

REBELLION IN TODAY'S YOUTH

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"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" I Sam. 15:23.

The problem of rebellion is not a new one. Throughout the generations of man, his offspring have struggled to grow up to adulthood. Our present generation has more urging to turn away from proven values than any before. We oldsters instead of shaking our heads need to find out what is going on with today's kids. The future of our families and even our nation depends on our youth finding purpose and Godly fulfillment in place of rebellion. .

We need to consider **THE NORMAL GROWTH PROCESS**. Small children seem to be willing to leave the decisions and problems of living to their parents. As they mature however, they start to do things for themselves. Hormonal changes, body growth, the flesh, and the desire to be accepted all surround the budding youth. Some days they want to be treated as an adult and others they slip back into sheltered child patterns of behavior. Paul remembered, *"when I was a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things"* I Cor. 13:11. We too must understand these changes, remembering our own younger days and with patience help our youngsters to adulthood. Stormy days will pass as we keep our course set by the compass of God's Word.

One huge cause of youth rebellion is **PARENT INCONSISTENCY**. *"Take heed to thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and*

them that hear thee" I Tim. 4:16. Rebellion among church young people is often caused by parents who fight in business meetings, leave churches over the least little thing, and gossip about the preacher. Your children spot quickly the difference between church pretense and home reality. Most teens revolt inwardly to being held to high ideals when they are not seen in their own parents. We Christian parents must seek to be like Abraham about whom God said, *"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord"* Gen. 18:19. Children from unsaved families have to contend with all the parent vices, adult

excesses, ridicule of the good, and pressure to learn the evil. Parents have the choice of molding their children for success or by bad example allowing a path of failure. Any Christian school or church cannot take the place of the Godly example your children will follow if they see your true walk with God. Remember, consistency is the key, example is the pattern, and prayerful instruction is the tool. Challenge your children like Jehu, *"Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord"* II Kings 10:16. It works!

The seeds of much rebellion are sown when we allow our family and children to feed on the **GARBAGE OF TODAY'S ENTERTAINMENT**. The tiny, brief spiritual voice of home training cannot withstand the blast of worldly brainwashing. Hours of TV viewing with all the profanity, immoral teaching, powerful commercials and ridicule of the right will roll right over a once a week church attendance. You want your sons and daughters to be virgins and yet sit together enjoying all the filthy programming. You allow them to buy and listen to rock and roll by the hour and videos which counteract the little

spiritual impact you offer. If one lays out in the sun long enough a painful burn will result. Movies, TV, VCR, evil books and magazines all cause injury to the moral skin of our youth. We must lead them to *"Hate the evil and love the good"* Amos 5:15. Start early and practice eternal vigilance to counteract the forces that sow rebellion in their hearts.

Another source of rebellion is called **"PEER PRESSURE"**. This has nothing to do with a boat bumping against the dock. Yet there is similarity, for our teens want to be "moored" with others their age. A Godly Christian will never be fully accepted by the world. Many adults are not willing to make this sacrifice to walk fully with God. Plenty of worldly adults are not willing to pay the price of a deeply different life than others around them. Yet we expect our growing kids to happily accept a life that is totally different from their friends with whom they spend most of their time. I John 2:15 commands, *"love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."* Every believer hears that sooner or later, but it takes self- crucifixion, humility and deep love for the Saviour, to maintain. Hair, clothes, music, morals, friends, and pleasures can all be battlegrounds for youthful skirmishes. The laughter and ridicule of friends exerts strong pressure against the need for Godly living. Yet parents are urged to *"train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it"* Prov. 22:6. Deut. 12:30 instructs *"Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them."* That is really good advice. Young people must learn not to be *"conformed to this world"* Rom. 12:2. Remember, dear young person, *"If sinners entice thee, consent thou not"* Prov. 1:10. Severe rebellion can result if you allow your children access to the wrong kind of companions. The sins of lying, stealing, disrespect, drugs, smoking, drinking, homosexuality, fornication and many other

forms of rebellion can be learned in close association with others. Repeated visits to the worldly homes of parents who do not hold to Bible standards can hurt. Here they learn from evil music, uncontrolled TV and by watching the family relationships there. They often experiment in things that must be covered up which adds to tensions when they come home. One must be very careful in dating days. Many a Christian home has been put into turmoil when daughter falls in love with a questionable young man or your son finds his angel in the devil's camp. You must start early to get them to see they can't run with a skunk and smell like a rose. Psalm 119:63 instructs *"To be a companion of all them that fear thee and of them that keep thy precepts."* We cannot expect our children to be hermits but we can provide the best possible friends that will lift them rather than tear them down. We need to win the lost but not be so attached in close fellowship that we lose our credibility for God. Remember God warns *"be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"* II Cor. 6:14. Dating and marriage is serious business. Whom to date is crucial and final marriage must be between two who are unquestionably born again.

Rebellion is also present **WHEN OUR CHILDREN FAIL TO DEVELOP SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT**. They must be taught from early years to *"Obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing unto the Lord"* Col. 3:20. The whole teen population is addicted to the idea of doing their own thing. The Bible clearly teaches that a growing child must conform to the rules and maturing values of their parents. Ephesians 6:1-4 teaches *"obey your parents"*, "honor thy father & mother", and promises good health and long life in return for obedience. The Bible requires unswerving conformity to the leadership of parents. Sometimes they are frustrated and their reaction is not the best, but

the Bible is on their side. The very things youth rebel against will one day have to be accepted and taught to children of their own. Biblical instructions are clear, *"My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother"* Prov. 1:8. Sooner or later all of youth will have to grow up and become the leaders of tomorrow. Growing up is far from easy, but *"it is good for a man that he bear the yoke of his youth"* Lam. 3:27. Lack of surrender and self discipline are also factors leading to rebellion. Some of the most disgruntled teens are to be found in Christian high schools. Many complain of rules and grudgingly attend classes while acting like prisoners serving a twelve year sentence. God's Word commands, *"obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves"* Heb. 13:17. Careful study of Romans 12:1 calls for a total surrender of our lives because of all He has done for us. Surrendered youth will, like Daniel, purpose in their heart not to defile themselves and try to live holy lives that are acceptable in God's sight. Really fall in love with Christ and the cross we bear will seem lighter. In the military ones basic training is tough, but lessons well learned will qualify for later leadership. We too have marching orders. *"Obey my voice and walk in all the ways I have commanded you"* Jer. 7:23. Our commander-in-chief expects unswerving obedience. We must not offer less after all He has done for us.

The best counterattack against rebellion is in the realm of the spiritual. Parents who care will take time to *"provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord"* Eph. 6:4. I have found when the heart is right then the life will be obedient and not rebellious. Parents must do everything possible to bathe growing children in spiritual things. Don't fail to maintain a daily family altar where problems can be countered and future paths of victory

can be charted. Since rebellion can be a learned trait we parents must deal with it in our own hearts. If not, our children will pick it up and perfect its techniques to our mutual sorrow. Decency and love require that each believer give his life without rebellion to the dear one who gave His all for us. Deut. 10:12 sums up this chapter. *"What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul."*

When you are finished please share this with a teen!

Yours Perhaps.....Thanks!