

You Never Stop Being a Parent: Parenting Your Adult Children (Part 2)

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I. Introduction and review.

II. When should you give financial help to your grown children?

A. Should parents pay for their children's college education?

B. Is it good to transfer wealth from one generation to another?

1. There is biblical basis for leaving an inheritance. Pr. 13:22 19:14 Nu. 26:53 32:18 I Ki. 21:3f II Co. 12:14
2. A suddenly gained inheritance may be squandered. Pr. 20:21 Luke 12:15ff
3. You may be able to offer crucial help to your grown children: an inheritance before you die.
4. You may be able to help bring the family together for special events.
5. You offer them a better spiritual inheritance. Eph. 1:11 Heb. 9:15

C. Money matters are very dangerous to family relationships. Pr. 22:7

1. Just because you can afford to "help" them doesn't mean you really would be doing them any good.
2. Sometimes it is appropriate to establish conditions for financial help.
3. Generally it is better not to attach strings.
4. Lending money among family members tends to generate stress and conflict.
5. Must you treat each child equally?
6. Your attempts at generosity may actually harm relationships.

III. 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

1. Ideally, both sets of parents will be actively involved in the courtship.
2. Children are wise to seek and heed parental wisdom. Pr. 31:30 3:5-6 Jer. 17:9
3. Ideally, all will agree as to the choice of a spouse, the timing of the wedding, etc.
4. We don't always receive what is ideal in life.
5. Give your dreams to God.

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

1. If you don't have your child'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 child. I Co. 7:39
3. Parents must be careful not to provoke their children to anger. Col. 3:21
4. Some young people marry just to escape tyrannical parental authority.
5. Under what circumstances may a child go against parental wishes when marrying?

C. What should you do if your children make romantic choices which you believe to be less than ideal?

1. What if:
 - a. Your child marries a professing Christian against your will?
 - b. Your child marries an unbeliever? II Co. 6:14 I Cor. 9:5 7:39,16 I Ki. 11:4
 - c. Your child lives with someone out of wedlock? Heb. 13:4
 - d. Your child is a practicing homosexual?

2. Some would say that you should shun a disobedient adult child.
3. You are to pursue peace. Build the relationship, so far as possible. Rom. 12:18ff
4. You are free to love people who have sinned against you. Gen. 45 Mt. 5:43ff
5. The limitation is that you cannot participate in sin. Rom. 14:23
6. Be sure that you are limiting because of conscience; not anger, bitterness, or a desire to control. Eph. 4:26-27

D. How can you be an in-law without becoming an outlaw?

1. How does your relationship with your child change?
2. What kind of relationship should you expect with your child's spouse?
3. Be careful to respect the integrity of this new family unit. Genesis 2:24
4. Be ready to overlook offenses and slights which may occur. I Pe. 4:8 Ro. 12:18ff
5. What should you do if your child's spouse tries to shut you out? Mt. 7:5
6. Pursue Peace.
 - a. Avoid unbiblical responses of attacking or fleeing.
 - b. Get the beam out of your own eye. Mt. 7:1ff
 - c. Gently restore. Gal. 6:1-2
 - d. The PAUSE principle.
 - (1) Prepare for peacemaking
 - (2) Affirm relationships. Phil. 4:1-2
 - (3) Understand interests. Phil. 2:3-4
 - (4) Search for creative solutions. Dan. 1
 - (5) Evaluate options objectively.
7. What should you do when you see your child is in a terrible marriage? Mt. 19:6

E. How should you respond if your adult child is going through a divorce?

1. You need to evaluate the divorce based upon biblical grounds.
2. You need to stand up for what God's Word says is right, even if this means standing against your own child.

F. What if your adult child remains single?

1. Be careful not to push him/her too hard towards marriage.
2. Recognize he/she may have the gift of singleness. I Co. 7:1,8,32-33
3. Help him/her to get ready for marriage.

IV. What is your role with your grandchildren?

- A. Grandchildren are a blessing to grandparents. Dt. 4:25 Ps. 103:17 128:6 Pr. 17:6
Job 42:16
- B. Grandparents are to be a blessing to their grandchildren.
 1. A spiritual heritage. Deut. 4:9 6:2 Ex. 10:2 II Tim. 1:5
 2. An earthly heritage. Pr. 13:22
- C. How can grandparents help their children and grandchildren?
 1. Counsel to parents.
 2. Positive relationship with and role model for grandchildren.
 3. Prayer.
 4. Childcare.

- D. What are some danger spots for grandparents?**
- 1. Don't show favoritism.**
 - 2. Don't undermine parental authority. You must respect the right of the parents to raise their children according to their own conscience.**
 - 3. When in doubt check with the parents before giving your grandchildren a gift.**
 - 4. Can a grandparent spank a grandchild?**
 - 5. What should parents do when the grandparents don't respect their rules for the kids?**
 - 6. What spiritual influence can you have if the parents aren't believers?**
 - 7. Both parents and grandparents should beware of selfishness.**

E. What should grandparents do when access to their grandchildren is restricted?

**F. Sometimes grandparents have to take over the parental role.
Parental responsibility should be accompanied by parental authority.**

V. What are the responsibilities of grown children to their parents?

A. Even after leaving home, you are still to honor your parents. Ex. 20:12

- 1. Seek your parents' counsel.**
- 2. Build your relationship with them. Ro. 12:18**

**B. You are responsible to ensure that your parents' financial needs are met. I Ti. 5:4
Mt. 15:3-9 John 19:26-27**

C. You may wind up becoming their care-giver.

D. Older parents need to be ready to accept the limitations of old age.

VI. Conclusion.