

Parents with Prodigals

Eight Questions to ask yourself as a parent of a prodigal:

1. Did I model Jesus Christ's love, grace and mercy to my child/children?
2. Did I recognize my need of God's grace to fill in for my inconsistencies?
3. Did I excuse or cover up my sins or did I confess them?
4. Did I ever claim to be the model parent without personal challenges?
5. Did I have a desire to please Jesus in my parenting?
6. Did I communicate that Jesus was the highest priority in my life and family?
7. Did I express unconditional love to my child/children?
8. Did I realize only God could change my child's heart?

Five Ways to Counsel Troubled Youth

1. Separate them from wrong influences.
2. Secure complete support and cooperation from parents.
3. Surround them with wise and loving friends.
4. Search out and identify root problems.
5. Send them out to help and serve others.
 - Children and teens are influenced by those who praise them and often are unable to discern legitimate praise from flattery.

Rules address behavior, but they don't deal with the heart. Grace, on the other hand, is internal. It works on the heart level. **Grace actually changes our heart what we want to match what God wants.**

2 Timothy 2:22-26 *Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ²³ But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. ²⁴ And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, ²⁵ in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, ²⁶ and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.*

James 5:19-20 *Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰ let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*