

Age of Opportunity

Lesson 6

BIG IDEA: We need to become skilled at recognizing the DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY to lasting heart change.

RHETORICAL QUESTION: How well do you know your teen?

- Although teen behavior and perspectives are unpredictable in many respects, we do have some insight into both of them because we were **TEENS** once!

What were some of your fears as a teenager? What was your most embarrassing moment as a teen?

Biblical Characteristics of Teenagers (Book of Proverbs)

- **NO HUNGER FOR WISDOM AND CORRECTION (Prov. 1:20-33)**
 1. **GOOD QUESTIONS:** In what ways do I make **WISDOM** appealing to my teenager? In what ways do I make the **TASTE** of correction sweet?
 2. Practical Suggestions:
 - ☞ We can diffuse defensiveness by 1) **CLARIFYING** our actions, 2) by helping our teens examine their own spiritual **BLINDNESS**, and 3) by **CONFESSING** our sins against our teenagers
 - ☞ **PURSUE** your teenager
 - ☞ Make moments of wisdom and correction a **CONVERSATION** rather than a **LECTURE**.
- **TENDENCY TOWARD LITERALISM (Prov. 14:22, 21:21)**
 1. Godliness is humble, thankful **WORSHIP** that causes us to **DESIRE** what God says and to **DO** what God says.
 2. Teenagers tend to emphasize the **LETTER** of the law rather than the **SPIRIT** of the law.

Care to share any illustrations?

3. The danger is that “literalistic” parenting leads to human **SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and that ultimately leads our teenagers to deny the need for God’s **GRACE**.
4. Practical Suggestions:
 - ☞ Redirect **BOUNDARY** discussions
 - ☞ Continually focus on **HEART** issues
- **TENDENCY TO BE UNWISE IN THEIR CHOICE OF COMPANIONS (Prov. 13:20, 18:24, 27:6)**
 1. Friendships are very **IMPORTANT** to a teenager!

What are some ways teens respond to the concerns we might have about their friends?
 2. Practical Suggestions:
 - ☞ Approach a conversation about friends with **SENSITIVITY** and patient **LOVE**
 - ☞ Avoid **LABELING**, unwarranted **ACCUSATIONS**, judgments of **MOTIVES**, and **ASSUMPTIONS**
 - ☞ Ask good **QUESTIONS**
- **SUSCEPTIBILITY TO SEXUAL TEMPTATION (Prov. 7:6-27)**
 1. Get ready, your teen will **FALL IN LOVE** one day!
 2. “Growth in understanding God’s way of sexual **PURITY** is not something that can be accomplished in one **CONVERSATION**.” (Tripp, pg. 86)
 3. Practical Suggestions:
 - ☞ Don’t avoid the “**ELEPHANT** in the room”
 - ☞ View **ENTERTAINMENT** choices with your teen
 - ☞ Never make it easy for your teen to **FALL** in this area!
- **ABSENCE OF AN ESCHATOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (Prov. 21:5)**
 1. Most teens don’t think in terms of **DELAYED** gratification!

How does our culture subtly confine our perspective to the present, temporal “now” and rob us of an eternal perspective?
 2. Practical Suggestions:
 - ☞ Open a **SAVINGS** account for your teen (60-30-10)
 - ☞ Don’t buy **BIG-TICKET** items for them
 - ☞ **VOLUNTEER** for a church ministry