

## TO GOD, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE A CHILD

Should we still discipline our children and influence their decisions even when they have already come of age? Many parents feel that children have earned the right to make their choices when they reach 18 or 21 years old. Besides, they say, they are the ones who will suffer the consequences, when they end up make wrong decisions. Do you agree? I believe this is an idea we got from the West, particularly the U.S. Parents who believe in this Western concept of child-rearing condition, train their children to be independent at a young age.

But let me ask you, supposing your adult children end up making wrong choices, will you reject them when they decide to return and ask to live with you again? Can you do as the Americans do—make them accountable for their actions and leave them to lick their wounds on their own? *Kaya n'yo ba silang tiisin?* I do not know about you, pero hindi ko 'ata kaya 'yun.

I realized that if we stop disciplining and influencing our children, we will ultimately bear the consequences of their decisions with them when they get older. So, I believe we must continue to act as parents as long as we are able, especially if they still live under our roof. I believe we have the power and responsibility to do so while they are still under our care. But this power greatly diminishes when they begin to live on their own. I realize that if we want to live a peaceful life when we get old, we must do everything possible to influence and guide our children to the right path.

Do you know that this is an attitude God possesses? God is our Father and He will continue to discipline us, train us and influence our decision for good no matter how old we are. It's because to Him, we will always be His child. His child. Though He would accept us when we decide to return to Him after making a wrong decision, like the Prodigal Son, yet He can not remove the consequences of our sin. But there is one thing He would do. He will make all things work together for good, even though He can no longer implement His original and wonderful plan for you. That's because God will remain a Father to us, no matter how old we are.

Our children too will remain our children no matter how old they become.