



Lively Stones

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Holding forth the word of life

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Dear Readers,

In this issue, the Lively Stones concentrates on teen issues. We have an article on Parenting Teens as well as tell you more about the Young Teens Department in the Sunday School.

We often hear parents lamenting the difficulty of dealing with teens. Perhaps this is one of the toughest age group for any parents to handle. They are a group of youngsters searching for an identity and learning to assert their will even more. Some parents call it rebellion. How do adults bridge the gap with the teens? Let's read today's article and find an answer.

Today is also the Promotional Sunday of Young Teens Department. As you read the testimonies, may we encourage the teens around us to join in the study of God's Word.

JK

Parenting Teens Avoid Being Uncool

Having been a parent of a young adult and two teenagers, I have made many mistakes and had my fair share of conflicts. However by God's grace, the experience has also been an enjoyable and rewarding one. Parenting teens is a fine balancing act of care and control. It is not easy because teens live in an entirely different environment from us when we were teens so we cannot even rely on our own teenage experiences to guide us. Being an avid reader, I would like to share some pointers on raising teens.

The Perfect Parent – through the eyes of a teen

Teenagers respect parents who:

1. walk their talk and set good examples
2. are approachable and available
3. accept them and are non-judgemental
4. have an open mind and don't jump to conclusions
5. trustworthy and fair
6. show respect for their friends and their need for privacy

Do you measure up? We will explore the issues further.

1. Walking Your Talk

Teens will listen only if they respect you. They need a parent whose life is integrated and consistent with what he says he values that the teen would feel is worth emulating.

How do we do that? Parents need to live "spirit-controlled" lives and the only way is to constantly be prayerful and be led by the word of God. Actions speak louder than words!

2. Approachable and Available

Teens need parents to be their friend,

guide and mentor.

The only way is to keep communication lines open. Listen to them more than you talk. Avoid long lectures as they learn to shut you up. Mealtimes are a great way to build communication. Use the normal flow of conversation to discuss important issues. This is non-threatening and teens will speak more freely. Open communication with parents means that the teens will not hesitate to come to you if they have problems. Easy access to communication like SMS (short messaging services) enables them to talk to you even if you are not physically present.

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3. Accept Them

Accept your teenager as he is, not as what you want him to be.

Recognise that parents are not called to be lord of our teen's life, God is. He was not given to us to live out our

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Sunday School Promotion— Young Teens Department

Proverbs 22:15 says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."

This verse in Proverbs deals with Biblical discipline. Here we are told that all children have foolishness in their hearts. Many proverbs are dedicated to describing the characteristic of foolishness and the synonym that comes to mind with regard to this word is "rebel." All children have rebellion in them and there is a duty for parents to drive it from them. We are instructed to use the rod of correction as a means of so doing. In fact, it is the prerogative of the child, and especially the Christian child. To deny them this privilege is to rob them a God given right to be disciplined.

Closely related to the word discipline is the word discipleship. Every Christian must be a disciple. To deny a child the instruction from God's Word and opportunity for fellowship would be to diminish his capacity to be a disciple. Sunday School provides a most comely avenue of discipleship. And many, due to Sunday School, grow in Christ-likeness and find friends in Church. We ask all teens and all parents of teens not attending Sunday School to consider the importance of this spiritual discipline. Instruction and fellowship are important means of grace.

**Mark Chen
Superintendent
Young Teens Department**



Sec 4 Boys

The experience of attending Sunday School in Life Church for the past 5 years has been a really spiritually enriching one. The lessons taught have given me a better understanding of God's ultimate plan for us. This experience has allowed me to understand why God has allowed trials and tribulations to come our way. 1 Peter 1:6,7 says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Of course, we should not only have head knowledge but heart knowledge as well. Profound knowledge of the Scriptures without application would be meaningless. Therefore, by God's grace, I hope to live a life that is pleasing in his sight and to be a good testimony for Him.

Sunday School along with LTF and Youth Choir has helped me gain the maturity, in recent years, to apply the lessons I have learned more effectively than before in my daily walk with God. It is my desire to do that which is stated in Colossians 1:10 - "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Charles Leong



Sec 1 Combined Class A & B

Sunday School Promotion— Young Teens Department



Sec 4 Girls

I have always found Sunday school to be a key in the foundation that my faith has now been rooted upon. Although it seemed to become a chore at times, I have never failed to learn something new every lesson. For that, I have never regretted attending class week after week. There are just countless lessons that I have managed to take home and apply to my life; some from bible stories, while others from doctrinal studies of the Westminster Confessions of Faith. When faced with the struggles and trials of life, we are all put to the test and our faith will be tried. Personally, Sunday school has armed me with the knowledge and courage I need to tackle those obstacles from a biblical perspective. In addition, it has

given me the chance to grow and mature as a Christian along side my brothers and sisters in Christ. It is definitely comforting to have them share my burdens with me, and remind me always look to God. Indeed, Sunday school is an important part of the church culture, vital to each child's spiritual appetite.

