

Good Biblical News For Modern Teenagers

'Let no one despise your youth but live to be an example to those who believe, in word, in your way of life, in love, in spirit, in faith and in purity' (1 Timothy 4:12).

'Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as a father and treat the younger men as brothers. Consider the elder women as mothers and the younger women as sisters, in all purity' (1 Timothy 5:1 & 2).

'Exhort the younger men to be sober minded in all things, showing yourselves as examples of good works and showing integrity in your teaching, seriousness about God and incorruptibility. Let your speech be sound so it cannot be condemned, so those who oppose you may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say about us' (Titus 2:6 to 8).

'You younger ones, be subject to the elder believers. Yes, all of you gird yourselves with humility, subject yourselves to one another for, "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God so He may exalt you in due time. Cast all your concerns on Him ... Be sober and self-controlled' (1 Peter 5:5 to 8).

'I write to you children because you know the Father ... I have written to you young men because you are strong in the Word of God and you have overcome the evil one. Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the Father's love is not in them, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not the Father's but is the world's. This world is passing away with all its lusts but those who do the will of God live forever. Young people, these are the end times and as you have heard, the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen and by this we know, this is the final hour' (1 John 2:13 to 18).

There are many pre-teens, teenagers and people in their early twenties who are deeply dedicated to the Lord and serve Him with all their hearts. Sadly, there are those who attend church but they love their lives, disregard the full Gospel and succumb to the temptations of illicit sex, alcohol, drugs and those things can lead to self-pity and depression. Many young people feel the world owes them and they become furious when life does not go their way. Political correctness has brought about a generation of young people with no concept of how to overcome life's difficulties; the kind of difficulties their parents and grandparents had to overcome in their lives. This modern, Western world has given us a generation of spoiled young people who may fail because a deep sense of narcissism has pervaded their lives. Here are a few hints for life in this difficult world. These hints for the younger generation will never be taught in high school, Sunday school and probably not from their parents either because they are politically very incorrect but very relevant for today.

Hint # 1. Life is unfair so get used to it. You cannot always have your own way. Running away is not the answer because one day you might be forced to return to the problems and work through them. Life is very tough for the 'runner' and many end up having to return to their parents for help which would be so humiliating like it was for the Prodigal Son. Prodigal means – recklessly wasteful, extravagant or lavish; a wanderer who returns home. 'When he (the 'runner') had spent all of his inheritance, there arose a severe famine in that country and he began to be in need. He went and applied for a job and he was sent to a farm to feed pigs. He wanted to fill his belly with the husks the pigs ate, but no one gave him any. When he finally woke up to himself he said, "My father's many employees have bread enough to spare, and I'm dying with hunger! I will get up and go to my father and will tell him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I am not worthy to be called your son. Consider me one of your employees'" (Luke 15:14 to 19). We are all told to honour and obey our parents for that pleases the Lord and so all may be well with our lives (Deuteronomy 5:16; Ephesians 6:1). If we do not honour and obey our parents, all will not be well with our lives.

Hint # 2. If you want life to work for you, work at it or stay poor. 'We command you this: 'If anyone will not work, neither let them eat. We hear of some who walk among you in rebellion, who do not work at all but are lazy busybodies. Those who are that way, we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus, with quietness, to go to work and eat their own bread' (2 Thessalonians 3:10 to 12).

Hint # 3. If you think your teachers are too tough, wait until you have an employer who will demand your best, make you work hard and expect you to accept a small wage. If you complain, you just might be told to 'go your way' meaning you could lose your job. 'When the workers received their wages, they murmured against the Boss saying, "These latest workers have worked just one hour, and you have given them equal pay to us who have borne the burden of the whole day and the scorching heat!" But the Boss answered them, "Listen, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree to work with me for \$50? Take what is yours and go your way'" (Matthew 20:11 to 14).

Hint # 4. The world out there does not care about your personal self-esteem. You will be expected to actually accomplish something before you have the right to feel 'good about yourself'. 'Be diligent in all things and give yourself wholly to them so your progress may then be revealed to all' (1 Timothy 4:15).

