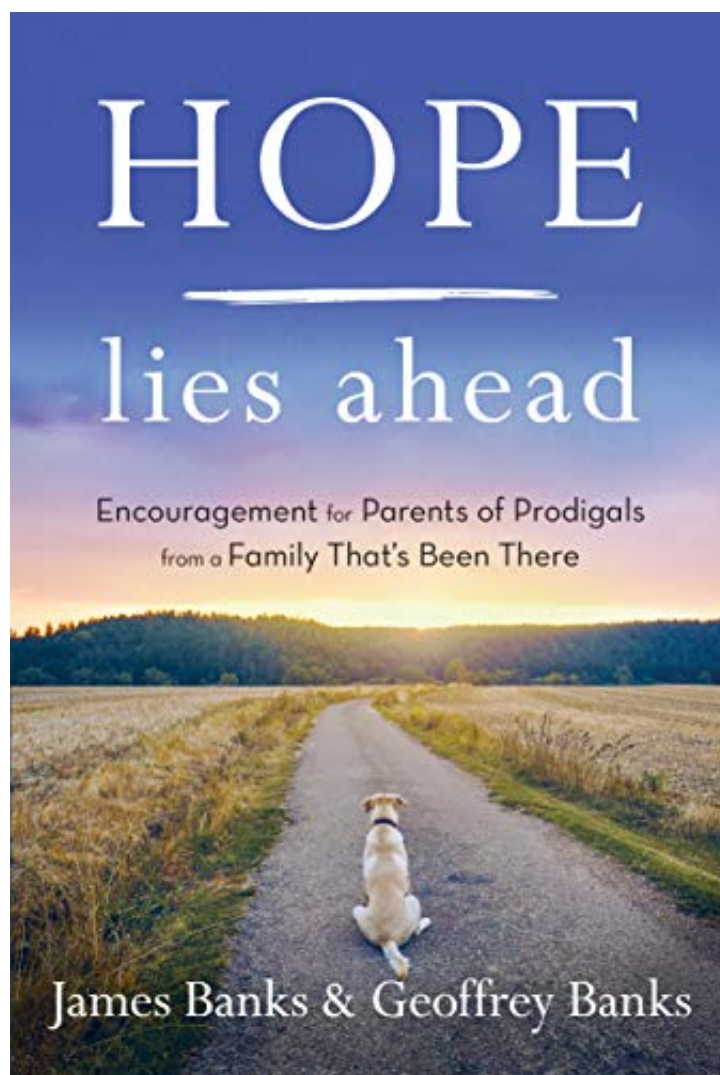


# Hope Lies Ahead: Encouragement for Parents of Prodigals from a Family That's Been There

*by*  
**James Banks**



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## Synopsis

People who love prodigals often struggle in silence. This book lets you know that you are not alone and that there is hope. Pastor and author James Banks and his son Geoff Banks each write from their perspective, sharing their story of redemption and offering you hope while you are in the struggle. No matter what your prodigal is going through—addiction, turning from faith, worldly pursuits—you'll find encouragement to pray deeply, love generously, and cling to God for comfort, healing, and restoration during the difficult journey.

## Sort review

“What a story! A courageously transparent father and son boast of their weaknesses so that God is clearly the hero in this life-and-death struggle of addiction and religion versus relationship—on so many levels! Every parent should get this as a handbook because it clearly illustrates the long, hard journey of parenting any child. It helped me trade my shame and guilt for a thirst for fervent prayer and unconditional-love relationships with my kids and grandkids for the long, long haul. The title sums it up well, hope does lie ahead!” -- Robby Dilmore, nationally syndicated radio show host — From the Publisher Published On: 2020-01-08“Few things reveal our limitations in life and ministry like parenting children. And, as Pastor James shows us, parenting a rebellious child can be a heart-wrenching, soul-crushing experience, but God uses it for good—both to teach us as parents to wait on God and also to make us understand more about His love for us. James’s books have infused me with more gospel hope on this issue than anything else I’ve encountered. I am constantly recommending his writings on this to others, who inevitably thank me and pass it on to others. “God is right now writing the testimony of our children.” Pastor James (and his son Geoff) will show you, with inspiring transparency, how you can be a faithful partner in His gracious work in your kids. What a blessed thought: ultimate hope for our children is found not in our parenting abilities but our Father’s goodness.” -- J.D. Greear, author and pastor of The Summit Church — From the Publisher Published On: 2020-03-09“There is one particular line in the children’s fable *The Velveteen Rabbit* that always moves me to tears: ‘You are a terribly real thing in a terribly false world, and that, I believe, is why you are in so much pain.’ Reading James and Geoff’s story instantly re-minded me of that line. *Hope Lies Ahead* is a must-read for any family pulled at the seams by addiction, rebellion, or pain. It is a painfully beautiful tapestry of the heart of a father, the desperation of a prodigal, and the hope found in Jesus. More than anything, James and Geoff’s willingness to wrestle with vulnerability is a living corroboration that love really does never fail.” -- Stuart Hall, director of Student Leadership and Leadership Networking for Orange (ReThink Group); leader of INFLUNSR; speaker, author, and coach — From the Publisher“Triumph out of tragedy. It is not just a pie-in-the-sky slogan but a testament to the redeeming grace of God. Never is this truth more beautiful than in our families. In recent years, I’ve been blessed to pray with my friend

