Jan. 31, 2018 a.m.

The teen years and beyond

Reading: **Luke 2:43-52**

**TEENAGERS!!** (These are still important - discipline/punishment, teaching, example)

* Having teenagers was God’s way of reminding me of what it’s been like for Him to have me as a child! Challenging times but can be good times.
* What were your teenage years like? What can you learn from your own experience?
* Wise enough not to make the same mistake our parents made.
* If 0 to 12 goes well, this time should be easier. (note point in previous lesson – Linda P.)
* Real challenges - hormones (testosterone and estrogen) and independence
* ‘Rules without relationships lead to rebellion!’ (love, acceptance)
* Spend time together (whatever happened to eating supper together) – laugh together
* Listen, be there for them (remember to start this very early when they want to talk to us when they are little about things we think are silly or are of no interest to us)
* Sign of a very healthy relationship – children feel free to discuss whatever is on their minds with their parents.
* Welcome their friends into your house. You know where they are! ☺ Good influence.
* Learn to tolerate annoying but not sinful behavior. (this is what love does)
* Color of her hair, hair styles, the holes in the jeans, music they like (comment I made about rap at 25th St., as long as it is not ungodly) – they do not have to do everything just like us or like what we like. Fun when they do but not necessary.
* “Don’t throw away your friendship over behavior that has no great moral significance. There will be plenty of real issues that require you to stand like a rock. Save your big guns for those crucial confrontations.”[[1]](#footnote-1) (James Dobson)
* Say ‘yes’ whenever possible – when you have to say ‘no’ it will be more effective
* Their “whys” deserve reasonable answers. Study and/or know where to find answers.
* We need to know why and be able to give sound answers to their questions.
* We need to be able to give *evidence* and *proofs* for our faith. (**Heb. 11:1; Acts 1:3**)
* “How do you know this is true?” (a 16 year old asked her mother holding a bible)
* “Does God really care if we use instrumental music in worship” a teenager asked me.
* Live & teach Proverbs – Solomon taught those things to his son.
* “Parents, never doubt your influence on your teen’s decisions about sex. Research released this month shows that teen girls who are close to their mothers are more likely to remain virgins. … Other studies have shown the powerful impact that caring, involved fathers have in preventing teen sexual activity. …The good news is that parents who try to be a positive influence in their children’s lives can – and will – make a difference.” (The News-Sun, Kendallville, from the Chronicle-Tribune)
* Dad to sons talks (**Eph. 6:4; Pr. 5:1-3; 7:1, 7**) – moms to daughters talks
* “I was looking for my daddy’s love.” (David Tant – why she committed fornication)
* They still need and want guidance when you might not think they are listening.
* “We need two things from you – first, a set of guidelines so we will know what you expect of us and second, consistency in how you enforce these.” (a group of teens in a church in Lexington, KY, One Diaper at a Time, Avondale Material)
* Technology, social media (see Social Dilemma on Netflix) – we have to set limits (yes, it something else we have to say no to) – we need to read the research on the effects technology is having on our kids – learning, mental (a medical term I heard recently – digital dementia – thankfully we don’t have to memorize all those phone numbers but we no longer know one), emotional, and especially spiritual concerns – bad influences
* Keep them busy – active (sports can have a place but love and acceptance are not based on performance or achievements – misses the game tying free throw with one second on the clock – take them to get ice cream, David Tant) – do things together – learn to work. Involve them in the work around the house and in the work of the Lord. (**1 Tim. 5:8-10**)
* But not so busy that spiritual things (assembling, study, prayer) take second place.
* Learning to let go – give them some more rope, more responsibilities, more choices.
* We are raising them to be able to live independently. Still rules at home.
* Someday, they will leave mother and father and cleave to their wife/husband.
* We should be preparing them for that day – by being examples and by training them to be good husbands/wives and mothers/fathers.

**When our children leave home – it’s hard, no two ways about it.**

* We have invested 18 years or so in raising them – then they are gone. Feel forgotten.
* Moving here – Nick was 20 still living at home and going to school – helped us move – we then went and played golf for a couple of days with Brownie and Jeb. I took him back to Florence and spent the night in his apartment. I got up the next morning and decided to leave before he got up. I sat in the car and cried and continued to do so for a good while after that – up the trace.
* Don’t live in the past (at least too much) – don’t wish they were little again. (**Eccl. 7:10**)
* They have their own lives and are making their own memories. Treat them like adults.
* Don’t make them feel guilty about this. Don’t keep trying to control them. Probably shouldn’t be at 17-18 unless they decide while still living at home, they can do as they please – Brian Everett – no more curfew – Bruce – are you moving out?
* Hard for sentimental, nostalgic fools like me. ☺ (Amanda didn’t want this stuff!) ☹
* Remember spiritual things (good) – baptized, comments – wisdom of their own
* When they get married, they have left us and started their own home. (**Mt. 19:5**)
* How much control does a parent have over who their children marry?
* We are not in a culture where we can make that choice for them.
* Teach, set an example, pray, advise – but when they fall in love ….
* Try to like their spouses – going to raise your grandkids.
* But if they don’t ask for your advice, be slow to give it.
* Don’t be a busybody in their affairs unless something sinful is taking place.
* Let them experience natural consequences – cannot protect them.
* How much are we involved in the lives of grandchildren? Do we live close by?
* “If we’d known grandkids would be this much fun, we’d had them first.” ☺
* Be on the same team – want them to grow up to love the Lord. (**2 Tim. 1:5**)
* *“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”* (**Luke 2:52**)
* Joy to have relationships with older children – especially when they are faithful.
* Becomes a friend to friend relationship – brother to brother, sister to sister in Christ

**What we should long for more than anything else in this world:**

*“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”*

(**3 John 4**)

1. Dr. James Dobson, Parenting Isn’t for Cowards, p. 154 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)