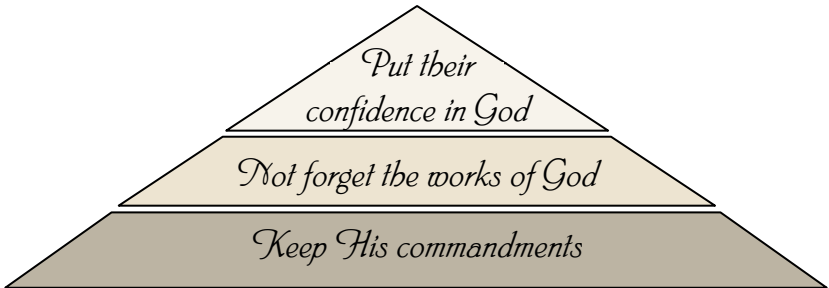




Nurturing Our Teens' *Confidence in God*

by Virginia Arnold



That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children, that they should put their confidence in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.

~ Psalm 78:6-7

Foundations for Nurturing Our Teens' Confidence in God



Question: *How can I train my child to keep God's commandments?*

Give him a Biblical understanding of himself.

(Rom. 3:10,11,23; Jer. 17:9; Eccl. 9:3; Eph. 2:1-7)

1. Teach him that he is a sinner and under the penalty of death without Christ
2. Teach him through the use of the rod and reproof that he cannot keep the law of God and needs a Savior to deliver him from his sin.
3. Teach him through the use of reproof and exhortation that he will need to continue to submit his will to God's will and that he will remain in the battle with his sinful flesh until he is glorified.



Question: How can I train my child so that he will not forget the works of God?

Give him a Biblical understanding of God.

(Gen. 18:19; Deut. 4:9-10; 6:6-7; 11:19; ch. 32)

1. Provide nonverbal teaching by giving him a consistent model of God's character and attributes: love, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, kindness, holiness, faithfulness.
2. Provide verbal teaching. Use spontaneous and planned teaching to help him know God, and understand His attributes. Give Bible instruction with Scripture memorization, and provide Biblical interpretation of daily events.

God's Directives to Parents in Scripture

(Prov. 22:15, Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 23:13-14; 29:15;
II Tim. 3:16, Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)

Paul writes to Timothy in II Timothy 3:1, 14a:

But realize this that in the last days . . . men will be lovers of self . . . they will not make further progress for their folly will be obvious to all. Now you followed my teaching conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance . . . you, however, continue in the things you have learned . . .

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them."

*Means by which parents can nurture
young people's confidence in God.*

- A. Example of Israelites who recounted the works of God before their children (Exodus chapters 10-13):
1. Instruction during the Exodus
 - a. Observed on site by their children (10:2)
 - b. Memorialized for generations for the sake of future children (12:13-14; 17; 24)

- c. Initiated children's inquiries (12:24-27)
- 2. Instruction of children during the crossing of the Jordan (Joshua 4:6 and Joshua 4:21-24)
- B. Examples of works of God that we can acknowledge before our children:
 - 1. Identify God's faithfulness through Biblical history
 - 2. Identify God's faithfulness to those in past history
 - a. Reformers who persevered during the reformation
 - b. Pilgrims who founded our country
 - c. Present day Godly people who are sacrificially making righteous choices
 - 3. Identify God's faithfulness in the small and great events of their lives.

Godly young people display a confidence in God when they are driven by a righteous purpose outside of their own self-interests.

Example: David (I Samuel, chapters 16–18)

- A. David's qualities described (16:18)
- B. David's response to siblings and peers (17:26)
- C. David's persistence when challenged (17:30-31)
- D. David's perseverance when challenged by a superior (17:36-37)
- E. David's response to the enemy of God (17:46-47)

Godly young people display a confidence in God when they can spontaneously recognize and recount the faithful works of God in their own lives and in the lives of others.

- A. David is described as being one "prudent in speech" (16:18)
- B. David communicated with music (16:23)
- C. David communicated God's faithfulness to assure Saul (17:36-37)
"The Lord who delivered me . . . he will deliver me."
- D. David communicated as leader in Israel (18:5)
- E. David was used by God to pen the Psalms which continue to communicate the works of God.



Biblical Principles for Nurturing Our Teens' Confidence In God

1. Highly esteem the Word of God, the work of God, and the servants of God before your teens. Prioritize the activities that you allow them to be involved in by choosing things that are eternal over things that are temporal. Don't allow too many "good things" to replace the "best things" (Luke 10:38-42).
2. Talk with your teen as a fellow believer. Ask him what the Lord is teaching him through His Word. Listen to him. Share what God is teaching you. Commend him for every measure of progress in his spiritual walk. Ask him to share the Scriptures or Scripture principles that the Lord has given when he is making important decisions (Heb. 3:13, I Pet. 3:15). Encourage him to *keep his heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life* (Prov. 4:23).
3. Encourage your son to diligently prepare to be a man of God that is both "blameless" and "adequately equipped for every good work" (Examples: Timothy in I Tim 3; II Tim 3:17; David in I Samuel 16:18). Urge him to keep his thoughts and actions pure before God and to make a "covenant with his eyes" (Job 31:1; II Tim. 2:22). Encourage much father/son interaction. Regularly assure your son that you are praying that he will have purity of mind and behavior.
4. Encourage your daughter to have "a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Pet. 3:4-6). Commend her when she is willing to dress and behave modestly and resist any likeness to the "strange woman" that is described in Proverbs 7. Regularly assure her of your prayers for her in the area of purity (I Tim. 2:9-10, I Pet. 3:3).
5. Encourage and commend every effort your teen makes to walk with God and study God's Word. Commend him when he chooses to exalt the Lord's name with his energies and gifts rather than focusing on his own needs and desires. Encourage him to avoid cliques among his friends. Urge him to instead befriend the lost, the lowly, and the needy. *God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble* (I Pet. 5:5; Phil. 2, Matt. 20:27- 28).