

Raising Godly Teenagers

We've been going through a family series for most of the summer, and this message this morning will be the end of our family series. I've had the privilege of bring several messages about raising godly children. We started off with a child's responsibility to honor and obey their parents. Then we looked at the parent's great responsibility to both discipline and instruct children in the way of the Lord. This 4th message is entitled Raising Godly Teenagers.

It's been kind of a funny week, in preparing for this message, I've had a lot of people ask me, what are you preaching on Sunday or what are you working on? When I tell them the title of Raising Godly Teenagers, it's this blank stare of utter confusion in the looks of their faces. As I say those words, godly teenager, most of us assume that's an oxymoron, because you can't be godly if you're a teenager right? Godly and teenager doesn't go together because we assume the definition of teenager is sinful, rebellion, wild-living like that's what defines the teenage years. So when we think about can we really raise godly teenagers, do those 2 words even go together? I think the reason why so many people just assume that teenagers can't be godly is because we as a culture have accepted what I call the myth of adolescence.

You see we are very familiar with the term adolescence and we're very familiar with the term teenager, what some people define as temporary insanity between childhood and adulthood is those teenage years. But to us it's a very common term, of course there are teenagers, but if you were to go back 100 years you would not find the term adolescence or teenagers. It was a concept that was unknown from the dawn of human history all the way up until the 1900's. Here's how it worked, from birth to 12 you were a child and from 13 to death you were an adult. So that 12 to 13 age was the time when a girl would become a woman and a boy would become a man. But in the 1900's we decided, well our kids need more

time to grow up; they need a little bit more time to mature into adulthood so we're going to create this new category called adolescence. We're going to call it the teenage years. What we're saying is between 13 and 18 or 19, or really in our culture up to 30, we're going to give them this span where we really are not going to expect a lot of them. Because after all they're not really adults but they're not really kids anymore so what do we do with them? Well we know they like to play a lot of video games and go to a lot of movies and have a lot of fun so that's kind of what we're going to expect of them. We're really going to expect hardly anything of them and as parents here's going to be our model; you're just going to survive the teenage years. As parents we often get into that survival mode, man we're just going to get through it. My child is not really old enough, not mature enough to do big things for the kingdom of God so we're just going to try to survive. We're going to try to see that they graduate from high school, don't go to jail and if those 2 things happen, we did a good job as parents. I think we think this because we believe that teenagers can't really do big things for the kingdom of God because we've accepted this myth of adolescence, these teenage years.

What I want us to think about is, what does the bible say about youth, and what does the bible say about individuals between the ages of 13 and 19, what we call the teenage years? The bible actually speaks a lot about youth, for instance Paul as he writes to Timothy he says this, "let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." So here Paul is writing to Timothy and he's saying look, God is not writing you a hall pass so that you don't have to live for the glory of God, but God is saying no, even as a youth here's what I want you to do. I want you to set an example to the believers in living a life that is sold out for the glory of God. He tells Timothy in II Timothy 2:22, he says "flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart". So God says to teenagers, flee youthful passion! You see we just

expect them to indulge in youthful passions because it's the teenager years, but God says they should be living a life that glorifies God.

You see the Bible is full of youth kids that do big things for the glory of God. I remind you of David, David was a boy, David was a young man, he was a youth kid when he stood before Goliath when none of the other adult would, and he stood up because he had a heart for God. He knew who God was, he knew the God that he served and he was willing to do big things for the glory of God even as a youth. I remind you of Daniel who was captured in his youth and taken into a kingdom under a king. The king was tempting him to disobey God and to eat his food and become a Babylonian and Daniel said "I resolved in my heart that I would not disobey the Lord". Here's Daniel as a youth kid who had a heart for God. That was the thing that regulated everything he did, his heart for the Lord. I remind you of Jeremiah, do you remember when God called Jeremiah? Jeremiah said but Lord, I'm only a youth. I think for us when we look at our teenagers we think they're only a youth, we can't expect anything. Do you remember what God said to Jeremiah? He said don't say to me you're only a youth, and I love that! Here's Jeremiah, yeah God I know what I'm supposed to do, but I'm just a youth, like I'm not really required to do that am I? God says don't tell me you're only a youth, you're the image bearer of God. You have a heart that should be set on me; I've given you the power and the grace to do what I've called you to do, so I expect you to do great things for the glory of God, so don't tell me you're only a youth.

