

## *Every Parent's Prayer*

*"My heart is so heavy... I have so many regrets. I was not a good parent. Precious years were lost and I am haunted by the mistakes I made. I feel like I failed as a parent. I fear my children's lives are totally messed up because of me..."*

Being a parent is a huge challenge which is made even more difficult because we are imperfect! However, God is perfect! He is able to give us the help we need. In fact, He really desires to help us. When we ask Him to forgive us for our mistakes and sin, He will take our situations and, through His grace and mercy, mend and repair the damage we've done. Even things that seem utterly impossible are not impossible to Him. If we put our lives in His hands, He will act.

The Bible tells of a situation when a huge crowd of people followed Jesus into the wilderness. It was a remote area and the people had been with Him, listening to His teaching for three days with no food. Jesus was concerned and knew if they went away hungry, they would surely collapse in the desert on the way home. A little boy in the crowd had five little barley loaves and two small fish. He brought what he had to Jesus and Jesus blessed it and broke it and miraculously fed thousands. He even had food left over!

In the same way, we can bring our feelings of failure as a parent to God and say: *"Lord, You know my inadequacies. You know my weaknesses, not only in parenting, but in every area of my life. I did the best I could, but it wasn't good enough. As You broke the fishes and the loaves to feed the five thousand, now take my meager effort and use it to bless my family. Make up for the things I did wrong. Satisfy the needs that I have not satisfied. Wrap Your great arms around my children, and draw them close to You. And be there when they stand at the great crossroads between right and wrong. I did the best I could. Therefore, I submit to You my children and myself and the job I did as a parent. The outcome now belongs to You."* In Jesus' name, Amen.<sup>1</sup>

I know the Father will honor that prayer. It's not too late, even for parents whose children are grown. The Lord does not want you to suffer from guilt over events you can no longer influence. Give Him your regrets and let Him heal your own heart. The past is the past. After you've repented, let the past die, never to be resurrected. Give the situation to God, and trust Him with it. You will be amazed at what God will do!

*"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,  
I press on toward the goal to win the prize  
for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 3:13-14)

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<sup>1</sup> Prayer shared in Focus on the Family, date and author unknown.