Hint # 5. You will not become wealthy just weeks after completing your education and you will not be a manager of a fast food giant until you have worked hard, proven yourself and earned the position. Making pizzas or hamburgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents considered such jobs as an opportunity. When a person wants to take every opportunity, their enthusiasm is obvious. Trying to gain finance unjustly is wrong and that sin cannot be hidden. 'There are good works that are obvious and those that are wrong cannot be hidden' (1 Timothy 5:25). 'One who hates ill-gotten or unjust gain will have a long life' (Proverbs 28:16).

Hint # 6. If you mess your life up with dope, drugs, booze, teenage pregnancy or crime, do not blame your parents, your teachers or your school. Blame yourself for making those foolish decisions and learn from your mistakes. Do not be like Adam and Eve. 'Adam said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit and I ate it." The Lord God said to Eve, "What is this you have done?" Eve replied, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate" (Genesis 3:12 & 13). Adam blamed God for giving him Eve, then he blamed Eve for giving him the fruit. Eve blamed the serpent for deceiving and enticing her. Many Christians today blame the devil for their own sins and like Adam and Eve, do not want to take responsibility for their own actions. Smoking, booze, drugs, crime and illicit sex will destroy your life so for your own sake, it is better not to touch them. Listen to your teachers and parents. Look at the results of these things and how they may have destroyed the lives of young people you may know. These things may cause you to spend time in prison. They might ruin your chances at a good life, or they might cause a terrible, slow, agonising death later in life. Either way, you will one day regret taking up such things. They will destroy you. If you sow destruction into your life, you will reap destruction to your life. 'Those who sow to their own flesh will from the flesh reap destruction' (Galatians 6:8). 'You will groan at your latter end when your flesh and your body are consumed and say, "How I hated instruction and my heart despised reproof. I disobeyed the voice of my teachers and turned my ear from those who instructed me! Now I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of society" (Proverbs 5:11 to 14).

Hint # 7. Your school may have done away with all competitions but life has not. In some schools, failing exams is not an issue and the teachers will give you as many chances as you need to find the correct answer. That attitude bears no resemblance to anything you will find in real life. Our earthly teachers are not perfect but it pays to listen to their instruction and accept their tuition. In this text, 'seeing your teachers' and 'hearing their voice' means you will be able to use the education and advice they have given you long after you have left school. 'Though the Lord may give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will not be hidden anymore. Your eyes will see your teachers and when you turn to the right hand or to the left, your ears will hear a 'voice' behind you saying, "This is the way. Walk in it"' (Isaiah 30:20).

Hint # 8. When you were young, your parents were not the boring, stifling people you as teenagers, may think they are now. They got that way by raising you! They paid your bills, washed your clothes, listened to you talk about how 'cool' you think you are, so before you snub your nose at them or roll your eyes, try cleaning your own room, wiping the dishes, mowing the lawn and getting a job to help pay your own bills. Regarding your parents with disdain is to dishonour and disrespect them. God hates the way people roll their eyes. He calls it 'a haughty look' (Proverbs 6:16 & 17). A bad attitude towards our parents is pride and arrogance, called a haughty spirit. 'Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall' (Proverbs 16:18). Remember what Jesus said, 'Honour your parents. Those who speak evil about their parents should be put to death' (Matthew 15:4). 'Give respect to whom respect is due; give honour to whom honour is due' (Romans 13:7).

Hint # 9. Before you attempt to save the whales and rain forests, remember the whales and forests were around long before your parents were born and will be there long after you are gone from this planet so you will make little difference to the overall plan of God, so you may as well do something more worthwhile that will bring eternal rewards. God wants people to serve Him and keep His commandments (John 14:15). He is more interested in our working with Him to save the souls of people (James 5:20), rather than saving animals and trees. That does not mean we are permitted to destroy our little part of the earth, but living our lives to serve God, to help save unsaved people and to help the poor and needy (Psalm 72:12) are way more important to God than trees are. We are to be fishers of men (Mark 1:17), meaning we are to look for people with whom we can share the Gospel and lead into the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:15). He wants us to live holy and Godly lives (1 Peter 1:16). God's final plan for this planet is to destroy the earth and everything on it with fire because it has been corrupted by sin and death. Once Judgement Day is completed and all humanity is removed from earth and the sea, this world will be utterly burned up and destroyed (Revelation 20:13).