So this morning as we think about raising godly teenagers, here's what we first must do. We must raise the bar when we think about our teenagers. If you as a parent believe the teenage years are only wasted years, where you're kids can't do anything productive, you are going to set the bar right about here (holding hand low) and guess what? That's where your teenagers are going to reach. But if you really believe a biblical view on youth, that they can do big things for the glory of God, then you as a parent will set the bar here (holding hand high) and from my experience when we set the bar high for teenagers, you will be surprised at how they

will rise and meet our highest expectations. Man, teenagers can do so much for the glory of God. You see the teenage years is not the time to bury our head in the sand and simply survive, it is the time to parent with great purpose because as Paul Tripp says the teenage years is the age of great opportunity. The teenage years are the age when you as a parent get to be the teacher mentor of your teenagers to help them mature into godly young men and godly young women. You see the teenage years whether we like it or not, will be the launching pad into the rest of their life, so these years are so crucial for us as parents to parent with great purpose.

So I want us this morning to go to Proverbs chapter 1 and we're going to let Solomon through the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, give us some insight to parent teenagers. Proverbs chapter 1, here's what it says, "the proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction and wise dealing, in righteousness, justice and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion in youth ---let the wise hear and in and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Hear my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, Come let with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason; like Sheol let us swallow them alive, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse"—my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood." So I want us to use this proverb as a template for how we can raise godly teenagers.

If you notice in verse 4, Solomon here is writing to youths in general, so Proverbs and really the 1st 7 chapters is geared toward youth. And here's what Solomon wants to tell the youth, he wants to give them prudence to the simple, and knowledge and discretion to the youth. So he wants instead of them to be simple, he wants them to be prudent. Now what does that word prudent mean? It means intelligence that manifests itself in wise behavior. So he wants them to know, to have information so that they can act wisely, so they can behave wisely in a very foolish world. That word simple, it means to be apt to be deceived. Our teenagers for the most part are very apt to be deceived, what we as parents need to try to teach them is godly wisdom so that wouldn't be simple, but they would be prudent. They would have discretion, they would have knowledge, and they would know how to be wise in a very foolish world.

Now before we get into this particular proverb, before we walk through it, I want to just remind parents of what your primary role is, in this teenage process, what is your role? Here's what I really want you to grab this morning, that you are the teacher-mentor of your teenager. That is your role, you're to teach, but you're also to mentor. Proverbs 23:26 says this, "My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways. He says my son give me your heart, in other words, listen to me, respect me, honor me, let me grab your attention, give me your heart, give me your trust so that I can teach you, so that I can show you the way you should go. But not only let me teach you, also give me your eyes. In other words, look at me and watch me because what you're going to see in me is how you need to be as a follower of Jesus Christ. Now parents that's a big responsibility for us, so as parents, if your teenager was to really look and mimic your life, would that really lead them to be a follower of Jesus Christ? Would they be glorifying Jesus if they did the things you did? If not, 1st of all as a parent, you need to get your life straight, you need to be a person who follows after Jesus Christ, you can be the example for your teenager to look to. You can be that role model for them.

