

You Never Stop Being a Parent: Parenting Your Adult Children

I. Introduction.

II. What can you do to prepare your children for adulthood?

- A. The goal of parenting is to make your children ready to live wisely (on their own).
Pr. 4:3-4 20:5 I Co. 13:11 Col. 3:21 Phil. 2:3-4
- B. What can you do to make your children ready to live on their own?
 - 1. Teach them to fear God and to live for His glory. Pr. 1:7 3:7-8 Dt. 6:5 Mt. 22:37
 - 2. Teach them to put others ahead of themselves. Mt. 22:39 Phil. 2:3-4
 - 3. Prepare them to pursue a vocation so they can work hard to care for a family. Pr. 6:5-11 24:30-34 26:12-16 12:11 13:11 22:29 10:4-5 28:19 14:23
 - 4. Teach them financial wisdom. Pr. 6:8 13:11 21:5 22:7 6:1-5 3:27-28,9-10
 - 5. Teach them God's design for marriage (and sex). Pr. 5:1-23 6:20-35 7:1
 - 6. Teach them to choose their companions carefully. Pr. 1:10-19 13:20 22:24-25 23:20 I Co. 15:33 Ps. 1:1
 - 7. Teach them to resist temptation. Pr. 29:25 2:12-15 20:1 31:4-5
- C. What authority does a parent have over an adult child?
 - 1. Parents must recognize that their relationship with their adult child is very different from what it was when the child was small. Eph. 6:1ff I Co. 13:11
 - 2. One of the biggest mistakes made by Christian parents is to treat their young adult offspring as if they were still small children. Col. 3:21
 - 3. When your child is married, he/she is in a new family unit and no longer under your authority. Gen. 2:24
 - 4. Are single adults also free from parental authority? I Co. 9:5 7:39 13:11 John 2:3ff 9:19-21 Num. 32:11

III. What do you do when your adult children come back home (or never leave)?

- A. The phenomenon of the "twixter" (or boomerang kids/adultolescents).
- B. What are valid reasons for an adult child to stay home? Pr. 10:4b Ex. 20:12 Mt. 15:5-6 I Tim. 5:4
 - 1. Sometimes children move home because of extraordinary circumstances.
 - 2. Young adults should only be living at home if there is a clear goal.
- C. Some young people sinfully postpone the responsibilities of adulthood: vocation, marriage, and children. Pr. 6:5-11 12:11 28:19 II Th. 3:10-13 I Co. 6:9-10 7:9
- D. Parents contribute to this problem.
 - 1. They fail to prepare their children to be on their own. Pr. 1:8
 - 2. Some refuse to let go of their kids. Gen. 2:24
 - 3. They inadvertently enable sinful behavior. Pr. 15:19 6:11 10:4 20:13 16:26
 - 4. They are afraid to take strong steps to deal with their kids. I Sam.2:22-25
- E. What are the challenges of having an adult child living with his parents?
- F. What should be expected of an adult child living at home? II Th. 3:6-12 Eph. 4:28 Pr. 10:1,4-5 23:20,30-31 26:3 Heb. 13:4 I Th. 5:7

IV. What do you do when your adult kids get into trouble (substance abuse, debt, crime)?

A. Whose fault is it when adult kids go bad?

1. Parents are responsible to raise their children in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. Pr. 22:6 23:13-14 29:15,17 I Sam. 2:12ff
2. Children are responsible for the choices they make. Pr. 20:11,20 30:11,17 Ezek. 18:5-13 Isa. 1:2 (more space here?) Jer. 2:30 Eph. 6:2
3. You are dependent upon God's sovereign grace for the souls of your children. Luke 12:51-53 Gen. 4:1-9 Ps. 51:5 Eph. 2:1ff John 6:44

B. Adult children often look to their parents to bail them out.

1. You need wisdom. Js. 1:5 Pr. 11:14.
2. Learn to distinguish between worldly sorrow and true repentance. II Co. 7:10
3. Don't enable a sinful lifestyle. I Sam. 2:12-17,22-25 3:13 4:11 Luke 15:13ff Pr. 16:26 19:15 10:4 II Th. 3:10

C. Help should be offered wisely and lovingly. Mt. 7:6 Pr. 1:7ff 4:23 Mark 7:21ff

1. Establish expectations as a condition for your assistance. Pr. 13:20 20:1,20 6:6ff 10:5 I Th. 5:7 I Co. 15:33
2. Does this somehow violate their adult status? Pr. 26:3 I Co. 13:11
3. What help can you offer a non-Christian child?

D. What should you do about an incorrigible child? Deut. 21:18-21 Pr. 19:18 29:1

1. Recognize that there is such a thing as an incorrigible child.
2. You should be concerned about the effect they may have upon others. I Co. 15:33
3. You must be prepared to take drastic measures and allow them to experience the full consequences of their sinful actions. I Pe. 2:14 Rom. 13:1-7 Pr. 19:15,18
4. God sometimes uses hardship to bring a child to repentance. Luke 15:18,21

E. When should you give financial help to your grown children? Pr. 13:22 19:14 20:21 22:7 Nu. 26:53 32:18 I Ki. 21:3f II Co. 12:14 Luke 12:15ff Eph. 1:11 Heb. 9:15

V. What is your role as your adult children approach courtship and marriage?

A. Ideally you will have significant positive involvement in your child's courtship. Gen. 2:24 I Co. 7:36-38(?) Ex. 22:16-17 Dt. 22:13-21 Pr. 31:30 3:5-6 Jer. 17:9

B. What authority do parents have in their children's choice of a spouse?

1. If you don't have your children's trust (heart) you will have relatively little influence on their choice of a spouse.
2. Parents do not have the right to impose marriage on their children. I Co. 7:39
3. Parents must be careful not to provoke their children to anger. Col. 3:21
4. Under what circumstances may children go against parental wishes?

C. What should you do if your children make romantic choices which you believe to be less than ideal? II Co. 6:14 I Co. 9:5 7:39,16 I Ki. 11:4 Heb. 13:4 Rom. 12:18ff

1. You are free to love people who have sinned against you. Gen. 45 Mt. 5:43ff
2. You cannot participate in sin. Rom. 14:23

D. How can you be an in-law without becoming an outlaw? Gen. 2:24 I Pe. 4:8

E. What if your adult children remain single? I Co. 7:1,8,32-33

VI. Conclusion.