

Abundant Living MINISTRIES

Encouraging Christian Living Since 1978



It's summer time! - July, 2025

I want to take a moment to write to you from the heart.

For 46 years now, our ministry has been quietly walking with families through some of life's hardest places. We don't offer complicated therapy. We offer a compassionate heart, a listening ear, and a hand pointing to the One who truly restores. We open God's Word together, pray, and trust that the Holy Spirit will do the deep healing only He can do. And we've seen miracles—marriages restored, hearts softened, chains broken.

To those of you who have *prayed* for us, here at Abundant Living Ministries... THANK YOU!

Most of you reading this letter have also provided financial help. We've never had a fee schedule. We've simply trusted the Lord to provide through His people, and we continue to marvel at how He does just that—often at the very moment we need it most.

Your giving—whether it's been large or small, one-time or consistent—has helped us keep our doors open, and our time available to those who need hope. You've helped us create a space where people feel listened to, prayed with, and gently pointed toward Jesus. And let me tell you: that matters more than you'll ever fully know!

So thank you. Thank you for partnering with us—not only with finances, but with your prayer... and your faith. They all contribute to someone's hope returning.

Please keep us in your prayers. And if the Lord lays it on your heart to give again, know it will be received with thanksgiving and used carefully, prayerfully, and for His glory.

We sure appreciate you!

John and Sharon Charles



Fractured Families

Question: Our children are adults. They have been living independently from us for several years now. We always thought we had a good relationship with them. From infancy, we taught them God's

Word, were active in our good Bible-believing church, and tried to model and instill Christian values in our home.

Sadly, in the last couple of years, our children have distanced themselves from us. In fact they basically refuse to have any significant contact with us. If we try to reach out to them, they don't respond. We don't even get to see our grandchildren, much less spend quality time with them. This is breaking our hearts. What can we do?

Response: From time to time over the last 47 years of our counseling work, we have been asked if we have observed "trends" in the causes that motivate people to seek help. Yes, we have been able to identify some trends. And if we had to name one current situation which we hear about over and over again, it is the challenge you described.

Children rebelling against parents is no new issue. Clear back in Bible times, there were many examples of this. Even the first children, Adam and Eve, disregarded the instruction of their perfect Father (and they really had *only one* crucial rule). If any parent deserved to be revered, it was God Himself. Surely this sinful bent to reject parental authority/involvement must have prompted God's commandment, "Honor your father and mother."

So, although division in families is not a new phenomenon, it nevertheless seems to be epidemic in our current day and culture. There are undoubtedly many factors that have contributed to the increase in this problem, such as... Western culture's promotion of individualism, a decline of regard for parental authority in our educational systems, the emphasis on "feelings" above right living, and many more.

In the last 20 years or so, a sinister and poisonous philosophy has infiltrated the minds of many. It is the belief that disagreement equals lack of love. Consequently, many young people have swallowed the lie that, because their parents don't agree with their behaviors/attitudes/beliefs, their relationship with them must be severed.

The Bible warns that this very trend is a sign of Jesus' imminent return. (See... Mark 13:4-31, 2 Timothy 3:1). But this doesn't comfort hurting parents who are grieving the loss of connection with their children and grandchildren.

Should such parents simply accept this separation as inevitable and sequester themselves from their offspring? No, definitely not!

Here are some practical things that parents can do, even in the midst of family division:

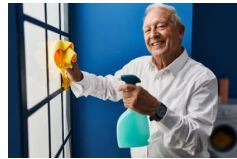


Guard against bitterness. It is easy to feel hurt, angry, sad, wrongfully treated, etc. After all, you poured your life into your children and now they repay you by abandoning you? Jesus' command to forgive even your enemies applies. It may need to be a moment-by-moment, situation-by-situation, decision you make. But it is absolutely necessary in order to not further deepen the divide in the family.



Continue to reach out to your adult children. Invite them to your house, or to attend a special event with

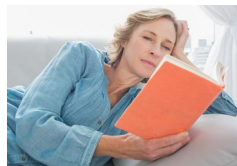
you. If they decline, accept their refusal graciously and purpose to invite them again. Don't barrage them with invitations, but calmly continue to reach out to them. Perseverance often pays off.



Demonstrate practical kindness...

perhaps dropping off a meal, offering to provide transportation, loaning tools, helping with a household project. View every contact as an opportunity to show ongoing love to them.

When you ARE together, **live the life that you are wanting them to experience.** Your children need to demonstrate love? Make sure you are demonstrating love. Your children need to have a respectful attitude? Make sure you are demonstrating respect. Sow into their lives "seeds" of the very traits they are currently lacking.



Read testimonies of families that have experienced reconciliation when it seemed there was no hope.

Read and memorize Scriptures that encourage parents to stand in faith for the salvation of the next generation.



Pray! Pray! Pray! Gather with other parents to pray for prodigal children. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective (James 5:16).

Prodigals do return. Those who seem "too far gone" to us, are never too far gone to our Heavenly Father.

There is probably no greater heartbreak than family division. Paul refers to "unceasing anguish" in Romans 9:2. This is an apt description of the pain Godly parents carry when their children have strayed. Yet, Scripture also exhorts us to "be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12). Jesus wants to carry the burden of our pain and sorrow.

In the midst of your heartache, lean on the One who is ultimately the only One who can change your children's hearts. Entrust your children to Him and persevere in faith for His miraculous work in their lives.

Remember.... the last chapter on your family has not been written yet!

Written by
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