

Outline :

1. Introduction to the Teen Years
2. Being God's Agents on the Watch
3. The Realities of the Age
4. Make Clear to them Their True Identity
5. Goals
 - a. Focus on the Spiritual Struggle
 - b. Develop a Heart of Conviction and Wisdom
 - c. Teach Our Teens to Understand and React Redemptively with Their Culture
 - d. Develop a Heart for God in Your Teen
 - e. Prepare Teenagers for Leaving Home
6. Practical Advice
7. Summary/Conclusion

1. Introduction to the teen years

- a. (very beholden to Paul Tripp and his book "Age of Opportunity").
- b. Hoping to leave time for questions at the end
- c. Try to remember your teen years- give me a word or phrase to describe something you remember
 - i. Raging hormones
 - ii. Passions, lusts
 - iii. Desiring to be "cool", popular, not stand out in a bad way
 - iv. Teenage insecurity- unsure of who they are
 - v. Teenage rebellion- figuring out who they are in a widening world
- d. "Teens" not specifically mentioned in scripture but is helpful!
- e. Much less is expected of them than at any other time in history
 - i. "Do Hard Things" is a good book to read
- f. God does give instruction in this age, and other ages in **2 Timothy 2:22**
So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
 - i. Battle in every sinner, but especially in the young
 - ii. Much more in the positive than dwelling in the negative
 - iii. We could land here for the duration of the class
- g.

2. Being God's agents on the watch

- a. This lesson will help us focus somewhat on the teen years, but more importantly, on us. We need to look at ourselves, our heart attitudes, our walk with God as we walk with our teens in their struggles
- b. Years of extraordinary opportunity! This is the time to connect with our children as never before!
 - i. Tripp Quote from page 18
 - ii. These are moments that God made parents for! We are

- iii. God's agents on the watch! It is an incredibly high calling!
 - iv. It is an age and a season of life to do battle together
 - c. Every day you are needed!
- 3. **The realities of the age-** (don't dwell long, but just set the table of understanding)
 - a. Physical
 - i. **Moving through puberty** which lends it's own challenges
 - ii. Concerns of **how they are viewed** and perceived.
 - iii. An **"explosion of sexual awareness, and sexual temptations"**
 - b. Mental
 - i. **Growing in intellect**
 - ii. Able to move from the **concrete to the abstract**
 - c. Psychological
 - i. More **self-conscious**
 - ii. Starting to **care about what people think** about them
 - iii. **Battle between wanting to remain a child and wanting to become an adult**
 - iv. Wanting to fit in, and yet also wanting to make their own way
 - d. Spiritual
 - i. As mind develops, they are **evaluating what they have been taught**
 - ii. Desiring to know the true God, but also **at war with "themselves-as-God"**
- 4. Make Clear to them their true identity! **Keep coming back to Deut 6!**
 - a. **To root our children's identity in the existence and glory of God.** We want our children to understand that they were **made by Him, belong to Him, and are called to live for His glory.** (Tripp p 50)
 - b. This is also Catechism questions 1-3
 - c. **Deut 6:20-25**
 - i. **²⁰ "When your son asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the LORD our God has commanded you?' ²¹ then you shall say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt. And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²² And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes. ²³ And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers. ²⁴ And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day. ²⁵ And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.'**
 - 1. The Lord commanded us
 - 2. Do all these statutes
 - 3. Fear the Lord
 - 4. He preserves us
 - 5. It will be righteousness for us
 - 6. Careful to do

7. Ends where we began- the Lord commanded us
5. 5 Goals for raising our Teens- in the battle Satan wages with us and with our teens!
6. Goals (for the battle Satan Wages) should NOT be:
- a. **To Regulate Behavior**
- i. **Short term victory** to regulate behavior for a soul whose heart is not submissive to God
 - ii.
 - iii. Col 2:20-23
 - iv. ²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ **These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.**
 - v. **So Instead...**
 - vi. Col 3:12-14
 - vii. **12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.**
 - viii. **Not to be detectives but Pastor/Shepherd of- their hearts**
 1. Befriending, engaging,
 2. Not cross-examinations
 - ix. **Ask Good Questions (Tripp p 100)**
 1. What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
 2. Why was it so important to you?
 3. What were you seeking to accomplish when you..?
 4. What was the most important thing to you at that moment?
 5. Why was it that you were afraid in that situation?
 6. What was it you were trying to get?
 7. Why did you become so angry?
 8. If you could go back and do something differently, what would you change?