James Banks as we have watched triumphant grace bring miracles in his son's life. Now, through the pages of *Hope Lies Ahead*, we can all trace God's redemption in this raw but real account of Geoff's journey of transformation and subsequent call to fruitful ministry. If you have a prodigal or know anyone who does, make this your next book because God has tailor-made doses of hope and healing for all." -- Daniel Henderson, president and founder of Strategic Renewal International; author of *Transforming Prayer: How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face* — From the Publisher --This text refers to the paperback edition.

From the Back Cover I woke up cold, angry, and sick. It was about four in the morning and I was laying on a hard cement floor on a mat about an inch thick. Due to rampant drug addiction, the county jail was overpopulated and there were no bunks left to sleep on. Being a heroin addict, I couldn't go more than 6 hours without dosing or I would be horribly sick. It had been almost 24. Every inch of my body was in pain and my skin was crawling. I couldn't think straight or even form coherent sentences, but the one thing that continually ran through my head was "How did I end up here? How did I end up like this?" Geoff's situation seemed hopeless. He had made a mess of his life. His parents struggled to understand the choices the son they loved so much made. And they prayed. Through the hurting, the questions, the frustrations. And through it all, God walked with them. *Hope Lies Ahead* shares the story of Geoff's prodigal journey and James's perspective as his father. Each write from their own personal experience as they candidly address spiritual and practical challenges families with prodigals face. As someone who loves a prodigal, you'll know you are not alone and that there is hope! Because no prodigal is beyond the reach of God.

*HopeLiesAhead.org* --This text refers to the paperback edition.

About the Author James Banks (D.Min, Gordon-Conwell) makes his home in Durham, North Carolina, with his wife, Cari, where James is the founding pastor of Peace Church. James' desire to write goes back to reading Christian devotional books at age twelve. He loves to encourage others to draw close to God through a heartfelt relationship in prayer and a fresh understanding of Scripture. James' books have been translated into several languages and include *Prayers for Prodigals*, *Praying Together*, *Praying the Prayers of the Bible*, *Prayers for Your Children*, *Praying the Prayers of the Bible for Everyday Needs*, *Praying the Prayers of the Bible for Kids*, and *Hope Lies Ahead*, which he co-wrote with his son, Geoffrey. You can find teaching from James on prayer with the *Praying with Jesus* and *Our Daily Bread University's Prayer Basics* series. James is also the author of several magazine articles, is featured in the weekly *Encouraging Prayer* radio broadcast and podcast, and is a popular speaker for churches and retreats. You can find out more about what James is up to lately by visiting [JamesBanks.org](http://JamesBanks.org). Geoffrey Banks serves as the high school coordinator at Port City Community Church in Wilmington, North Carolina. He loves reaching students where they are and helping them walk with God. He is an avid surfer and skater. Geoffrey struggled with heroin addiction throughout his teens and early twenties before coming to know Jesus and having his life radically change. Now he is host of the podcast *Too Many Christians*, which explores beliefs in the pursuit of ultimate truth. --This text refers to the paperback edition.

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## What people say about this book

Ebook Tops Reader, "Must read!. I bought this because I liked the title. I had recently received bad news about an adult child and I was really upset. This book has been a huge encouragement! The dad just pours out his heart; the son chronological ly adds what was going on with him at the same time. Almost unbelievable how God was able to work. This story has so many places of sadness, but I am encouraged re. My own situation. God does hear and answer our prayers! Must read!"

sunnyv, "Encouraging words for parents of a prodigal. Uniquely written by father and son. I found the book to be inspiring, hope giving, and encouraging. We must never stop praying for a child who has wandered into the far country away from their faith. God is listening to every prayer. Thank you James and Geoffrey for courageously telling your stories."

D. Ogden, "Looking for answers, this book gives them!. I LOVED Hope Lies Ahead! It's an excellent book that outlines the story of a father and son and his battle against addiction. What is unique about this book is with each chapter the father tells his story, and the son shares his story as well. It helped me understand both sides of this illness. But most importantly it provided me with the HOPE that does lie ahead if we are willing to trust God!"

