

RESOLVING FAMILY CONFLICTS

WHEN THE FUN STOPS FOR PARENTS

1 SAMUEL 15:22–23; LUKE 15:11–24



The Heart of the Matter

Every family has its headaches and heartaches. Because human depravity runs deep, it is impossible to rear our children from infancy to independence without encountering times that call for straight talk and tough love. While parents continue to love their children no matter what, they cannot escape those occasions when wills clash, rebellion reaches an impasse, and things get downright impossible. For any number of reasons, some adolescents and young adults who still live at home will reach a place where they simply refuse to obey their parents. All attempts to restore the harmony in the parent-child relationship prove futile. The result? Harsh words and ugly reactions as parents stand their ground and sons and daughters react in stubborn defiance, refusing to back down. The parents pray, but nothing changes. They reason with the disobedient child, but it's a dead-end street. They apply different measures of discipline, but things only get worse. And the realization that their other children are being neglected—or negatively influenced—as they spend their time and energy dealing with the rebel complicates their struggle. This is one of those times when the fun stops for parents.



Discovering the Way

1. An Analysis: Rebellion (1 Samuel 15:22–23)

We all think we know what rebellion is, but what does the Bible say it is? And what is God's opinion of it?

2. A Story: A Rebellious Son (Luke 15:11–24)

As we review this familiar parable of the prodigal son, let's take a closer look at the ethnic and domestic scene (15:11–13), the lifestyle and consequences (15:13–16), the realization and decision (15:17–19), and the return and restoration (15:20–24).



Starting Your Journey

How should you respond to the rebel in your family? Four lessons: no rebel can be allowed to ruin a home; if the rebellion necessitates a separation, then go there; let go of your child and release him or her to the consequences; and when true repentance occurs, let grace abound.

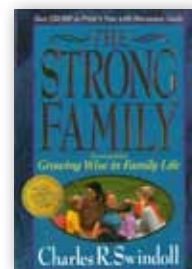


Tools for Digging Deeper



Resolving Family Conflicts

by Charles R. Swindoll
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