So how do we gain their heart? Solomon is saying give me your heart, so how as parents do we gain our teenagers hearts? I think there are 2 main ways that we do this, it's through love and acceptance. Number 1, we have to show them unconditional love, we have to love our teenagers for who they are. They are your son, they are your daughter, and you're not loving them based on what they do or on how good they perform. You're showing them unconditional love like God shows to you. You love your child unconditionally, they know that no matter what I do, you might not approve of it, but mom and dad love me. They always love me; they have unconditional love towards me. Then 2ndly there needs to be acceptance, and what I mean by acceptance is you need to accept differences. Sometimes our teenagers don't act the way we think they should act and they don't grow up the way we think they should grow up. For instance some of you dads think, my son is going to grow up to be the best baseball player that Marshall County has ever seen, but God's plan might be for him to be the best piano player that Marshall County has ever seen. For you as a dad that might be a difference you might not understand but that's ok. You need to accept him if he chooses piano over baseball, or moms if your daughter doesn't love to dance, that's ok. And they need to know that's ok because ultimately those aren't God issues, those aren't things that are moral or non-moral. We need to accept our kids for who they are, not for who we think they should be. They might not act just like you and that's ok, because God has created us differently. So accept how they are different, and you as you grab their hearts, you're going to be their teacher and their mentor.

So the next thing I want us to think about, now that you're seeing your role as a parent, you're the teacher-mentor, I want us to kind of understand our teenagers, what makes our teenagers tick, who are they? Paul Tripp gives 4 things about teenagers, number 1 he says this: teenagers are made for worship. You've got to understand this; your teenager is a worshipper, and guess what, so are you. You see our teenagers were made by God, for God. They were made to worship the

God of all creation. The truth is they will either worship God or they will worship something else. Your teenagers will worship something and the question is will they worship God, or will they worship an idol, will they worship something else? We've got to understand they were made for worship.

2ndly teenagers were made for community. They weren't made for isolation, they were put in community and what they are commanded to do is to love and serve others. But the temptation for a teenager will always be to love self and to serve self above everyone else. So we as parents must to guide them in that.

The 3rd thing we must understand is teenagers interpret the world. In other words they think, when something happens our teenagers are thinking why did that happen? What is going on? They are asking big questions. What we as parents must do is to help them to think biblically. You see your teenagers will interpret the world either through a biblical worldview or a non-biblical worldview. What we've got to help our teenagers in is to understand all of life through a biblical worldview.

The 4th thing is teenagers behave from the heart. In other words behavior is not just an outward thing, behavior is an inward thing. Jesus said from the mouth the heart speaks. It's from the heart all of life flows so as we parent, we must parent at our teen's hearts. It's not just behavior; the behavior is just the result of something going on in their heart. So as we've seen our role as the teacher-mentor, as we've understood a little bit more about our teenagers and what makes them tick, now how do we as parents, parent our teenagers?

Well, from Proverbs chapter 1 the writer Solomon tells our teenagers to do 3 things primarily. Number 1 is to fear, 2 is to hear, and number 3 is to steer. He tells them to fear the Lord, he tells them to hear from our parents their instruction and he tells them to steer away from evil influences. So as parents we've got to think through how can we help our teenagers do these 3 things?

So we'll start with number 1. It is helping our teenagers; it's leading our teenagers to a fear of the Lord. What the fear of the Lord means is it's really developing a heart for God; it's all about worshipping God above everything else. You see when the bible tells us to fear God, it doesn't mean to be scared of him or run away from him. That's not what the fear of the Lord is. The fear of the Lord is that we know Him, we see Him, we're in awe of Him, and we're in reverence of Him. Our affections begin to be drawn to Him, so instead of running away from God, we run to God. That's what the fear of the Lord does, it causes a sense of awe and wonder for God and we're drawn to Him and we want to obey Him and worship Him, that's what our teenagers must grasp. They must understand a proper fear of the Lord. Tom Constable is his commentary; he defines what really the fear of the Lord is. I want to read it to you and then I want us to unpack it. He says this, "fear includes not only a correct way of thinking about God, but also a correct relationship with Yahweh. It is an affectionate reverence that results in humbly bowing to the Father's Will. It is a desire not to sin against Him because His wrath is so awful and His love is so awesome."

That's what a fear of the Lord is; he says first the fear of the Lord starts with correct thinking. We know who God is, now how in the world will our teenagers know who God is? Primarily through us, it's primarily through you as parents teaching them who God is. If you look in the bible, all throughout the bible is parents continually telling their kids how great the Lord is, how faithful He is, what He's done in Israel's history. You can show what He's done in your personal history, what He's done in the family, how great He is, and use every opportunity in life as God moments to show them how great God is, to give them the correct information so that they know who God is. If our teenagers truly know and see who God is for who He really is, I believe they will be drawn to Him in worship because He truly is the great treasure of the universe. So they've got to have correct thinking and we as parents need to guide them in that thinking.

