

Preparing For An Empty Nest



Empty-nest syndrome has established itself as a real dimension of mid-life crisis. Life after children is now recognized as another threat to marriages that have survived earlier tests. Parents who have lived all their lives for their children suddenly find themselves rattling around in an empty house. They become restless, unsatisfied, and irritable. Anxiety, anger and depression can come in slowly like a fog.

If empty-nest syndrome marks yet another test for parents and their marriage, it should also be seen as the mark of success and hope for the child.

Children are not born to be children. The highest good is not to be protected and directed by a hovering, smothering parent. From the day a baby is born, his parents should understand that their mission is to prepare this child to fly.

Maturity is better than immaturity, independence is better than dependence, and the day of departure is better than the day of arrival.

If after working through the normal pains of departure, parents are still apt to be overinvolved, overprotective, and meddlesome in their adult children's lives, then there is a need for some housecleaning. It might be time to acknowledge and discard a pattern of selfish control and smothering. It might be time to accept the fact that we have been overinvolved, not for the child's good but to indulge our own selfish needs. It is difficult to let our children go, especially if we have become dependent on them. Dependence signals the child in us, and is a warning that we are not finding our satisfaction and peace in God Himself.

It is interesting to note the way God parents His children. In both Old and New Testament times, the heavenly Father temporarily nurtured His children with a heavy provision of miraculous signs and wonders to assure them of His presence. In time, He withdrew the obvious presence of the miraculous and forced His children to sink or swim in the disciplines of faith.

God has made man and woman to leave their parents and cleave to a new mate of their own. It is in this new sphere of independent living that a person is the freest to learn to love God, parents, mate, children, and friends. It is here that we can find the peace of mind God provides.

Stephen Ministers are especially trained to come alongside you to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support during a time of transition. There are several ways to make arrangements to talk to a Stephen Minister.

(1) Complete this confidential [Stephen Ministry form](#).

OR

(2) Call directly: Pastor Bob Bohler (706-549-9284) or Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator Deb Williams (706-247-9000).