



Rebellious Teenagers

A few years ago I attended a seminar on Youth Conflicts, and the instructor shared a thought which struck me as profound:

"When we say teenagers are 'going through a stage', what is actually happening is that they are going through a spiritual battle, and they are losing. They are longing to be brought under control, but they are choosy who they let/want to do it."¹

In my dealing with youth ever since, I have come to see just how true that statement is.

The world in which we are living is one which is filled with devils. Literally. The Bible says that "*We are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age.*"² The devil and his demons have got a hold on the media, the television, music CD's, our shopping centres and bus shelter ads. We are being bombarded every day by incitements to fulfil our flesh desires without any respect for God and His healthy standards.

And our teenagers are the devil's primary target. They are coming into a new level of mental growth, with their

thinking capacities expanding enormously; they are coming into a new level of physical growth, with puberty bringing a whole new realm of bodily desires to learn to cope with. And the devil will win every time in seducing our kids unless we have trained them beforehand to understand there is this battle going on, there are God's standards of truth and behaviour out there, and unless we are lovingly firm ourselves in upholding God's standards!

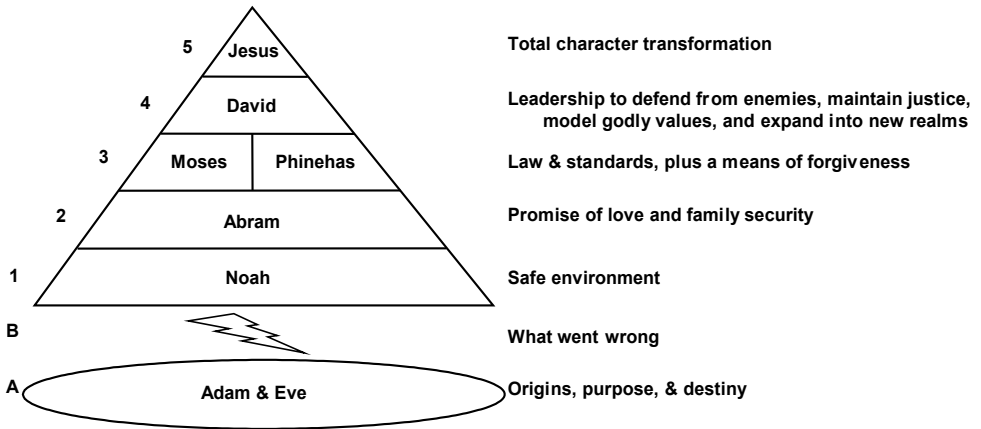
Have you been training your children for this battle? Have you been standing unswervingly strong for them on behalf of what is right and good?



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(1) Bill Gothard, Basic Life Principles Seminar, 2002. (2) Ephesians 6:12

God's plan for turning rebels into princes & princesses



Let me pass on some simple tips and tools in how to prepare your teenager for the inevitable spiritual battles that will face them. These tips are based on how God Himself has been working throughout history to help people be all they were intended by Him to be.

There are two foundations followed by five principles.

A. We need to communicate to our children the origins of the human race: we were created by a loving Almighty God in His image, in order to be fruitful, multiply, and enjoy the earth, in a wonderful happy relationship with God and each other for eternity.

With this foundation firmly set in place, we must:

B. Clearly explain what went wrong with Adam and Eve's relationship with God, and hence what went wrong with the whole world: Adam and Eve disobeyed God, listening to the devil and his temptations instead. This caused the whole world to come under a

curse, and that is why there is death and bloodshed everywhere.

In response to these truths, in order to bring our children to wholeness, we should:

1. Provide a safe physical environment for our children to live in. That is, a decent house, bed, food, neighbourhood, etc.

This provides the basis for:

2. Constantly communicating through word and action that you love your children, you want the best for them, and that you love them as part of the family; indeed, they are a vital and precious part of the family.

In the context of this love comes:

3. Communicating and training them in the standards for good behaviour which make family life good, and the consequences for misbehaviour (breaking the standards). The means of "getting right again" must also be communicated.

This sets the scene for:

4. Leadership (you as a parent) now modelling these standards, enforcing them, and defending your family from bad influences based on them. Note that if you fail to be a good model of these standards, you forfeit your effectiveness in leadership, but if you humble yourself and ask for forgiveness from God and your children, your effectiveness can be restored.



And finally, your ultimate role as a parent is to:

5. Show how the real enemies to be conquered in all of life are the enemy within (a person's own selfishness) and the spiritual enemies (the devil and demons). These are conquered by turning your life over to the rule and authority of Jesus Christ. Through His death on the cross, resurrection, and His giving the Holy Spirit to all who trust in Him, you gain the power over these

enemies, and are now set for maturity! In actual fact, Jesus becomes your new leader, who helps you fulfil all the standards for good behaviour, forgives all your misdeeds, builds you into His family, and will ultimately bring in a new heaven and earth which is totally safe and free from decay and destruction!

But, you may ask, what should I do if I already have a rebellious teenager? Well, I suggest three things:

First, you should repent and ask God for forgiveness. Tell God that you are sorry that you have not been communicating these standards and principles to your child(ren).

Second, ask God for help for yourself, so that you yourself can first start to be a godly example and living witness of how life should be lived. Remember, it is no use telling your child to obey your instructions and come under your authority if you yourself are disobeying the authorities of the land and buying illegal tobacco or taking drugs, for example. Your teenager smells this hypocrisy a mile away, and won't respect you.

Third, begin praying for your teenager, asking God to open his/her eyes to the truth of how life should be lived.

May God richly reward all your efforts to put into practice His principles of living!

**“Believe in the Lord Jesus,
and you will be saved – you
and your household.”**

Acts 16:31

Managing Stress

(A summary from last month's Community Church Service)

1. **You need Jesus as your shepherd.** Let Jesus guide you, and don't try and take control yourself – we make so many mistakes!
2. **Stop doing what you know to be wrong, and start doing the right things.** So much stress in life occurs because we are doing what we know is wrong!
3. **Be gentle and humble, like Jesus.** When we react in violent outbursts of wrath, it's like a bomb that goes off, leaving so many lives in shattered pieces. How stressful!

Community Market Planning Day

Are you interested in helping establish or participating in a local market for our community in East Preston & East Reservoir??

What ideas do you have?

Find out more on **Saturday 24th April, 10am – 1pm**, at the **Community Health Centre** in Crevelli St.

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A ministry supported by Regent Baptist Church and LinC Northern Region

News & Events

You're invited to our next

CELEBRATION SUNDAY


a Community Church Service for everyone!!

Topic:

Conquering Anger



- **Sunday April 18th**
(the 3rd Sunday of the month)

- **5pm - 6.15pm**
(followed by supper!) 

- **Preston Nth East Primary School Hall**

Bring your whole family!