Then next we need to have a correct relationship with God and this is loving Him with all their hearts. I think primarily how they learn this is by

watching us. They watch us parents; do you love the Lord with all of your heart? Do you really love Him; do you really seek after Him? Do they see you love and seek after the Lord? So as they think correctly about God, they begin to relate correctly about God. The information leads to affirmation, and they begin to love Him, then those 2 things lead to correct living. They humbly then, bow to the will of the Father. As they see how great He is, as they begin to love Him, all of a sudden what God says really begins to matter. When He tells them not to do something, they obey it, not as a rule but as something that their Father has told them and they love their Father and they want to obey their Father. And correct living is done through correct motivation, and the motivation is God's awful wrath and His awesome love, both of those things working together. So when our teenagers get into a situation they understand God's awful wrath but also His awesome love! That yes He doesn't want me to do this, but not because He doesn't like me, but because He knows what's best for me. So in this situation I want to do what honors and please the Lord, because He knows best and He loves me like crazy and I love Him. So the fear of the Lord, it's all about getting your teenagers to worship God above all else, because ultimately what they fear, they will obey. Whatever they fear, they will obey, whatever their highest value is, that is what they will obey.

Here's how this works in your teenagers life, if your teenager fears being dumped by their boyfriend over the fear of the Lord, then your teenager daughter is going to be very likely to give into sexual immorality because they fear not giving into sexual immorality will cause them to lose this guy and they fear that more than they fear the Lord. It's in all areas of life, some of our teenagers fear popularity more than they fear the Lord so they give into temptation and they try to do all of these things to please people versus pleasing the Lord because ultimately they fear self, they fear others, they fear man, they fear their reputation. They walk in fear of all of these things so they obey all of these things and what our teenagers need to understand is a proper fear of the Lord. All of these other things bow down to King Jesus, popularity, relationships, activities, they all bow down

to King Jesus. So when King Jesus says something, they obey Him rather than whatever it is because they fear, and love Him over everything else. So as parents we must guide our teenager's heart toward the Lord. We must continually guide their hearts to the Lord, and also away from all of the idols that can grip their affections so that they cannot worship the Lord. So as parents we lead them to a fear of the Lord.

And then 2ndly, the writer of Proverbs says for them to hear their parent's teaching. He says son listen to me. If you look through Proverbs 1 through 7, it opens up with the Proverb writer Solomon saying listen to me, hear me, obey my commandment, I'm telling you good things, you need to grasp what I'm saying. In the 2nd thing, here's what parents must do, we must instruct and teach teenagers in the way they should go. You see parents have been given the great task of teaching and instructing teenagers. It's parents who must show them the correct thing to do and also show them when they do the wrong thing. It's parents who are walking them through life showing them this is what you should do; this is what you should not do. It's parents being that teacher-mentor in a teenager's life. So how does a parent do this? Well the 1st thing, I think there are 4 things you must do in order to really teach your teenager in this area. Number 1 you must enter into their world, you must enter their world. And I want you to think when we talk about entering into their world, here's the big word, time. Parents you must spend time with your teenagers. If you're going to be the teacher-mentor, you must spend time with your teenager. You see we live in a society that tells us that teenagers don't want to hang out with their parents; parents don't want to hang out with their teenagers, so we really shouldn't spend any time together. For most of us our homes are more like hotels, in that we run in and get a shower, go to sleep and then run throughout our day. We are extremely busy and the only conversations that parents and teenagers have is, hey what time's your game, I'll see you in the morning. We don't really have those times where we're sitting down and instructing, we're teaching, we're having those good conversations, we're asking good questions, we're being