Faith Seah

Sunday School has played an important role in my life. Firstly, it has taught me many precious and important lessons from the Bible. Through the past 6 years of my Sunday School life, my faith has definitely been strengthened and my Bible knowledge has increased tremendously. Each and every time I strayed away from the Lord, Sunday School never failed to put me back on the right track - be it through the lessons, friends, or teachers.

Secondly, Sunday School has helped me in my social life. I have built many friendships during the past few years. Now, I have friends to which I can turn whenever I face difficulties I cannot overcome by myself and when I am feeling down. These friends have brought much happiness into my life and has made going for Sunday School an even greater joy!

Thirdly, Sunday School has brought good role models into my life. My Sunday School teachers are always people whom I look up to very much and they have never let that "image" fade away. When friends cannot help me in my problems, it is the teachers that I turn to and they always give good effective advice. My Sunday School teachers never fail to encourage me to keep on running this spiritual race and being motivated every week really drives me on to stick close to God.

Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." I think Sunday School has accomplished this duty and I thank the Lord for giving me the opportunity to attend Sunday School.

Rebecca Tan



Sec 3 Combined Doctrine Class



Sec 2 Girls & Boys

Parenting Teens Avoid Being Uncool

(Continued from page 1)

unfulfilled desires or expectations. He needs to form an identity of his own and we have to recognize and appreciate his abilities and talents.

Recognise that the ultimate biblical goal of parenting is to let them go. They are meant to leave the home and cleave to their spouse. (Gen.2:24). How can we attain this goal?

- a. Train them to make decisions and solve their own problems.
Allow them to make as many decisions as possible over their own lives. Allow them to choose their own hobbies, style of clothes etc. when they are not in conflict with God's Word.
- b. Be supportive of their decisions, remembering it's their life and be ready to support them when they fail.
- c. Train them to take responsibility and account for their own actions. When they fail to make a wise decision – be loving and gracious. Do not be quick to say "I told you so!" This does not mean we have to "bail" them out whenever they suffer the consequences of a bad decision as the Lord uses some of these consequences to help our teens mature.
- d. On the converse, always praise their wise and mature decisions.
- e. Guide them and help them discern their gifts, talents and abilities. Do not set goals for them and then try to manipulate them to fulfill YOUR will.
- f. Correct their behaviour. Accepting your teen does not mean that we should not correct bad behaviour. Just as the Lord is pleased that we are His children, He is not always pleased with our behaviour. Correcting their behaviour involves :-
 - i) sharing your thoughts (based on Biblical principles) and feelings on the issue
 - ii) advising him of consequences and holding him accountable for his actions if he still insists on his own way

4. Have an open mind

Teens will question personal morality, values and the basic belief systems on which they were raised. When such issues are raised we should not condemn them for thinking their parents' beliefs are incorrect. Wise parents will encourage the questioning, give

answers in a non-authoritarian manner and encourage the teen to explore his ideas.

5. Be Trustworthy and Fair

Keep your promises and be consistent in your behaviour. Be consistent in your treatment of all your children.

6. Show respect for their friends and their need for privacy

- a. Keep whatever they tell you in confidence
- b. Problems with teens should be kept within the confines of the home unless the teen agrees to seek help outside.
- c. Do not criticize or correct them in front of their friends.
- d. Allow them a private space at home.

Nobody's Perfect

Parents and teens are sinners so parenting teens is a challenging experience for all. Our teens should also see that we are struggling with our own sin. I thank the Lord that He has seen me through the hard times and for blessing me with a happy family. I thank the Lord that He has provided a way where we can present all our problems to him in prayer and I thank the Lord for the greatest parenting guidebook of all – The Bible!

Tan Hui Tin

Announcements

Today is the Young Teens Department Promotional Sunday.

There will be NO Sunday School next Lord's Day 24th April, in view of the combined Worship Service and Annual Congregational Meeting.

The Editorial team welcomes contribution from the congregation. Please send contributions to kohjulia@starhub.net.sg. The editorial team reserves the right to edit any articles to be published.

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