



THE PARENT UPDATE

West Side Youth Ministry

January 2016

Jake Greer

Hello WSYMers! I can't believe it is already mid-January! Things are moving fast this year already! This past weekend some of our juniors and seniors traveled down to Panama City, FL for Gulf Coast Getaway. The weekend was packed with powerful messages and classes centered on the collision of Heaven and Earth and what that means for us -- right hear, right now. It was also a great time for our upper-classmen to bond, share, think deep about their faith and consider their "next steps" after high school. I pray this weekend was a blessing in their life!

With the start of the new year means CHRISTeens is right around the corner! Be looking for announcements about workdays, video shoots, meeting times, etc. For now keep praying for CT16!



UPCOMING EVENTS

WSYM Super Bowl Party

Sunday, February 7, 2016 at 5:00 PM to Sunday, February 7, 2016 at 9:00 PM

In the Cornerstone. Pick a team and wear their colors! Prizes for Most Team Spirit and other games. Bring \$3 for pizza and a snack or dessert to share. Drinks provided!

CT16 T-Shirt Deadline

Monday, February 8, 2016 at 9:00 PM to Monday, February 8, 2016 at 9:00 PM

Sign-up sheet in the Cornerstone!

Teaching Your Kids About the Real Value of Money

Jim Burns

As parents, the sooner we begin teaching our kids about money, the better off they'll be in the future! The late Larry Burkett, the founder of Crown Financial Ministries, once gave some advice I've found helpful on what kids need to know, that I'd like to pass along to you.

1. Kids need to know that money is not the most important thing in life. A person's attitude toward finances is an indicator of his or her heart. Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also " (Matthew 6:21). Jesus taught that what we do with our money and our possessions is a direct reflection of what is in our hearts. Our kids' hearts will be found wherever their treasures have been buried.
2. Kids need to know about income. As soon as a child is ready for school he or she should begin to receive an income to manage. Whether that income is earned or given as an allowance is a decision that must be made by the parents. But whatever the choice, parents need to begin to instill within their children that boundaries must be placed on how money should be spent and that spending must not exceed income.
3. Kids need to know about budgeting. As soon as children begin to receive income, they should be taught how to divide that income into categories and to budget. The categories may be as simple as saving, spending, and giving. Encourage kids to budget and not to spend their entire income on personal desires just because they have it to spend.
4. Kids need to know about saving. Children should be encouraged to regularly save a portion of their incomes and to not deplete their savings when they want to buy something that they feel they need.
5. Kids need to know about debt. Parents need to teach their children the cost of borrowing and how difficult it is to get out of debt once they are in debt. They should be encouraged to stay out of debt and to purchase with cash whenever possible.
6. Kids need to know about tithing. Parents must instill within their children the necessity of tithing to the Lord and help them understand that the first part of any and all of their incomes should be tithed to the Lord—before personal purchases, savings, or recreation.
7. Kids need to know about generosity. In addition to tithing, parents need to encourage their children to set aside a certain amount of their incomes to help people in need, such as missions or special humanitarian projects or to purchase or give items for the benefit of others.

Still More Discussion Questions to Get Your Family Talking

Jim Liebelt

Parents often struggle to get more than one- or two-word responses from their kids, especially in families that don't talk much. It's no secret that good communication builds family relationships. But, when the rubber meets the road, how does a parent actually help to get more out of family talk-times? Here are a series of family discussion questions you might find helpful.

The Way I Am / The Way I Was...

In the following group of discussion questions, your kids will talk about the way things are right now in their lives, while parents will talk about the way things were when they were teenagers.

- Talk about what you like (liked) doing most when you are (were) hanging out with your friends.
- Talk about what the biggest fads are (were) in your school.
- Talk about what are (were) the "in" words and phrases students at your school use (used) and what they mean (meant.)
- Who are (were) your favorite music artists? Why?
- Describe your best friend. What are (were) they like? What makes (made) them tick? Why are (was) he/she your best friend?

Family Talk...