good listeners and we're taking the temperatures of their hearts, and we're hearing what they're saying and what they're struggling with. You see as a parent we must enter into their world, you must show them that you value them and you want to spend time with them. Even if your teenager doesn't want to spend time with you, spend time with them, love them, show them that you care about them and I promise they will begin to value your time with them. This is one of the things my parents did exceptionally well with me and my sister, they spent so much time with us. I can't tell you the lessons that I learned driving in a motor home across the country and just spending time with my mom and as things would come up she would give me godly insight, it was just by walking in life, she would teach me. I can't tell you the things I learned from my dad by working alongside of him as he taught me how to become a man. Through the camping trips and family vacations, and all of life, my parents entered into our world, they saw the things we were struggling with and they were our biggest allies, our companions, they walked beside us, they led us through life. They were constant teachers to us, so parents you must spend time with your teenagers. They don't need their friends all of the time, their friends are not going to teach them anything, you are going to teach them everything. So you've got to spend time with your teenagers.

Number 2 you've got to interpret for them their world. You've got to help them think biblically, as we said teenagers interpret. Something happens, their interpreting through a worldview and here's one of your roles. You've got to help them see the world through gospel glasses. You've got to constantly be putting forth the themes of the bible, like grace, redemption, forgiveness, and reconciliation and defeating sin and living in the new life of Christ. You see they're going to see that the world is broken and bad things happen. You've got to help them interpret through a biblical worldview. Yes the world is broken but it's not because God is not good, it's because we are not good. But here's what happened, God entered into our world, and He is fixing it, He is redeeming it, so God is good and we should pursue Him because outside of His blessings is where destruction

happens. So as issues come up, guess what? You're kids are going to have all kinds of struggles; they're going to have all kinds of depressing moments and it's your responsibility to interpret the information and the struggles they're going through so they can show them how it fits into the gospel of Christ so they can interpret and think correctly about their situations.

Then 3rdly, you must help them develop biblical convictions. You're helping your teenagers develop real conviction. You see you don't want them just to act because you said to them do this and you've said to not do this. You want them to develop biblical convictions so they can make decisions based on the bible. So you're helping them to begin to detect sin in their life. And this is through speaking the truth in love, it's to revealing issues that have come up in their life; this is to show them, hey there's sin in your life. You're not condemning their sin; you're helping show them their sin so you can lead them to repentance. So you're helping them to detect sin in their life but you also want to help them hate the sin in their life. So it's not just to detect sin, it's to hate sin, it's to get them to see sin the way God sees it. So that's what you do as you begin to help them form biblical convictions because you want them to walk through life and when they're faced with a decision, they know how to respond based on convictions that you have helped them develop. Parents this means letting them make decisions. This is the time we've got to start letting them out, like in the **Parent's Authority** triangle that we talked about, we've got to start letting them make some decisions, even if they make the wrong decision and fall. We can't at this age make all of the decisions for them, we've got to prepare them to think on their own, and we've got to prepare them to walk through how to make a correct decision.

Then 4thly, we've got to prepare them to leave our home and to start their own home. This is one thing that I think as parents sometimes we neglect. I think it's one of the biggest needs in our teenager's life. You see we don't want to think about them leaving home, we don't want to think about 18; we don't want for them to think about high school graduation because it

