

terms of job performance. Sadly, our society rarely stresses the importance of family relationships when defining a successful life. But we need to. We must come to a position where we say, "Nothing that I will ever be or do will rival the importance of God's work in the formation of my children's souls. Nothing is more important than that. That demands some hard choices.

When I speak in churches, I often single out the men and challenge, "Some of you are so busy in your careers that you're seldom home, and when you are, you are so physically exhausted that you have nothing to offer your children. You don't even know your own kids. I offer a radical challenge to you. Go to your boss and ask for a demotion. Take less pay. Move out of that dream house and into a smaller one. Sell your brand new car and drive an older one. Be willing to do what God has called you to do in the life of your children." In a culture with twoincome families, increasingly that challenge must also be made to women who also sacrifice family for career.

I made that appeal at one home-school conference and it angered a man in the crowd, although I didn't know it at the time. Two years later he came over to me during a conference break. As he got closer, he began to weep. He said, "Two years ago I heard you give the challenge you just gave tonight and I got angry.

I thought, What right do you have to say that? But I was haunted by your words. I thought, He's speaking about me. My whole life is away from the home and I don't know my own kids.

I finally went to my boss one morning and said, "I want to talk to you about my position." My boss said, "Look, we've advanced you as much and as fast as we can." And I said, "No, no, just hear me, I want a demotion." The boss looked startled. He asked, "What are you talking about?" I said, "The most important thing in my life is not this job. The most important thing is that God has given me five children. I'm His instrument in forming their souls. But right now, I don't even know my own kids." The boss said, "I've never heard this kind of conversation before and I'll probably never hear it again. I'm very moved. We'll find you a position where you can work forty hours a week.

You can punch in and punch out and have less responsibility. But I'm not going to be able to pay you enough." I said, "That's fine." We sold the house of our dreams, got rid of two luxury cars and bought a mini-van. It's been two years now, and not one of my kids has come to me and said "Dad, I wish we lived in a big house," or "Dad, I wish we had new cars." But over and over again they have come and said, "Dad, we've been having so much fun with you.

It's great to have you around." Now, for the first time, I can say I know exactly where my children are. I know their hearts. I know what I need to be doing in their lives. I'm actually being a father." There are obviously many other crucial attitudes, but I'd start with "make parenting a priority."



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Teens

What sort of attitudes and approach should parents have when dealing with their teens?

First, define "a successful life" in terms of family relationships, not career. The modern workplace has devalued the importance of family relationships. This trend began with the industrial revolution. Two hundred years ago, when industry was cottage-based, if the family was in crisis, the shop shut down to settle the problem because the family ran the business.

But when you remove men from the home and relocate the place of work, all of a sudden industry begins to dictate lifestyle. What man today would call his boss and say, "I'm going to be two hours late because I'm sorting out a difficult problem in our home and it needs to be dealt with now." Instead, you say to your wife, "I can't talk about that now because I have to be on-time for work." As work and family life became separate, men began to define success in terms of their performance on the job rather than on their success in the home. Now women also define success in





Our Home

The Key Way of Parenting Teens

We will consider the parenting of teens from two angles:

1. Common _____ in parenting teens, Proverbs 22:6, 12:18

◆ _____,
(1 Corinthians 13:7) "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."
(1 Corinthians 13:7) "It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." [paraphrase]



◆ _____,
(2 Corinthians 9:8) "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work."
(2 Timothy 3:16-17) "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, {17} that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
(Romans 15:13) "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

◆ _____, Proverbs 22:6
(Ephesians 6:4) "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

◆ _____, Proverbs 12:18



◆ _____,
(Mark 12:29-30) ".. "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. {30} 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment."
(Matthew 6:33) ""But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

2. Best _____ for parenting teens, Prov 20:5, 15:23, 18:13

◆ _____,
(Romans 12:13) ".. given to hospitality."
(Hebrews 13:2) "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels."

◆ _____, Proverbs 20:5, 15:23



(Romans 12:9) "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good."
(Ezekiel 34:15-16) ""I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord GOD. {16} "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick;""
(Hebrews 3:13) "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness." [paraphrase]

◆ _____,
(Deuteronomy 6:4-7) ""Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! {5} "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. {6} "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. {7} "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

◆ _____,
(1 Thessalonians 5:17) "pray without ceasing,"

◆ _____, Proverbs 18:13

