

Group/Individual Study

Series - Love Does: Love advocates for Teenagers

Passages: Luke 2:41-52, 1 Samuel 17, Luke 15:11-32

REFLECT on the message heard on Sunday, 5/20

1. Many people comment that it's harder to raise kids now than ever before? They also say that the world is a much more difficult place for kids to grow up in and make good choices in than when we were growing up. What are some of the reasons for this?
2. When you think about it, the teenage years are inherently challenging for both parents and kids. During these years kids transition from a world where parents make all decisions for them -- to a stage of life where they make all decisions for themselves. It's confusing for both sides. What challenges does this put on kids? What challenges does this put on parents?
3. Read Luke 2:41-52. This whole incident was very upsetting to Jesus' parents -- and yet they also grew in their understanding of who their child was and what He was about (v.51 "But his mother treasured all these things in her heart"). As parents we try to shape our kids in ways that are good for them. At the same time we also "discover our kids" as we watch their God-given personality, strengths, and weaknesses come out. What do you see in this passage that informs the nature of the teenage years?
4. Take a look at David's experience in 1 Samuel 17. David as a teenager illustrates how teens not only can make us pull our hair out, but they can also amaze us, going far beyond what we have taught them or built into them. When has a teenager amazed you in a positive sense?
5. Read Luke 15:11-32. What principles do you see in this passage that may help adults who love teens and emerging adults? Is there a prodigal in your life who you are waiting for?
6. There's a principle recently discovered in youth ministry that says, "If a child has 5 believing adults (beyond their own parents) who are meaningfully part of their lives, the odds of that kid sticking with the faith increase dramatically." Have you ever seen this play out? For what teenager can you be one of these 5 key relationships?