

Who is Writing Your Child's Story?

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Would you like to write the script for your child's future? Of course you would.

Let's face it, parents are concerned about their kids whether they're 9 or 39. And they should be . . . in a certain way, and up to a certain point.

When children are small, families are engineered for parental caretaking. Mom knows and cares if the teeth are brushed, and if they are brushed *correctly*. But a wise parent releases more and more of his/her meticulous oversight as the child grows, in hopes of making a sensible, independent, cogitating human out of that unruly blob of wiggling flesh.

When a child leaves home, except in certain special cases, the child is to function on his or her own, handling money, getting jobs, building relationships, taking care of life in general, and caring for his or her own spiritual development. At first, they were part of the parent's story; but when they are grown, and out of the home, God begins writing a new story through their lives.

Yet, we parents, even those of us who believe in Christ, often find it difficult to sit back and let God write the story *He* wants with our children's lives.



Writing the Story

Let's think about that idea. But first, tell me, what's the best story you ever read? I hope you will say, "The Bible." The Bible is a true story, from creation to the future world, filled with smaller stories woven into that amazing metanarrative. Have you ever noticed how much trouble shows up in the Bible? Have you ever been amazed that godly people faced so many struggles and seemingly insurmountable tragedies? Have you ever read those stories and found help to face your own trials? In fact, have you *ever* read a good story without conflict?

Once I was away ministering in another state when my wife called. I had just been meditating on Abraham's near sacrifice of his son on Mt. Moriah. It was meaningful to me. But the call brought it home even closer. My son had a severe seizure and my wife was not sure what to do. Neither of us knew what was happening, in fact. I remember kneeling in my host's home tearfully going over the Abraham story again, telling God that, like Abraham, I was willing to face the loss of my child if it were for His honor.

This is just one way the Bible helps us—a very important way, in fact. We identify with the story and gain the perspective we need.

So, the stories of the Bible, as full of difficulty, fear and tragedy as they are, have a purpose and speak a message to us. We read the stories of men and women like us and gain understanding about God, our weaknesses, faith, perseverance and sanctification. Behind it all we see God's hand writing the story. And all of those stories take place in the lives of people who were somebody's kids.

Now, the Bigger Point

When children leave home and face life, God is writing His story with their lives. The story may have danger, loss, agony and pain that we as parents would love to erase from the narrative. But God is writing the story and we shouldn't want to edit it.

In the end, the story pleases its Author and speaks volumes about the ability and insight of the Writer.

So, we parents (ideally) should let the story go on. Your children must make their mistakes, lose their fortunes, gain their footing, and raise their children, without our constant reminding, cajoling, warning, and I-told-you-so-ing. They are men and women on their own now, living before the face of God. They will face danger, trials and heartache themselves. And that *is* the way the story unfolds. We will not keep them from their trials; we must let the Author finish His work.

Do you think the parents of William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and Robert Moffat would have spared their children the suffering they experienced if they could have? Do you think they were armchair coaches, wishing they could bring their children back to a safe environment without dengue fever, malaria, malnutrition, the death of children, the loss of wives, and the pain of misunderstanding. But God had a better story. So they let them go to India, Burma and Africa with their message and youthful zeal to face all the danger God had for them.

This doesn't mean we parents don't care anymore. Not at all. But our cares are now between us and God. At times, our children will ask our views and seek our help. Those are precious times and a wise child will see the value in them. But don't try to write God's story your way. Let God write the plot so that others might learn from it. Pray, and watch what God will do.