

Saving the Souls of Our Sons and Daughters

(Lesson six continued; compiled by Paul R. Blake from material by Jeff Asher)

Introduction:

A. Last week:

1. We need Jesus to save us from our sins; we learned:
 - a. That He is the only Savior
 - b. That we must come to Him His way
 - c. That it is a sin to refuse to obey the Gospel
2. We need Jesus as our intercessor; we learned
 - a. That no Christian is perfect regardless of age
 - b. That Jesus continues to save us

B. This week:

III. WE NEED JESUS AS A GUIDING EXAMPLE

- A. God has always known that there is great power in examples
 1. 1Cor. 10:6, 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1Thes. 1:6; 1Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7; Heb. 13:7
- B. Jesus is the perfect example from Whom we can learn to live.
 1. Resisting temptation - Matt. 4:1-11
 2. Bearing with suffering - Matt. 26:39
 3. Willingness to forgive - 1Peter 2:21-22; Luke 23:34
 4. When making moral choices, we should ask, "What did Jesus do?"

IV. WE NEED JESUS TO GIVE MEANING TO LIFE

- A. Many people are dissatisfied with life and living; in abandoning God and the faith they have separated themselves from their purpose in life
 1. Clothes, cars, the latest electronic devices, partying and having fun, relationships and romances all seem tedious and empty, and do not make life fulfilling. Chasing the next high from whatever
 2. "They have everything in this life and nothing to live for." - Ecc. 1:14
 3. Jesus gives meaning and purpose to life and makes it fulfilling.
 - a. We are here because we were created by God. He has a purpose for us.
 - b. Gifted with free will, we can choose to bring our lives into subjection to Christ or rebellion against God
 - c. 2Cor. 5:10-11; Ecc. 12:13-14
 4. Jesus fills the void in our lives - Matt. 5:6; John 4:13-14, 6:35

V. WE NEED JESUS FOR DAILY STRENGTH

- A. Some things in this life are extremely difficult to face alone: drugs, alcohol, abuse, pornography, et al; but, no problem is too big for Jesus
 1. Phil. 4:13; 2Tim. 4:16-17
- C. God is our refuge in trouble - Psalm 56:3-4, 46:1-2; 1Peter 5:6-7

VI. WE NEED JESUS FOR VICTORY OVER DEATH

- A. Fear of dying is a universal human experience - Heb. 2:14-15

1. Death is the most difficult event anyone will ever be called on to face.
 2. Without Jesus, it is a senseless, bitter end to the human experience.
- B. Jesus brought life and immortality through the Gospel - 2Tim. 1:10
 C. There will be a resurrection - John 11:25
 D. There is hope for Christians - John 14:1-3; 1Peter 1:3-5

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON SEVEN:

- A. Ecc. 12:1 - Solomon speaks of the moral advantage of the young
1. Today's youth are unfairly characterized
 2. It is true that there are some young people who go out of their way to be crude and obnoxious.
 3. "Our youths love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority. They show disrespect for their elders and love to chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the subjects of their households. They no longer rise when their elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, babble before company, gobble up food, and tyrannize their teachers." (Socrates in about 400 BC)
- B. The Bible speaks favorably of youth
1. Youth is a time for great service to God - Ecc. 12:1
 2. Youth is the experience that provides a foundation for life - Eph. 6:1-4
 3. The most important decisions are made in our youth - Prov. 2:10-20
 4. Youth has potential for spiritual greatness - 1Tim. 4:12; 1John 2:13
 5. Youth is intended to be a happy time - Ecc. 11:9-10
- C. The Bible presents examples of young people that pleased God
1. The Bible gives a balanced and fair representation of young people.
 2. The Bible shows us that there were good and bad, wise and foolish, moral and immoral youths.
 3. Young people who have chosen to please God and excelled at it: Joseph, Samuel, Esther, Daniel, Ruth, Jeremiah, Josiah, and Mary
 4. You can do the same; begin by obeying the Gospel, and continue to live a reverent, devoted life

I. THE YOUNG ARE OFTEN MORE SPIRITUALLY MINDED THAN THE AGED

- A. Results of A Study: What Teenagers Look for in a Church. The Barna Group researchers asked 2,409 teenagers aged 13 to 18 why they would attend a worship service at a church or temple. Here is what they said:

Reason:	Very Important	Total Importance
to worship or make a connection with God	45%	66%
to understand better what I believe	42	71
to spend time with close friends	34	63
to get encouraged and inspired	34	62
to volunteer to help others	30	65
to learn more about prayer	26	55
to listen to religious teaching	26	54
to participate in a discussion regarding	23	51

to be mentored spiritual development	21	49
to discover the traditions of my religious faith	20	53
to participate in a study class about faith	19	46
to participate in a study of sacred Scripture	18	36

(Source: The Barna Group, Ltd. YouthPollSM 2005)

The top fifteen things that teenagers ask about when given the chance to do so anonymously:

1. How do I know what God's will is for me?
2. What's wrong with rock/country/rap music? How can you tell what music is good and what is bad?
3. What do you do if you have parents/siblings who are living the wrong way? (one way in church, another way at home, dad on the internet) How do you avoid wrong influences when you live with them?
4. How do you take a stand with your friends/what do you do when you have a friend that is becoming rebellious?
5. How do you separate from bad friends without hurting them or making them think you're stuck up? How can I be a witness to my friends and still be accepted?
6. What's dangerous or wrong with being physical before marriage?
7. Why is it so hard to be consistent in the Christian life as a teenager?
8. What is appropriate and modest clothing for a Christian and why?
9. What's wrong with my parents' separation or divorce?
10. How do you get over/deal with a broken relationship (dating & friendships)?
11. Why does God allow trials/temptations to come into our lives?
12. What does having a relationship/walk with God really mean?
13. Should I consider going to a religious college and why?
14. In dealing with authority, how can I explain things or make a point without sounding argumentative or disrespectful? Why do authority figures sometimes assume they know what you are thinking?
15. How do I deal with people and problems in my life that have hurt me deeply?

These questions reveal a lot of real life issues and a strong desire to know "why" or "how." As adults, we ignore this list to our own detriment. This is what our young adults are seeking to understand. This is what has them tied up in knots. This is what holds them back spiritually, emotionally, etc. Thankfully, God's Word has answers to every issue, and it's up to us to apply His truth and make it come alive.

Conclusion:

A. Psalm 119:9; Jer. 29:11