

The One Key Question God Asked This Pastor, Parenting Expert

We might expect the author of a book and newly released companion study guide titled *Parenting First Aid* (New Growth Press) to be an expert, and that he is. Marty Machowski is the father of six, grandfather of two, author, family pastor and publishing leader who has helped thousands of families through the years. But there was a day, he says, when he needed parenting first aid himself.

Machowski tells host Marti Pieper on this episode of the *Family Matters* series on the *Charisma News* podcast that “We started with twins, a boy and a girl. And our girl, Emma, was what you might call the picture of perfect Christian young lady. She knew the Lord at a young age. She was very compliant. and she wanted to follow the rules.

“And our son was the opposite,” Machowski says. “He didn’t want to be constrained by rules. He wasn’t interested in doing things that we said [just] because we said them. He said to me one day, ‘Dad, look. I’m not one of the kind of guys who can just learn from a lesson and do it that way. I can’t learn from other people’s mistakes; I have to make them myself.’”

And he did, Machowski says. In the middle of the night, he and his wife “got the proverbial call from the police station: ‘Can you come pick up your son?’” They discovered their teenage son had been sneaking out at night to drink beer with other church kids at a local park.

Machowski says he asked God what to do, and the Lord said, “I don’t want you parenting standing up. I want you parenting kneeling down.

“You see, I had a vision [that] I’m going to be the pastor who does it all,” Machowski says. “I’m going to do devotions with my kids. I’m going to take them to church. I’m going to watch and be a good gatekeeper over their media intake. I’m going to steward friendships. I’m going to do it all to help show people how this can be done well.

“And God said, ‘You know all those things you’ve got? They’re all really good. But guess what?’” God asked. The Lord told him that not one of those things started with J and spelled “Jesus.”

“‘You’re doing this in your own strength, and you’re going to take the glory for yourself,’” Machowski says God told him.

“And just like He did with Israel, He just removed his hand and said, ‘All right, you want to do it on your own, by your own means, go ahead,” Machowski says. “‘And then I’m going to come back up on the back side, and I’m going to lift you up when you fall in, and I’m going to do a work in your family.’

“And what we realized was, when the psalm says, ‘Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain,’ you say, ‘OK; who’s building the house: me or God? And the answer is yes. We’re doing it together,” Machowski says.

To hear more of Machowski’s wisdom for parents including his top tips for parenting during the pandemic, [click here](#) to listen to the entire podcast. {eo}