means we're going to have to let them go. Because we don't want to think about it, we deny it and what happens is we come to graduation and we kind of just passively let them go. What I want you to think about as parent is not how can I passively let my teenager go into the world, but how can I launch them out into the world as a fully functioning adult who follows Jesus Christ with all of their heart? So you as a parent right now have to be thinking, if you're a mom and you have a daughter whose 13, 14, 16, 17, how am I going to see to it that my daughter becomes a biblical woman and if Lord willing a biblical wife? That's got to be in your focus all of the time during the teenage years. Guess who's going to teach her to be a biblical woman? You are, but it's got to be spending time with her, you showing her the things you're doing. Who's going to teach her to be a biblical wife mom? You are, so it's got to be you calling her to your side as you're cooking a meal, as you're going to the grocery, as you're doing the things that you've done all of her life, you're beginning to transfer those things over to her, so that when she's 16 you begin to transfer those things over to her. You send her to the store with a credit card with a list and she buys the groceries and comes home and fixes the meal for the family. You're preparing her for one day when she's 18 and gets into an apartment she's not saying, "What do I do now? How do I fix a meal, how do I wash my clothes, and what do I do"? Moms, that's your job right now to train her and show her the things she needs to do. Dads, as you focus on your sons, here's your responsibility right now, how do I turn my son into a biblical man? That's going to be done through you. You showing him how to be a biblical man, this is you showing him the value of work, this is you teaching your son to mow the yard, you teaching your son to weed eat, you teaching your son to weed the flower bed, you teaching your son to wire up a light, you teaching your son how to change a fuse, how to change the oil, how to do all of those things that he's going to need to know when he gets into adulthood, when he gets his own home. I remember once there was a college guy who came to my house and he borrowed my push mower. He pushed it all the way down to his house and he was in college, I think he was about 22 years old. About 30 minutes

later he came back to my house with the push mower and he says, "How do you start it?" I was thinking what? How do you not know how to start a push mower? Dad's there are many, many boys who when they graduate high school, they still don't know how to do anything because we as dads have failed in raising them to be godly men and ultimately godly husbands. Fathers how is your son going to know how to love his wife unless you teach him, you tell him, you show him daily how you love his mom, so that when he gets to the age where he's ready to take on his wife, he's ready to do it? Not because he's read a book but because he's seen you, he's seen you and you've taught him. Dad you're the mentor of your sons. Dads in this crucial opportunity of the teen years, you should have your right arm around your son a lot of times. He should be with you in your truck a lot of times, he should be walking with you in your house a lot of times, and you should be a lot of times teaching him how he needs to be a biblical man. Moms this is the time for you to have your arms around your daughters and you're teaching them how to become a biblical woman and ultimately a biblical wife. Who's going to teach them? It should be you, so this is a great time for us to prepare them to launch out into the world and to replicate what they've seen in your home and to take it into their own home.

The teenage years are not about you just giving your kids a fun environment. That's what I think some of us think, well I just need to make my kid happy so I'm going to give them all of the stuff and I'm going to give them all of the opportunities to be happy. What happens is, we turn 18 or 19 and we don't know how to do anything because all we've known is to be happy and to be entertained. This is the time for training because it's the launching pad into the rest of our lives.

The 3rd thing we as parents need to do is to steer them. Parents we must protect our teenagers against evil influence. Parents we must be the protector. I want to say this to you parents, you can't keep your teenagers from sin but you can do your best at keeping sin away from your teenagers. You can't keep your teenagers away from sin, but you can do

your best at keeping sin away from your teenagers. Here's what I mean, your teenager is going to be exposed to sin, they're going to see ungodly influence, and they're going to be exposed to sin. You can't keep your teenager if they want to go out and pursue sin, you can't hold their hand 24-7, you can't keep them from going after sin, but you do have some control at keeping sin away from your teenager. Here's where as parents we've got to be the protectors of our children, we've got to set boundaries. We've got to think ok, how is my teenage boy going to be tempted? How is my teenage girl going to be tempted and how can I as a parent put a hedge of protection so that temptation has limited access to my teenage son, or my teenage daughter in this period where they are maturing and developing a heart for God? How do I do that? How do I put that hedge of protection? If you look at Proverbs chapter 1-7, it gives all kinds of pitfalls that teenagers face. I'll just speak of one briefly because we're almost out of time. One of the ones that Solomon speaks about in chapters 5, 6 and 7 is sexual immorality. Parents if you have a teenager, that is going to be the biggest temptation in their life at this point. We live in a culture that celebrates sexually immorality, everywhere we look sexual immorality is glamorized and your kids are going to be exposed to that. Here's what I want you to think through as a parent, how can I protect my son and my daughter in every way that I can? How can I protect him, how can I protect his heart? How can I protect my daughter, how can I protect her purity? I want you to think this through with your wife and with your husband, and think how can I do this? One of the great strongholds that is taking most of our teenage boys is pornography. They tell us that the revenue for pornography is more than the revenue for all of the major sporting events combined. Baseball, football, basketball, soccer, you take all of the revenue combined, and the pornography industry is making more money than all of it. They tell us that the most viewers of especially internet pornography are between the ages of 13 and 17. That's the group that's consuming the most, so as a parent I'm hoping you're alarmed. I'm hoping that your jaw has dropped and now it's time to think ok, how can I protect my son and my daughter from this thing that is taking so many of

