



The  
Minister's Child  
- When Children  
Seem to Be  
Going  
Wrong  
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My passion in Ministry is to see the souls God has committed into our hands saved especially the biological ones and to see them fulfilling God's purpose for their lives.

Psalm 127:3-5 NLT says *'Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands. How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates'*

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will give us insight and revelation in understanding this issue and help us to know what to do whenever we are faced with this very situation. Amen

What happens when we have not done it right or we have done our best to bring up these children in God's way but they still seem to be going wrong?

First, there are some truths we must know when one or some of our children are going wrong. The first thing to remember is that the devil is constantly fighting for the souls of our children. John 10:10 says *'The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy... My (Jesus) purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.*

We cannot save these children, only Jesus can. We are custodians. Children are God's and He has committed these souls into our hands to nurture and bring up for Him.

Another truth is that we will give account to God about what we have done with these souls. Therefore, we should be careful not to compare one child with another. They are different even if they are siblings.

Also, we cannot use the world standard to raise them even if it seems some children are doing well according to the world standard.

It is important to know that God owns them and loves them regardless. We should not forget that no matter what level we are now spiritually, we too had a past but for the unconditional love of God. The scripture says *'All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God but and 'While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us'.*

What a loving God. His great love for us moved Him to sacrifice His life so we might be saved, therefore as people who have been saved by the mercy and Grace of God, there is nothing that should be too big for us to sacrifice for the salvation of the children God has committed into our hands. We must be intentional about the assignment God has put in our hands.

**How do you feel when you are in Ministry and your child or children are going wrong?**

Usually, we begin to ask questions. Why me? Why us? Especially when God is using us to impact the lives of other children in Ministry but our own children are not yielding or struggling to surrender to God's Word.

We sometimes become so ashamed of our child's behaviour. We feel the child is bringing reproach to the ministry and the name of God. We continue to judge or condemn the child. Sometimes we see the child as an outcast or become bitter about the child. We fail to show the child love.

We unconsciously put ministry before the child, sometimes neglecting the child but forgetting that our family is our first ministry.

Sometimes it affects us to the extent that we give God an ultimatum, telling God we will quit the work of the ministry if He does not do something about the situation.

This happened to me when I was going through this. There was a day I told God I will stop sharing the Word of God with people if it seems not working in my own life. I told God that people will start mocking me and say 'Physician heal thyself' forgetting that I am not the physician but just a vessel in the hands of the physician.

I was at a point when I felt God was not fair as I thought I had done everything I needed to do regarding my children. I dedicated these children to God from the womb, I did all I knew to do. Trained my children up in the way of the Lord. To the best of my knowledge, I gave them the right examples to follow. My children at one point or the other confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour at early ages of their life. I held on to the scripture *'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.'* (Prov. 22:6.) At that point, I felt I was doing well.

But when things didn't turn the way I thought with this one child, one day I was crying to God and the Holy Spirit began to speak to me.

Amongst the things spoken to me that day was the Holy Spirit taking me through how deep and how wide the Love of Jesus over us is even when we are not doing right. The Holy Spirit further told me this is how Jesus feels after we have declared for Him and then turn our backs on Him and become friendly with the world.

The Holy Spirit reminded me of the story of the prodigal son. He said while the child was still away in the foreign land and with what he did, the love of the father was still clearly evident. He was all the while waiting for Him to come back with his arms spread out to receive him. That's why the scripture says in Luke 15:20 *"So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him."*

While he was still a long way off, his father spotted him because he was hopeful he would come back one day. The father never stopped praying for him to come back. Despite what he did, the father was still filled with compassion towards him, he ran towards him. Wow! So much love for a son that had done wrong.

Sisters my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will open our eyes to see the extent of the Father's love towards us. Amen.

Since that day I saw these children not just as my biological children but as souls that God has committed into my hands. I saw them as assignments given to me and I didn't want to fail God. I saw their salvation and fulfilling God's purpose as a project and on the day of account, by the Grace and help of God, I want God to be pleased with me. I saw what I was going through as training from God and another ministry He was launching me into. Today I have a great burden to see our Youths saved.

For this to happen, they have to see the genuine and unconditional Love of God manifest in and through us despite what they do or didn't do.

## **What is Love?**

I love the way 1 Corinth 13 explains love. We will look at Vs 4 - 7 NLT

*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.*

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will continue to expand these words in our hearts in Jesus' name.

## **Input from others**

**Input 1:** I really agree with the need to see our children as souls that God committed into our hands. A lot is going on. Children of pastors or people in ministry are really struggling. And oftentimes, these children are meant to fit within a mould because they're pastor's children and not because they're souls in need of a Saviour.

And we in ministry most times have this thinking that these children that are becoming difficult are going to put us or the ministry to shame.

I think you have said it already that we shouldn't put ministry ahead of them. Sisters Folasade and Kemi mentioned this too since we have been looking at the Ministers' home.