Here are more open-ended discussion questions to keep your family talking:

- Describe an embarrassing moment in your life that your family members don't know about.
- Talk about the time you remember being the sickest. What was worst about going through that time?
- What are three of the happiest memories you have from your life? What made them happy experiences?
- Talk about one thing you know you should do differently that would make your family work better.
- What is your biggest fear? Why?
- What do think is the most important thing in your life? Why?
- (For kids) What is one issue you wish your parents would discuss with you? Why?
- (For parents) What is one issue you wish your kids would discuss with you? Why?
- (For kids) What is one area in your life you wish you had more control over? Why?
- (For parents) What is one area in your son's/daughter's life you next plan to give them more control over? Why? What will this look like?

5 2016 New Year's Resolutions Your Family Can Live With

Jim Liebelt

It's reported that most Americans either never or only infrequently set New Year's resolutions and of those that do only a few are always successful in keeping them.

So, what if we take a more modest approach this year, setting the "resolutions" bar at a reasonable height? It just might make a difference. With the right attitude going in, the following five "just for today" resolutions can help to get your family's 2016 off to a positive start. These are resolutions that most everyone has a good shot of accomplishing - something that your family can live with. As you succeed, you might even end up incorporating some of them into your family life and identity.

Five Resolutions for 2016

#1: Just for today, I resolve to forgive someone. We routinely suffer minor offenses against us, so think of one and in your heart and soul, forgive the person who committed the offense. It's good for you to exercise the same forgiveness that God has demonstrated toward you. If it makes sense, tell the offending person that you forgive them.

#2: Just for today, I resolve to exercise. Today, do yourself and your family some good by getting some exercise. This can be as simple as going outside for a brisk walk. You don't have to go overboard here. In fact, if you haven't been getting regular exercise, don't go overboard! If at all possible, exercise by doing something you enjoy. If you find all exercise tedious, try listening to music, an audiobook, a radio broadcast or a podcast while exercising.

#3: Just for today, I resolve not to demand the last word. Many of us seek to have the last word...on everything! But today, just for today, when some non-life-or-death issue arises and you feel that pressure to provide the last word on the subject, decide not to do it. You might in fact be right about the issue at hand. Still, just defer. Just this once. It's likely that you'll find the world doesn't unravel immediately after all.

#4: Just for today, I resolve to say, "Please". The word "please" is an often overlooked common courtesy these days, and especially within the family. We can easily slip into taking our family members for granted, and so assume that others exist to serve us. So just for today, add the polite request to your vocabulary, whether at home, school, or work. It doesn't cost anything, and your action just might motivate others to do the same.

#5: Just for today, I resolve to make someone laugh. We all need to experience the gift of laughter, and the accompanying lightening of our hearts, from time to time. Your mission today is to make someone else laugh. Not known for your sense of humor? Find a (wholesome) joke that you like and share it with someone. The fact that you aren't known as a funny person will likely make the other person laugh even more.


10 Telltale Signs Your Teen May Be Depressed

Jim Burns

The teenage years are an emotional rollercoaster—I mean, in all honesty—which of us parents would willingly go back and relive our junior or high school years all over again?

The happy times for a teenager can be utterly sensational but the "down times" are very real as well. One national survey reported that many teens experience feelings of depression and sadness that often go untreated and that 9 out of 10 adolescents have periods of depression that last at least two weeks.

So, how is a parent to tell whether a teenager is depressed or just in a mood? Here are some questions to ask yourself:

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1. Is he or she always sad or in an irritable mood?
 2. Has he or she lost interest in something he or she previously enjoyed?
 3. Have you noticed a significant change in his or her eating patterns? (Has your son seemed to "lose" his appetite—or has your "figure-conscious" daughter become a "chow hound?")
 4. Is your former "early riser" now sleeping in considerably longer?
 5. Does he or she have trouble concentrating on projects that "never used to be a problem before?"
 6. Has your son or daughter recently begun expressing feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt?
 7. Do they fear death?
 8. Is your son or daughter experiencing excessive boredom?
 9. Is your son or daughter prone to sudden outbursts of shouting, complaining, unexplained irritability, or crying?
 10. Has your son or daughter recently begun complaining about frequent vague, unspecific physical ailments?

If anything on the list applies to your child, he or she may be dealing with depression. Seek professional help—and get it today!