Everything will be burned as though it was placed in a furnace. Jesus said heaven and earth will 'pass away' meaning it will be completely destroyed (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33). 'The heavens and the earth, created by the same spoken word have been stored up for fire, being reserved for the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men ... The day of the Lord will come as suddenly as a thief in the night. The heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements (sun, moon, planets, comets etc) will be dissolved with fervent heat. The earth and everything in it will be burned up. All these things will be destroyed like this, so what kind of people ought you to be in holy living and Godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of the Lord, which will cause the burning heavens to be dissolved and the elements will melt with fervent heat?' (2 Peter 3:7, 10 to 12).

Hint # 10. Real life is not divided into school holiday breaks. You will not get summer holidays off work and you might find yourself working hard all year with only two weeks off at the end of the year. In real life, sleeping in till midday and feeling too lazy to get up for work is not an option. 'How long will you sleep, you sluggard? When will you arise out of your sleep?' (Proverbs 6:9). 'He who is lazy becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent brings wealth' (Proverbs 10:4).

Hint # 11. Employers are not interested in helping you 'find yourself', they want you to do the job allocated to you. You will have to 'find yourself' in your own time. 'Servants (employees), be obedient to those who are your masters (employers) with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as though you are obeying Jesus, not serving only when eyes are on you but as servants of Jesus, doing the will of God from the heart with good will, doing service as to the Lord and not to men' (Ephesians 6:5 to 7). 'Those who have believing employers, do not despise them because they are your brothers, but rather serve them because those who partake of the benefit (of fellowship) are believing and beloved' (1 Timothy 6:2).

Hint # 12. Be kind to all people. You never know whom you might end up working with or even working for. 'Treat people exactly as you would like people to treat you. If you only love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even wicked sinners love those who love them. If you only do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you give to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners give to sinners. So, love your enemies and do good. Give, expecting nothing back and your reward in heaven will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for He is kind toward unthankful and evil people' (Luke 6:31 to 35). 'Employees, be in subjection to your own employers and be well-pleasing in all things, not contradicting or arguing, not stealing from him but showing honesty so you may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things' (Titus 2:9 & 10). 'Servants (employees), be in subjection to your masters (bosses) with all respect, not only to the good and gentle employer, but also to the wicked' (1 Peter 2:18).

Hint # 13. Soap operas and movies are not real life. In real life, people have to actually go to work. Movies and television are fantasy no matter how long the series has been running and how well you think you know the characters. They are just characters. If you look at their real lives you might see they are flawed human beings, not the perfect role models they are portrayed on the screen. Movies, soap operas and science fiction are just that – fiction. Singers are living a fantasy stage life. If we look at their lives we will see they are all persona, shallow and without substance. The One and Only true Role Model we have is Jesus. He is real. He was not stage-managed. He was not acting. Everything He did and said was real, true and from God the Father (John 8:28). 'We did not follow cunningly devised fables, (fantasy, fiction) when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty' (2 Peter 1:16).

Hint # 14. Be thankful for all things. 'Let the peace of God rule in your hearts ... and be thankful. Let the Words of Jesus dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord. Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him' (Colossians 3:15 to 17). If you are able to read this Bible study, thank your teachers. If your life is peaceful, thank a police officer. If you are able to read English, thank the armed forces. If you have heating in winter and cool air in summer, thank a miner. If you have life, thank your parents. If you are saved, thank the Jews, for our salvation came from the Jews (John 4:22). For every other thing you have in life, thank the Lord and be grateful. 'In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Jesus for you' (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Amen and God bless you.

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