



DISCIPLESHIP STRATEGY FOR PARENTING TEENS



1. Assess the status of your relationship with your teen.

- a. How would your teen complete this sentence: "I know my parents love me because _____"
 - What evidence is there of a growing relationship?
 - If there is none, find out where it stopped and what was going on in the life of the household.
- b. The way we show love to our teen is _____.
 - What is the basis on which they have chosen this approach?
 - What verbal feedback re their love have they received from the teen?
- c. What is your view of how parents should relate to teens?

2. Present a godly model to your teen

- a. The impact of "imitation" in human growth and development is significant.
- b. God reacts severely to hypocrisy.
- c. Do you respect authority? Do you make sure your teen sees that you do this? Do you talk with your teen about why you respond as you do (obedience to God and His Word)
- d. Discuss as a couple the example you give to your teen.

3. Understand your own hearts

- a. What do you each personally value most? Do you value God's wisdom and righteousness more than anything else?
 - Do you value comfort in life more?
 - Do you value respect from your teen more?
 - Do you value appreciation or approval from your teen more?
 - Do you value success (in business, in a hobby, in the eyes of others) more?
 - Do you value control of your lives more?
- b. Are you willing to accept that your hearts are "deceitful above all things" (Jeremiah 17:9) and that you need God's Word to be sure you are pursuing His goals for you?

4. Understand the heart of your teen

- a. What does your teen value most? Does your teen value God's wisdom and righteousness more than anything else?
 - Does your teen value pleasure / comfort more?
 - Does your teen value peer's acceptance more?
 - Does your teen value money and material possessions more?
 - Does your teen value control more?

5. Teach the right way: Communicate God's expectations appropriately

- a. Do you understand the necessity of applying many ways to communicate wisdom to your teen? It is inadequate to use only one method!
 - Questions, examples, stories, lecture

- b. Do you understand the value of drawing out and understanding your teen's point of view?
- c. Implement the "put off/put on" dynamic in dealing with your teen's thought patterns, behavior patterns, emotional reactions, and values (Eph. 4:22-24).
 - Eg. Eph. 4:25-32 – lying, anger, stealing, unkind words
- d. Do you orchestrate "teachable moments", using vocabulary your teen understands?
 - Use humor, repetition, get their attention

6. Consequences

- a. Are you unified in your resolve to deal with the issue at hand?
- b. Are you unified in your assessment of its seriousness?
- c. Is there sufficient reason for the teen not to sin / be foolish? Note the difference between folly (sin) and childishness (inexperience).
- d. Do you understand what motivates (directs, energizes) the teens typical daily choices (friends, hobbies, approach to school)?
- e. Are you willing to find consequences that motivate your teen, and be consistent in implementing them even when it is inconvenient to do so?

7. Incentives

- a. A bribe is a form of manipulation. An incentive or reward/reinforcement is a learning tool.
- b. Tangible incentives include any prizes or rewards that can be seen. Intangible incentives include praise and positive publicity. .
- c. Do you see any role for incentives in parenting teens?
- d. Is there sufficient reason for your teen to pursue wisdom / righteousness?
- e. What kinds of incentives or reinforcements might be meaningful for your teen?
- f. Would you be willing to offer incentives that motivate your teen, and be consistent in offering them even when it is inconvenient to do so?