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The Perfect Parent

By Teresa Hampton

The child was born into a loving family. The parents did everything possible to provide a nurturing, godly home. Years passed and their worst nightmare began. The child, now an adult, is unfaithful. Emotions flood their heart. Deep sorrow because the child's soul is in jeopardy. Resentment or anger because someone or something led them away from the Lord. Frustration because the child knows better. Then, recognizing their own imperfections, they ask, "Where did we go wrong?"

What does one say or do to encourage them? Turn to God's word. Scripture reveals another parent who experienced sorrow, disappointment, anger, and many more emotions due to a child's unfaithfulness.

The parent was God and he was perfect in every way. He created Adam and Eve, placed them in the beauty of the garden, and gave them everything they needed. He walked with them and talked to them in the cool of the evening, but his children chose a path that would shatter that beautiful relationship.

After the fall, God's dealings with men continued to show his reaction their rebellion. The earth became corrupt and God was *grieved in his heart* that he had made man (Gen. 6:5-7). After delivering his chosen people from bondage, he was angered because they murmured against him in the wilderness (Num. 11:10). Centuries later he was frustrated and angry because of their idolatry (Deut. 32:16). When the prophets delivered God's words about his displeasure, they killed them. Despite all of this, he sent his Son.

Jesus was angry with the moneychangers (John 2:13-16). He expressed frustration and disappointment with God's children (Matt. 17:17). Yet, he loved them, encouraged them to be obedient, and often went to God in prayer (Luke 5:16).

Fathers and mothers, if your child is wayward, take heart. Keep an open door of communication without compromising your own godly principles. Speak often to God, because He knows firsthand what you are experiencing. Hold fast to the Lord and *never* lose hope.

Today's Verse: *And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him (Luke 15:20).*

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