Input 2: I'm of the opinion that whatever you don't want your children to do or learn outside please start with them at home in a language they'll understand. Though it could be so ridiculous it can still be of help in a way.

Someone shared how she taught her children how to hate sex in a tender age. How did she get it done? She bought chewing gums and chew a few of them without letting the children know. She wrapped them neatly the same way she bought them. She did it all alone in her room. The sweetness is gone, she then came to the living room and dropped them on the table both female and male children grabbed and opened and drop into their mouths to chew only to find out that the taste is gone, disappointedly they called mom and wondered what the hell is this you gave us, their mother responded chewing gums, and the children said, "no mum, how could it be?" Then, the woman from there started her teachings. If you can't eat leftover chewing gums then why should you use a lady and dump her or why should you allow a guy to use you and dump you?

Also, we should give listening ears to our children, especially our teens, they love to argue their way out, thinking they know better because of the social media stuff.

The most potent and ever-winning tools for children's training is "The Word and Prayer". They'll work in our hands in Jesus' mighty name. Our Children shall be taught of the Lord and Great shall be their peace.

### **Folakemi continues**

Even if our children go wrong, we can liken them to projects committed into our hands to nurture by God and for God. We are like the project officers. A project officer oversees a project from start to finish. In the secular, a project officer is given a project to work on and deliver results at the end of the project. The project officer leads, defines project goals, communicate with stakeholders and sees a project through to its completion. There are processes and stages before a project is completed. The project officer is intentional in whatever he does because there are expectations from the project giver who wants to see results at the end of the project. These expectations will be the driving force of the project officer.

The project officer may encounter challenges in working on the project but he will not abandon the project, because he knows he is paid to deliver. He will seek ways to resolve issues faced and strive hard to complete them successfully.

### **Lessons for us to learn from the above**

- .God has committed his children into our hands to train up in God's way
- . We are overseers/ Custodians
- . We should lead by example. It is what they see, not what we say.
- . Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal God's purpose for every child, then pray and guide them into it.
- . The Word of God is the standard and guide.
- . Always pray with and for the child
- . You may face challenges on the project, don't give up. Always go back to the owner of the project.
- . Be intentional about this project
- . Be expectant about this project
- . Pray that you will not fail the project Owner.

One thing that is great about this project committed into our hands is that we are never left alone to work on the project. God, who is the Giver of the project will give you the project and help you on your journey of working on the project.

In John 16:7-8, Jesus told His disciples *'But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.*

Today, we have the Holy Spirit as our helper. He is the one that will convict the lost child of sin and convince him/ her of righteousness. When we seek the help of the Holy Spirit, He will even reveal deep secrets about the child to us which will help us to pray and guide aright. May the Lord help us on this journey.

As we begin to round up, prayer is key. We should never underestimate the power of prayer. I believe in praying until something happens. Lk 18:1.

From the analysis of the project, we should never give up. God does not give up on us so no matter the negative behaviour we see in our children now, it should become a prayer point that will become a testimony.

Patience also is key.

I will conclude with this. Stand on the Word of God concerning your children. Isaiah 8:18

## Responses

**Response 1:** Thank you for the powerful thought-provoking reminder of God's love and our purpose on earth. What a great responsibility and privilege. Lord behold us with your wisdom and strength. Let's be reminded that it is God first, family second and ministry after. God first means having a relationship with God. Abandoning family for ministry isn't God's desire! Taking care of your family is one of the prerequisites that qualify you for ministry!

**Folake's response:** Yes you are right sis. You cannot give what you don't have. God first, spouse, children and then ministry. That's the order it should be. When I mentioned it earlier in the discussion, I was saying the family is before ministry.

## Question

Many of our children when back from University no longer want to attend their parents' churches simply because of the not-so-balance preaching and less accommodating of young people (this is according to the majority of them).

My question now is how do you deal with your young adult children who are still at home, in Christ but want to permanently worship in other churches which they feel are culture, age and gender neutral?

Secondly, if you are someone that feels it doesn't matter as long as you are in Christ. How do you mediate between parents and children when the parents pastor a church?

**Response 1:** You have hit on a big matter. Many times we want them in our midst, but we are very hostile to them.

**Response 2:** We need to start including them, considering their views and remembering their experience, environment and generations are different. 99.99% of them will not pray die-die or pray against their enemies. And we must understand that and not enforce it on them. We are shepherds and shepherds cannot design sheep but they can guide, guard and nurture sheep.

## Folakemi's response

Good question. I don't have all the answers but my stand is even though I am a pastor in a church, what is important is that my children are saved and doing well in the Lord. For me, it's not about the church but about souls that need to be saved. We have to get to the point of it's not about us but about the one that sent us. With my children, the only thing I will do is to do my research on if the church is preaching the undiluted Word of God as there are so many so-called churches compromising today.