7. The 5 Goals for Pastoring/Shepherding our Children:

- a. **Goal #1 Focus on the Spiritual Struggle (assign this to someone to remember)**
- i. The things unseen (we wrestle not against flesh and blood)
 - ii. 2 Cor 4:16-18
 - iii. ¹⁶ So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self^{is} is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things

that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

iv. Make them aware of the battle that Satan wages for their soul!

1. Eph 6:12 (and all of Eph 6:10-18)

2. 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.

b. Goal #2- Develop a Heart of Conviction and Wisdom (assign this to someone to remember)

i. By our example

1. How can we teach out teenagers to exercise biblical wisdom if we are not accustomed to doing it ourselves?

ii. Make decisions on principles from God's word and stand firm

iii. Clear boundary issues (plain commands of scripture) versus Wisdom issues (guided by principles but not as clearly defined- thus, needing wisdom)

1. Knowing they try to apply clear boundary decisions when scripture is not clear on something can leave them frustrated

2. Conviction (based on revealed truth) VS Preference (personal desires)

iv. 6 characteristics of biblical conviction (**how to know when we are living out Deut 6**)

1. Based on study of scripture

2. Predetermined (**not arrived spur of the moment**)- determining to live by God principles

3. Will not change with circumstances. **Doesn't respond to outside pressure. Inner commitments.** Christ, apostles, martyrs are good examples

4. **Inflexible**- True convictions are non-negotiable

5. **Bold**- not timid and doubting- it results in courageous acts of faith

6. Always lived out- if it's not lived, it's not convictions

v. Great quote from Tripp, p 120

vi. The truths of Scripture are like the music of a great symphony orchestra. In an orchestra, each instrument is made more beautiful by the other. You do not understand or experience a symphony by hearing the separate notes of one violin, oboe, or drum. It is only as you hear all the instruments play together that you understand the beauty and majesty of the symphony. Each complements and balances the other. Similarly, Scripture gives us a symphony of truth. Not just one note but many contribute to the rich, harmonious tones of truth. As parents, we need to have a symphonic mentality as we train our children for godly living. We cannot hammer away at one note. We must introduce them to the whole symphony of biblical wisdom so that they can make biblically sound decisions...it is of paramount importance that we do not think for our children, but teach them how to think about life and employ the symphony of perspectives God has given us in His word

c. Goal #3- Teach Thoughtful, Redemptive Interaction with the Culture (assign this to someone to remember)

- i. Cultural Awareness- the way the spiritual struggle is played out in the culture in which we live
- ii. (We could/should have a series just on culture and it's shaping our lives)

iii. 3 responses to culture

1. Rejection/Isolation response (Go out from the world and be ye separate), (be in the world but not of the world)
 - a. May subtly deny goodness of creation- all God made was good
 - b. May miss the core issue of the struggle with evil
 - c. May promote self righteousness
 2. Assimilation response
 - a. Things are neutral so there is no harm in participating the thing
 - b. But nothing is ever neutral (Whoever is not with me is against me)
 - c. Remember that things can be used for good or evil
 3. Best response- They need to understand what culture is and the nature of it's power and influence and need to form a biblical plan for living with it
 - a. Be aware of the poisons of the culture
 - b. They need the protection of a biblical worldview
 - c. Have eyes of faith- see every situation as opportunity to engage them to rethink and carefully apply scripture
 - d. Talk, Talk Talk (and LISTEN) with your children, especially teens
- iv. Raise teens who are fully able to interact with their culture without becoming enslaved to it's idols

