

Biblical Parenting – 14 The Teen Years

I. The Big Picture

But it's worth noting that there's really no such thing as a "teenager" in the bible. It is not really a biblical category – nor even a human category in a lot of cultures. The bible has commands to children, and to parents. It addresses "young men" and "older men/women" (cf 1 Jn 2:13-14; 1 Tim 5:1-2). But no word about "teens." What then are we to do with them?

. And the bible is clear about a number of things: Children are a blessing – with no age caveats!

II. A Season of Change

- They will go through significant physical changes – puberty
- Teenagers are also changing in their ability to comprehend and process what's going on in the world. They're growing in their intellect.
- In all of this, our teens' relationship with us will also change.

In all this change, there are unique dangers and traps that will also face teens as they are more in the world & understand more of it:

- Peers (whether in enticing to sin, or in bullying)
- Appearance
- Pornography
- Ungodly world views
- Media (almost impossible to overstate the potential pitfalls of this one – so much so that we have an entire lesson devoted to it.)

So whether we call this phase "teenaged" or not, clearly this time of life is one where, just as in other stages of life, we will confront issues and challenges we have not faced before.

III. What does the Bible say about teenagers?

What are things that tend to characterize youth?

1. No hunger for wisdom or correction.
2. A tendency to be unwise in their choice of companions. The Bible is clear that bad company corrupts good morals (1 Cor 15:33)
3. A susceptibility to sexual temptation.
4. An absence of eschatological perspective. Has anyone here ever needed to be reminded to take the eternal view? Then it should not be a surprise that teenagers can be especially present-focused.

5. A lack of heart awareness. We've been talking about the heart through this whole course. Proverbs says "Above all else, guard your heart s, and what the Bible says to them about every aspect of their lives and experience.

IV. How to "pastor" our teens

Goal 1: Focus on the Spiritual Struggle. "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places

Goal 2: Developing a heart of conviction and wisdom (p128).

Goal 3: Teaching our teenagers to understand and react redemptively with their culture.

Goal 4: Developing a heart for God in your teen.

Goal 5: Preparing teenagers for leaving home.