our men and even so many of your young ladies? How can we protect? I want to offer just a few suggestions. One would be the internet; it's got to be safeguarded. If you've have internet in your house it's got to be safeguarded, it's got to be in a place that's public like the living room. It's got to have pass codes and protection. If your son or daughter has internet access in their room, I'm begging you to remove it. I know what you're thinking, yeah but my son or daughter would never do that. I want to remind you of a guy named David, he was a guy after God's own heart, and he was a guy who wrote a great majority of the Bible. Now if you have a son that God says his heart is after Him, and he's wrote most of the Bible, then I'll say maybe he's better than David, but I don't think we could say any of our kids rank up there with David, or wrote the Bible. We know in one moment he saw something inappropriate and it took his life on a course it shouldn't have gone. Don't think your sons are great enough to handle this temptation. We as dads must stand and protect, we must put ourselves in harm's way so that we can protect our kids from ungodly influences. Cell phones...man if, I know I'm not going to be a popular youth pastor, I'll just go ahead and throw that out there, but if your son or daughter have a cell phone with internet access, they've got with the click of a button every image they could ever want to see. You do not know how many teenage guys have come into my office and said I've got this i-pad, or i-phone, or i-pod and I can't stop looking at pornography. It's right there, it's instant access and our sons and daughters are not strong enough to face some of these temptations. So how as parents are we going to protect and guard our children, our teenagers when yes they can still get to sin, but how can we keep sin from getting to them? How are we going to have monitoring systems on some of the things that they're doing so that we can see to it that we're doing a good job as parents in protecting the purity in the eyes of our teenagers so that ultimately they walk in the way of the Lord and they're not susceptible to all kinds of sin? I just spoke briefly about this because we're out of time, I have a lot more to say about this, but here's what I want to say to you as a parent, how can I protect my son or my daughter? How can I protect them against not only

sexual immorality, but all of the sin out there, how can I do my best for them? Ultimately it's not just removing everything from them, it's through teaching them. Do you know what Solomon did for his sons? He didn't just tell them that lust was bad; he taught them that sex inside of marriage was good, so they should wait for that. Read through Proverbs 5, 6, and 7 and think about how can we teach our kids biblical sexuality where they see that it's a good gift from God and so they flee from the lie that Satan is telling to so many of our teenagers? So as we've see from Proverbs 1, how are we going to parent our teenager? We've got to lead them to a fear of the Lord, we've got to teach and instruct them so they hear from us, they know the right way to go and then we've got to steer them away from ungodly influence. We've got to protect them against evil temptations, and that's what the Proverbs writer says. He says "my son if sinners entice you do not consent, do not go towards them, do not go down the way, but turn away from those things." Parents I know the teenage years are tough, I know they're hard but I want you to raise the bar a little bit. I don't want us to accept the cultural mode that teenage equals rebellion, it doesn't have to. Teenage years can be ages of great opportunity where you as the mentor-teacher, teach your son to become a man and your daughter to become a woman who loves the Lord with all of their heart. So parents it is a great age of opportunity and yes we're not perfect parents and none of our teenagers are going to be perfect but guess what? God is perfect and He gives grace to those of us who aren't perfect so that we can, under His Holy Spirit, truly lead our sons and daughters to become the men and women that God has intended them to be. I want to pray for you guys, I want to pray especially for parents of teenagers and parents of those who are going to be teenagers. I pray that we would grab onto the Bible and parent well, because the teenage years are years of great opportunity, they're not years for despair, they're not years for survival, their years for us to teach the next generation how they can know the Lord.