1. Matt 5:13-16

- a. 13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.
- b. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that[a] they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

- v. Attach what we learn from scripture to a biblical system of thinking

d. Goal #4- Develop a Heart for God in your Teenager (assign this to someone to remember)

- i. Equip them to leave our homes with a sense of awe over God and the glories of his grace
- ii. We must have this ourselves if we want to impart it to them
 1. Lifestyle in our homes
 2. Fight hypocrisy and confess and ask forgiveness when it appears

3. Search your hearts
 4. In them, Recognize a deep, sincere hunger to know and honor God
 5. Encourage a personal pursuit of God
- iii. Make engaging family worship a priority
 1. Keep them interested
 2. Spend time in the Proverbs and gospels
 3. Avoid being rigid
 - iv. Be a model of the things you hope to impart in your children
 1. In prayer
 2. In a hunger for God
 3. Confessing sins and asking forgiveness
 4. Desire for church and corporate worship
- e. Goal #5- Prepare Your Teenager to Leave Home (assign this to someone to remember)
- i. Few teens leave due to rules as much as due to the relationship.
 - ii. We are not finalizing God's work in our teens lives. Think beginning, not ends. God will water the seeds and make them grow
 - iii. 4 verbs for parents in preparing their children to leave home
 1. Accept- greet the sin of our teenagers with acceptance of the grace of Christ. Not condemnation but to be God's instrument of change
 - a. Our most powerful tool is our relationship!
 2. Reveal Christ to our teens- in our love, teachings, and modeling
 3. Identify-
 - a. Heb 2:11- Christ Identifies with us
 - b. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source.^[a] That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,^[b]
 - c. If Christ can identify with us, how much more should we be able to identify with our teens in their struggles
 4. Enter- Christ entered our world and spent 33 years getting to know our experiences. We also should we enter the world of our teens.
 - a. Let them know their world is important to you
 - b. Find ways to show you care
 - c. Take time to understand them, their experiences
 5. How to know their ready? Same as asking how to know they've reached maturity?
 6. Colossians 1:9-14
 7. ⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹² giving thanks^[a] to the Father, who has qualified you^[b] to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered

us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

8. Practical advice

- a. **Pray- this is God's work** (He will be victorious as God has no contemporaries- Dan 4:35), and you are His agents in it! It is for His glory!
 - i. 3rd question in the catechism- why did God make you?
 - ii. Phil 1:6 He who began a good work in you...
 - iii. Eph 3:20-21
 - iv. ²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
 - v. For God to do the work
 - vi. For God to grant you "power at work in us"
 - vii. Throughout all generations
 - viii. For His Glory
- b. Communicate- Ask good questions! Listen! Then speak.
 - i. James 1:19
 - ii. ¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.
 - iii. Prov 4:20-22
 - iv. ²⁰ My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings.
²¹ Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart.
²² For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their[Ⓜ] flesh.
 - v. Everything has to be on the table!!
 1. I allowed my kids to ask any question they wanted, especially about sex
 - a. I was naïve and not as well taught especially about slangs
 - b. I even allowed them to question my directives but only after they acknowledged me with a yes sir
- c. Help them choose friends wisely: Proverbs 13:20
- d. Allow kids to begin to make decisions, with your guidance
 - i. **Example of kids and going to movies**
- e. **Communicate**- ask good questions! Listen! Then speak.
- f. **Pray**- this is God's work (He will be victorious as God has no contemporaries- Dan 4:35), and you are His agents in it! It is for His glory!
- g. **Highly recommend Tripps "Age of Opportunity"**
 - i. I will pay for any book or Kindle if you would like my help
 - ii. Only if you promise to read it!

9. Conclusion/Summary

a. Is this even possible?

b. A very helpful passage:

i. 2 Peter 1:3-9

ii. ³His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to^[a] his own glory and excellence,^[b] ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue,^[c] and virtue with knowledge, ⁶and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸For if these qualities^[d] are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.