?" For a real eye-opener, go to a funeral of some teenagers who were killed in a car accident. Several are dead, while the others are now paraplegics for life. Sit in the funerals and let it soak in. Why would young people go to such extremes? The answer is quite simple: because they are enjoying themselves.

If the prodigal son found in Luke 15 was here today, he'd say to the prodigals, "You're enjoying your life of sin right now. You're having a good time. But listen to me. And listen to the preacher who's been down that road you're on..."

3. A true prodigal has ENTERED a life of SLAVERY.

Things got so bad for the prodigal that he ended up on a pig farm feeding pigs. Think about it. A Jewish boy feeding pigs. It doesn't get much worse than that. He was in bondage. And hungry.

I remember what it was like scraping for food as we wandered across America. We lived in rescue missions, slept under bridges, and stole whatever food we could get. Sometimes we got busted; other times we got away with it. But it was a life of slavery.

The prodigal wakes one day and discovers that the fun and games are over. The life he's living isn't really freedom at all, but bondage.

4. A true prodigal becomes EXHAUSTED over his life of SHAME.

I talk with parents all the time who bring their prodigal to me, asking for help. Often I turn to the kid and say, "I know you don't

want to be here. Honestly, it's tough for me to be here too, because you're not open to the things of God." "I don't want your stinking God," is a typical reply.

Sometimes they'll cuss and tell me that they are sick and tired of their parent's religion. My response: "Let me just tell you something. Jesus loves you and has a plan for your life. And when you become exhausted with what you're doing, my door is always open."

Prodigals have to get to the place, my friend, where they're exhausted from their life of sin. They've have been drinking at the watering holes of the wicked. They've been sapping up contaminated water out in the desert land. They've got to reach the point where they no longer *want* that poison. They must become tired of being infected with the disease called sin. They need to get to the point where they say, "I remember fresh water. I remember what it was like to eat a good meal. I'm tired of this life and I want out."

Eventually, the prodigal became exhausted over his life of sin and shame. He thought himself, "Look at me. I'm living with pigs, starving to death. I can't go on like this..."

Anyone who wants out of a life of sin must get to that place. But getting tired of that lifestyle isn't enough. You have got to *do* something about it.

5. A true prodigal comes up with an EXIT plan so he can be restored to his life of SONSHIP.

When the prodigal son reached that point, he rose up and said, "I've had enough. I'm going back home to my father. I'm going to repent."

Here's the kicker in this story. He got up and headed home. But he didn't get there overnight. Remember, the Bible says that when he left home, he went to a far away country.

Prodigals often want to get home immediately. But sometimes it takes awhile. Sometimes you have to walk *past* some of the old haunts. You've got to go *past* the old cities where you used to hang out. You've got to go *past* the old ungodly friends. You've got to cut the ties and leave them

If you're a prodigal, it's time to come home.

behind. You can't keep holding on to them with phone calls, emails and text messages if you're going to make it all the way back home. You have to make a clean break. Sometimes walking down the long road of sinful memories can be tough. But here's the good news. The Bible tells us that when the prodigal son was still a long way off, his father came running to meet him and embraced him.

Now hear what I'm about to say. This is where a lot of prodigals miss it. When the father embraced his son, the prodigal could have said to himself, "Wow! Dad receives me with open arms. Everything is okay. I don't need to repent! I'm forgiven."

I've seen prodigals make this mistake all too often. Here's what happens. You're a prodigal who decides it's time to come home. You muster up the courage to go to church and during the service, you feel the presence of God. And you cry. You haven't felt His presence in a long, long time. But now you do. And it feels SO good. So you start coming to church again and every time you do, you feel His presence and His love. But don't stop there. Feeling His presence and His love doesn't mean that everything is okay. There's some business you must take care of with Him before you are restored. Before you are truly home.

The Bible gives us the pattern of how to come back to God. The prodigal humbled himself, fell on his knees and said to his father, "I have sinned, Dad. I'm sorry. Forgive me." He repented first. Then his father forgave him. The prodigal was home at last.

My friend, if you or someone you know is a prodigal, your heavenly Father is waiting with His arms outstretched to welcome you home.

We are entering some of the most incredible days of restoration and healing. If you are a prodigal, it's time to come home. If you know a prodigal, let's believe God together for his or her homecoming.

GOING DEEPER

FOR PRODIGALS ONLY!!!

If you are a prodigal, I want you to log on to my website, www.stevhill.org. On the home page, click on the section that says, "Prodigals Only" (Christians, please don't go to this area of my website. This is for prodigals *only*).

You'll find a letter that I wrote just for you. At the bottom of the page, you'll see that I want to send you a gift. It's a copy of my booklet *Stone Cold Heart* which details my testimony. There are pictures on the back cover of when I was a drug addict and an alcoholic. I want to send it to you as a gift to help you on your journey home.

I love you my friend, and want to help you. What's more, Jesus loves you and has a plan for your life. It's time to come home.