Ebook Tops Reader, "very inspirational. A must read for families struggling with prodigals!"

Deana, "Emotional Journey. This has been a very emotional book to read. I appreciate how transparent the authors' have been in sharing their story. Most of us are familiar with the story of the prodigal son. The story hit home for me in several ways as the authors' began to share their journey. Growing up in a house where my dad was a preacher we were always judged by others in the church. We seemed to be held more accountable than others and were always watched by members of the church. My father was all about appearances and any secrets going on in our family were never revealed. I pray that this book will touch many lives and set them free. I loved how this family was open and received great counsel from their church. They had prayer warriors surrounding them which helped them during their difficult journey with their son. Geoff began to spiral out as he found himself deeper into drugs. He addiction was so severe that at times his parents were at a loss of what to do. The pain that Geoff went through was so heartbreaking and I could feel his hopelessness. It is easier for people to have sympathy when someone has cancer or other recognized medical condition. When someone deals with addiction, they shun them and toss them aside. The rollercoaster ride the family went through was difficult and eye opening at the same time. Geoff wanted to be accepted but felt the only way he could accomplish that was to get high and hang around people like himself. As parents we want to protect our children, but sometimes we have to give it to God. It was nice to read how God was changing not only Geoff but his parents as well. In a crisis we need to stand together as a family.

As the addiction became worse, so did the communication between husband and wife. At some point I'm sure they wanted to give up, but instead they dug in deeper and surrendered everything to God. A situation may look hopeless, but God is in the hope business. He wants to strengthen our faith, hope and endurance. The book is one I think everyone should read. It shares the struggles of an addict and his road back to God and his family. It is an honest look at how devastating addiction can be and the consequences it has on not only the addict but the family as well. Forgiveness and grace is the key to helping those who feel rejected and a failure. Geoff needed his family to not give up on him. What he realized was that he was not alone in his journey. God was guiding him and watching over him. His parents in their darkest moments knew they had to forgive their son and welcome him home with unconditional love. I encourage readers to share this book with others and ask a God how you can help those who feel lost and about to give up. Addiction is an illness and without help it can destroy lives. I want to thank the authors' for sharing their story and allowing God to use their story to impact others. Through our test comes our testimony. "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us," Luke 11:4. I received a copy of this book from Celebrate Lit. The review is my own opinion."

debs, "Hope Lies Ahead. This is a true story of addiction and how one family deals with it. James, the father and Geof, son and addict tell their story in their own words. Both do not sugar coat anything. Each chapter both are telling of the situation and how both see and react to each other and the situation. James is a pastor and never felt he would be dealing with a son addicted to opioids. Geoff was the pastor's son that people looked up to and thought couldn't do anything wrong. He tells how he was finally kicked out of his parents house, moved in with his sister, stole from her, kicked out, was in and out of jail, in and out of rehab, and so much more. James and his wife Cari, share how they kept being praying parents and someday they knew God would come into Geoff's life again. Does God come into the life? Does God work all things for good, or is this an ending that no one saw coming? I would recommend this book to anyone going through an addiction, either themselves or a loved on. This book is so true it doesn't hold back and gives you both sides of the story. It shows that everyone involved is held accountable and how you can pray, keep faith strong and have hope. I loved the chapter that when a counselor is telling James about addition: "When you are a parent of an addict, it's hard for others to understand. If your child was sick or had another problem, people would bring meals to your door and listen sympathetically. But when your child is an addict you don't get a casserole." This is so true, and I never thought of it that way.... how much society writes off the addict and is not willing to meet them where they are. People tell the addict it is your choice, you did this to yourself..... This book makes you feel differently about this issue and will make you see both sides. Great book of truth and above all GOD!! I read this from cover to cover and couldn't put it down. So inspiring and will give hope to anyone that is dealing with this issue. Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a complimentary copy of this book from Celebrate Lit Books. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions expressed are my

own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255, "Guides Concerning the Use of Testimonials and Endorsements in Advertising."

Amy Boucher Pye, "Inspiring, helpful, authentic. A thoroughly encouraging book written by a dad and the son who called himself a prodigal as he got into a life of drugs, stealing, and other activities. They share the narrative, giving their views on the same events in their lives from each of their perspectives, which was particularly insightful. Geoff was a gregarious child, one who shone in a crowd. But he started to experiment with alcohol and then moved into light and then heavy drugs. Everything went toward finding his next high, which meant he learned how to lie and steal. His parents despaired as they watched him spiral down. Heartbreak after heartbreak for them - and him - but finally he reached a "pigsty" moment and with God's help turned his life around. Inspiring, helpful, authentic. I highly recommend."

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