## Other response

This reminds me of when my daughters went to church with one of their aunts, they returned home to tell me how the pastor said they were not born again because they were not dancing the way they were all dancing and singing. Meanwhile, they said they were actually worshipping, and that they were even concerned with the Pastor's interpretation of the Bible. They vowed never to go there again, and indeed, they don't. So, we need to be careful!

I have worked with young people for years now, and one thing that characterises them is their softness. They may not shout as we would, but we must not interpret their salvation for noise.

While I believe families should fellowship together, when a child is struggling, we need to be wise and seek God for wisdom.

I know how one of us approached her child and told the child to feel free to go to any Bible-believing church as you don't have to come to ours. And the child is in the parent's church today, serving God in his or her capacity.

We need the wisdom of God. I want my children to have a faith that goes beyond church walls.

### **Other response**

I like this "They might not shout as we do but we must not interpret their salvation for noise or their softness as not knowing God.

As regards children going to other churches other than their parents' church, don't forget that church members might not understand this and so also are some parents ( ministers). How do we address this?

### **Folakemi's response**

I think from the beginning, you should let church members know your stand. For example, even with other people, the main aim should be their salvation, not about coming to your church. When you evangelise, do you do focus on them coming to your church or pointing them to Christ?

Towards the end of last year, one of my children started going to a church in Dagenham. He loved the church and when church members asked, we told them the reason he loved the church which was understood. Later he came back to our church because of distance but he introduces some of the new things he learnt there to the young adult church in ours. I understand it is not easy but God will help us to strike a balance in whatever situation we find ourselves. So I think we should pray that these ones will be rooted and grounded in the Lord no matter where they fellowship.

What about us? I was born into a Baptist church but once I knew the Lord, I changed my church and this is the situation with most of us. May the Lord guide our footsteps in Jesus' name.

Also, when our children went to University, initially my husband wanted them to go to a Redeemed Christian church of God church as that is where we attend but none of them did. They went completely to different fellowships. For me, what if they decided not to attend any church at all which some children do once they are out of the house?

Also please advise the person involved that he/she should let the church members know Jesus Christ is coming for one church. Hallelujah

### **Other response**

God bless you for these words of wisdom. I am very little in things of the ministry. As a wife, mother and minister's wife, my personal walk with God and how I am raising my children, I see God using my own home as an example to teach me to learn, everything we have discussed so far somehow I have experienced it (though I failed in handling it God's way.

My husband started Bible study with our children at a very young age, it was a thorough teaching of the Bible and he encouraged them to challenge anyone including himself if not teaching the Word of God.

When our first son went to university, he attended a church, and when we asked him about it, he told us he is not going back there because all they focus on is the man of God, that is the pastor, rather than God.

For me, I think the knowledge of God that they have will help shape their lives and any choices they make in future.

Before God opened my eyes I think I was quietly wishing they follow us to church, be well dressed and behave in certain ways (God bless our African daddies) but the truth is these children are watching us, watching our fellow brethren. Has anyone had their children act out the lives of church members and tell you how they talk, dress and behave? These things discourage our children. When the enemy sees the lives of our children as a challenge to his kingdom (which our children will be by the grace of God) he will fight by discouraging or confusing our children. Rev12:17

Wherever our children go, may they be firebrands for God's kingdom, may righteousness be their cloak always and may he put in them the kind of fear he put in Joseph that even in a strange land he will not sin against his God. May the Holy Spirit continue to teach us and grant us wisdom on how to raise these children for his kingdom. Amen

### **Conclusion**

Thanks to our sister, Folakemi who took us through. May the Lord help us to be wise as serpents and gentle as doves as we help our children that are struggling presently.

The take home for me is that we must not take our children's struggles or misconduct too personal, we must see them as souls that must be reached for the Lord.

We should engage our homes as the first church for our children. When they choose to go to another church and not the one we pastored, we should see it from the eyes of there is only one church, and we are one as long as the church they go to is preaching the truth. We must not obscure Christ.

And while they go to other churches, let us pray for them and engage them positively. We should be more focused on their spirituality and not denomination. I believe we must focus on the total person (spirit, soul and body).

Let us create time to listen to our children. Don't neglect your adult children, ask after their emotional well-being, their work, academics and so on.

You can go on a date with them just to spend time chatting and having fun. You can do a book date with them, or share a short message that you can both catch up to discuss together.

May the Lord give us the wisdom to help each and every one of our children.

Jesus told a parable in Luke 15 about the shepherd that had hundred sheep and one got lost, the shepherd left the ninety-nine and went after that one that is lost. Let us go after our lost children, first on our knees. Let us show love and not be judgemental. Let us encourage our husbands to be involved wherever possible.

We should be careful who we talk to about them, particularly in their struggling seasons. May the Lord make our home a place of quiet rest for our children.