

Trust in the Lord That Your Children Are Coming Home

Throughout my years of ministry and travel, I discovered that countless parents were suffering silently over their backslidden children. Because of accusations and condemnations from the devil and the judgments and opinions of men, they felt guilty and ashamed. My heart would go out to them as they would share their grief and ask for prayer.

Little did I know that one day I would be the parent with the same problem. I felt so disqualified and responsible that my heart would break over and over again. Believe me when I tell you, I tried everything! There were times that I didn't know if I could make it another day.

Through it all, I learned that there is no formula. However, there are some strategies that I learned from the Holy Spirit. I do not pretend to have all the answers and I humbly confess that I failed many times during the process. Yet, in God's wonderful grace, I found His Word and ways to be flawless.

Before I could be effective in securing my daughter's freedom, I had to be free from my own bondages of guilt, condemnation, accusation and judgments. Standing in my friend's kitchen, I heard the words that set me free. We had been having a normal, friendly conversation, but then I turned our conversation down the same path of despair. I always seemed to say at least something about my prodigal daughter.

"Prodigal." I hated that word. Defined as "spending recklessly, wasteful, extravagant waste," the word summed up my daughter's wasted life.

I couldn't go a day without the topic coming up. I really couldn't help myself even though I knew everyone was growing tired of hearing it. There seemed to be a foreboding threat

hanging over my head like a dark cloud. It was always there—the knots in my stomach, the tightness in my chest. I felt myself braced for bad or tragic news every day.

My friend had patiently listened to me talk of my heartbreak. Finally, she said life-changing words: “Your daughter is eating just enough from your table to not realize she’s starving to death. If you will stop feeding her, she will realize she is in the pig pen.”

At that moment, I realized that I had been feeding her with all the spiritual benefits of my life. She never had to seek God for herself because I was always there with the answers to every crisis. Repeatedly, I bailed her out of circumstances that God, Himself, had set up. I thought it was love and mercy, but actually I had stepped into the role as “savior.” I had sought God for her and provided her with spiritual solutions. I gave her Scripture promises to help her get over each dilemma. I rescued her from the consequences of her choices time and time again.

That day I made a conscious decision to take my hands off and let my daughter experience the “pig pen.” It wasn’t going to be easy to watch her sink deeper into the mire. However, I knew that I had to be free from the role of playing “God” in my daughter’s life before she could see her deep need for Him. It wasn’t much longer after God set me free, that she came to her senses and realized she had a need for God that only He could satisfy.

Can you imagine the joy you will also feel the day your precious one comes back to the Lord? You will feel like you are dreaming. You have gotten so used to the nightmare of their captivity that you will hardly believe it.

I remember, in the midst of my darkest days, that I heard the strangest sound. I heard the sound of rejoicing. For a split moment, the Holy Spirit opened my spiritual ears to hear the

sound of God laughing. Just in that instant, I had a glimpse of celebration in heaven. I thought, *Can't God see my tear-soaked pillow?* Suddenly, I knew He was mocking His enemy and rejoicing in His triumph! The Lord can see what we cannot see. He can see that the enemy's days are numbered and He laughs. I purposed in my heart to join heaven's perspective and rejoice and praise Him for my child's return.

With a faith for the future, I was then able to begin to speak words of life into the situation. When we agree with His Word and begin to declare it over our children, His creative power begins to move over the darkness of their lives and releases His light. I began to realize that as the parent, I have the spiritual right to enforce the kingdom of heaven and His will. My authority is God-given and is in partnership with Him. The power of that agreement renders a verdict upon the unjust trespassing of the enemy in the life of my seed!

I believe that it is no accident that you read this article today. I believe that the battle has raged long enough! Your children have a calling on their lives and it is time for them to be free from the snares of the enemy. You, as the parent, carry an authority and an anointing to unlock the prison doors. I believe the time is *now*! I am agreeing with you for the accelerated fulfillment of God's will over your child's life.

Adapted from the writings of LaNora Van Arsdall of Fountaingate Ministries, International. Used with permission.

Prayer Power for the Week of February 21, 2016

This week begin to rejoice over the plans God has for your children. Praise Him that He does all things well and tell Him that you totally trust Him to fulfill all His promises. Bless them as you pray for His perfect will to be done in their lives. Continue to pray that the church would fulfill its

purpose of evangelization while being light and salt in this dark world. Pray for a great harvest of souls, laborers for the harvest fields, the protection of Israel, the persecuted church and the upcoming elections (Psalm 37:12-13; Psalm 126:1-2).