

Shepherding A Child's Heart

Week 18: Shepherding Teens

Warm-up:

1. What are some of the unique challenges associated with raising teenagers?
2. What are some of the common pitfalls for parents during this time?
3. What are some of the challenges that teenagers are facing during this stage of their lives?

Main Idea:

There is a great deal of complexity to shepherding kids through the teen years. The kids themselves can be insecure and unstable, often influenced by a culture that is not easily quarantined. Parents are commonly fearful of the problems (actual and potential) during these years and can be unsure about how to proceed. Rather than disengaging and giving up on being a nurturing influence in the life of their teen, parents must see that the opportunity to shepherd is actually in the problems that arise.

Rather than living in fear and dread of the teen years, we must see them as years that are tailor-made for shepherding.

Video (notes below)

1. Common characteristics of teenagers

- a. Insecurity
- b. Vulnerability
- c. Instability
- d. Emotional instability
- e. Apprehension
- f. Tendency to rebel

2. Common pitfalls for parents

- a. Cops and robbers—parents always checking up on children
- b. Parents Disengage—give up on trying to influence their teenagers
- c. Authoritarianism versus influence
- d. Reckless words—derogatory, nasty words do great damage
- e. Majoring on the minors—focusing on matters of style and taste

3. Goals with our teenagers

- a. Internalization of the gospel
- b. Passing on the baton of faith
- c. Shepherding their interaction with the truth of God's word
 - i. Parents need to bring God's word to their kids all the time
 - ii. Apply God's truth to think through issues of culture
 - iii. Apply scripture to relationship struggles
- d. Shepherding teenagers through the inevitable periods of doubt
 - i. Teenagers *will* come to the point of wrestling with issues of faith
 - ii. Parents need to be ready for these periods
- e. Develop a relationship that leads to mutuality as adults under God

4. Three foundational things for interacting with teenagers

- a. The fear of the Lord
 - i. Proverbs 1:7—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."
 - ii. This is the first step in the path of wisdom
 - iii. The fear of God has been de-emphasized in modern evangelical culture
- b. Proverbs 1:9-10—Remember your parents' words.
- c. Disassociation from the wicked
 - i. Equip your teenagers to get out of places of danger
 - ii. Wicked people present evil as something attractive, and offer acceptance

5. Communication

- a. Communication with your teenagers is dictated by your parenting paradigm
 - i. If your paradigm is *control*, you will use harsh words
 - ii. If the paradigm is *nurture*, your language will be different
- b. Biblical communication has spiritual foundations that reflect a life of faith and confidence in God
 - i. Proverbs 15:33—The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom
 - ii. Proverbs 9:10—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom
 - iii. Proverbs 17:27—Wise people speak with restraint
 - 1. Shouting trivializes your words
 - 2. Avoid wordiness (see Ecclesiastes 6:11; Proverbs 17:28)
 - 3. Too many words make your words meaningless
 - 4. If you say too many words, you will say things that are unguarded
 - 5. Think first, speak second (see Proverbs 15:28, 29:20)
- c. Use pleasant words (Proverbs 16:20-24—Pleasant words promote instruction)
- d. Your goal is understanding
 - i. The finest art of communication is not the ability to express your thoughts; it is the ability to understand your kids (Session 7)
 - ii. Heed the warning of Proverbs 18:2—“The fool does not delight in understanding, but delights in airing his own opinions”
- e. Communication is what enables you to have a relationship with your teenagers that makes you an influence in their lives

Q&A / Reflection:

1. One of the three foundational things that Tripp identified in raising teens is to emphasize the Fear of the Lord (Prov 1:7)... Why does this need to be a primary concern for parents during this stage?
 - a. What are some things a parent can do to in order to impress the Fear of the Lord upon their teens? (
2. The second foundational emphasis is to impress upon your kids the need to remember parental instruction (Proverbs 1:8-9)... Why should this be an important emphasis during these years?
 - a. Practically speaking, what is necessary in order for parents to call their children to “remember their instruction”?
3. The third emphasis that Tripp identified was disassociation from the wicked (Proverbs 1:10). Why does this need to be a foundational emphasis during teen years?
 - a. In what contexts will teens be tempted to “associate with the wicked”?
 - i. Why will this be appealing and attractive?
 - ii. Why does this emphasis need to be connected to “The Fear of the Lord”?
4. The teen years are often marked by many mistakes and some outright rebellion... look at Galatians 6:1-2 as a model for how to engage your teen when they have sinned.
 - a. Caught – Restore – Gently – Watch – Carry
 - b. Do not add your sin to their sin
5. A parent’s job is, in large part, to prepare them to leave and be independent.
 - a. How does this help to determine our goals during these years?
 - b. Name some specific areas that parents need to be equipping their teens for: