

Summary:

Using the parable of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15, the pastor outlines four principles for becoming a 'porch light parent' – one who leaves the light on and welcomes their children home unconditionally. The key message is that effective parenting of adult children requires letting go of control while maintaining loving connection, allowing consequences to teach lessons, keeping communication doors open while avoiding unsolicited advice, and celebrating their presence without expecting anything in return.

Intro Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we come before You today as parents, future parents, and adult children ourselves. We acknowledge that parenting is not easy and that we don't always have the answers. Open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us through Your Word today. Help us to be receptive to Your guidance and wisdom as we learn how to love our children well, whether they are young or grown. Give us the courage to examine our own hearts and the willingness to make changes where needed. We trust that You love our children even more than we do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker:

What's one family tradition or memory from your childhood that always made you feel loved at home?

Key Verses:

Luke 15:11–24

Luke 15:20

Luke 15:22–24

Questions:

1. What does it mean to shift from 'control' to 'connection' when parenting adult children? How might this look different in practical situations?
2. The pastor mentioned that 'you could win the argument and lose the relationship.' Can you think of a time when being right wasn't worth the cost? How do we balance truth with relationship?
3. How difficult is it to 'trust them without tracking them'? What fears drive parents to want to monitor their adult children's every move?
4. What does it look like to 'let consequences connect their choices

to their outcomes'? When is it appropriate to step in and help versus letting them learn the hard way?

5. The father in the parable didn't ask any questions about the wasted money when his son returned. Why do you think this was significant?

How hard would this be to do in real life?

6. What's the difference between being a 'porch light parent' versus a 'watchdog parent'? Which tendency do you lean toward and why?

7. The pastor said 'unsolicited advice usually comes across as criticism.' How can parents show love and concern without giving unwanted advice?

8. What does it mean to 'celebrate their presence' without expecting anything in return? How might this change the atmosphere in your home?

Life Application:

This week, practice being a 'porch light parent' by choosing one specific way to show unconditional love to your children (regardless of their age). This could mean: deleting a tracking app, holding back unsolicited advice in a conversation, planning a celebration just because they're coming over, or simply telling them you're glad they're in your life without mentioning anything they need to change or improve.

Key Takeaways:

- The key to parenting adult children is connection, not control - shift from controlling to counseling
- Trust your adult children without constantly tracking their every move
- Let consequences connect their choices to their outcomes rather than always swooping in to rescue them
- Keep your door open and your mouth shut - avoid giving unsolicited advice that comes across as criticism
- Celebrate their presence without expecting anything in return - they don't owe you anything for raising them

Ending Prayer:

Lord, we thank You for the gift of our children and the privilege of being parents. Help us to release our need to control and instead focus on building strong, loving connections. Give us wisdom to know when to speak and when to remain silent, when to help and when to let consequences teach. Help us to be porch light parents who always leave the light on, welcoming our children home with open arms and celebrating their presence. We trust You with our children's futures and ask that You would work in their hearts as only You can. May our homes be places of grace, love, and acceptance. In Jesus' name, Amen.

