

What the World Is Trying to Steal From Your Teen

Raising teenagers is tough. Any parent can tell you that. Their emotions are volatile. Their passions change almost daily. And they often lack the strength to keep their commitments.

The challenges are real, but is there a way to navigate through them to bring fruit—relationally, socially and spiritually?

There are no easy answers, but this key truth can help guide us—and them—into greater partnership with God's grace. And that, more than anything, is success.

What teens lack most is confidence. They have earnestness and zeal, but not the wisdom and strength to follow through. Their desire and passion gets easily overwhelmed by their array of choices. Add in some peer pressure, and they can get off track quickly.

As parents, we can bless our teens with the gift of confidence, starting with confidence in their destiny.

Confidence in their Destiny

Teens desire greatness. They are drawn to it, pursue it, and are not content without a measure of it. Trying to avoid a life of dullness and insignificance, they search for new things, test boundaries, and, at times, rebel against the status quo.

What lies behind this behavior is a heart that very well could change the world—but confidence, maturity, and reliance on grace is needed.

Take Moses, for example. After growing up in Pharaoh's house,

he observed the plight of his people, the Jews. He killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew, but that resulted in him fleeing for his life (Ex. 2:11–15).

Moses looked like a failure, and probably felt like one. He had desired to liberate his people, but now he was in the wilderness.

But Moses was born to be a liberator, and in the right time, God called him into his destiny (Ex. 3).

Our teens will undoubtedly face many obstacles, including some from their own foolish or immature decisions. In these setbacks, we can give them confidence that they are in the midst of a growth process and that their destiny still awaits.

Keep Trying

Rarely do our first attempts at greatness succeed. Most people, both in Scripture and throughout history, have a past littered with failed attempts before they experience breakthrough. In retrospect, not trying is the only thing that could have stopped them.

Some teens need confidence to take risks because they fear failure. Our culture feeds into this, but teens need confidence that what looks like failure can be a step toward their destiny.

As parents, we can share from our experiences to give them confidence to keep reaching. As we build our own relationship with God, we will be better positioned to steward our teenagers into looking to God the Father as the ultimate source of both identity and destiny. The world cannot take away what it does not give. Confidence as of a chosen son or daughter of the Most High God will give both them and us a perspective for navigating what do not need to be troubling years.

Fascinate, our high school conference, is a great place for individual teens and entire youth groups to grow their identity in God and find their calling in life. Learn more about Fascinate »

How can you help your teen encounter God? {eoa}

*A Detroit native who was raised in Vermont and Connecticut, **Adam Wittenberg** worked as a newspaper journalist until 2012, when he moved to Kansas City to complete the Intro to IHOPKC internship. Afterwards, he earned a four-year certificate in House of Prayer Leadership from IHOPU and is now on full-time staff in the marketing department at the International House of Prayer Kansas City. Adam is also active in evangelism and has a vision to reach people everywhere with the good news of Jesus Christ*