

When Parenting Ends

The task of parenting is extremely difficult and holds numerous challenges. Over the years, many have asked me to talk about this controversial topic. I don't always enjoy going into it because of all the trouble that it brings. If you want to anger people, just start talking about how they manage their children.

Yet, from time to time, I weigh in on this difficult subject. Some of the things that I am about to share in this article could transform the most important relationships in your life. Even if your children are grown, there are things that you can still do to impact their life.

Over the years, many parents have come to me with a strained look on their face and say, "Tell me, when does my involvement with my kids come to an end?" I tell them that you need to look to your heavenly Father to answer that question.

As we read through the pages of Scripture, we see that God never stops being actively involved with lives of His sons and daughters. Contrary to what popular religion declares, God simply doesn't abandon His creation.

Speaking of this, the Lord once revealed the following to the children of Israel:

"Be strong and of a good courage. Fear not, nor be afraid of them, for the Lord your God, it is He who goes with you. He will not fail you, nor forsake you. ... The Lord, He goes before you. He will be with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you. Do not fear, nor be dismayed" (Deut. 31:6, 8).

Even in times of immense foolishness and sin, He is not an absentee parent. The Lord is always moving toward His people and drawing us toward His wonderful righteousness and truth. He is a relational God transforming everything by His guiding

presence.

As earthly parents, we need to follow the same transformative pattern in our lives. We need to be like our Heavenly Father.

So to answer this question, there will never be an end to our direct involvement in all of this. Though often frustrated and disappointed, we aren't given the right to abandon our unique responsibilities. We can't put the blame on anyone else. Our role is to continue guiding and nurturing our families.

We always get ourselves in trouble when we think there ought to be an end to our engagement with the members of our household. Even in rebellion, poor decisions, and other difficult circumstances, you will never have the privilege to excuse all responsibility.

By active parental involvement, I am not talking about smothering your kids or trying to control their lives. I'm talking about being fully present.

You should be listening to them, relating to them, and giving them wisdom and guidance. You need to engage them in ways that encourage them and help them find the best way forward.

My 42-year-old daughter sometimes says, "Dad, don't you know how old I am? I'm not a kid anymore." She typically says that with a half-smile, because she knows how much I want to serve and help her. I know that she is grateful that I have been actively involved in her life.

That is how God works in our lives too. He is always there—speaking, guiding and helping us. He simply doesn't leave us alone—unless we insist on it. Yet, even when we resist Him, He doesn't leave us alone. He is always speaking and wooing, inviting us into something greater. He will never leave us or forsake us.

The greatest insight into parenting comes from our heavenly

Father. We need to pay attention to all that He does. He need to live and move the way that He shows us.

Parenting can be extremely difficult. You cannot control your children, nor can you make every decision for them. They may make some disastrous choices that negatively impact everyone or do things that embarrass you.

Yet, in spite of all of this, you can still be actively involved with their lives and help them move forward. It obviously works best if you start when they're young, but you can also start making up for lost time with the older ones.

You can transform everything by being fully involved in the lives of your loved ones. A wonderful opportunity is standing before you. I hope that you will take it.

Steve Gray Ministries *is dedicated to restoring the glory of God to Israel and to Jewish people everywhere. In a time when annihilation and tribulation are being spoken over the Jews, Steve Gray Ministries brings a fresh message of hope—and the biblical promise of revival, restoration and salvation.*

The Jewish people are part of the rich heritage of Gentile Christians. They are the natural branches from the original olive tree. God is able—and willing—to graft them back in again. "For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" (Rom. 11:15).

SGM offers many resources to help you understand the biblical mandate to reach Jewish people, while equipping you to be an effective minister of the freedom and favor God is extending to the Jews. It is our vision to see the glory of God restored to churches and people everywhere—with a special emphasis on Israel and the Jewish people.