

PARENT UPDATE

coming alongside your family

Ignite Student Ministry

Parent Newsletter April 2015

Garrett LeVault

Happy Spring! This April we are really looking forward to starting a brand new teaching series on James! This chapter by chapter study will take us through the end of the school year. We also have CIY Believe coming up for Middle School students and it is not too late to register! Get ahold of Garrett ASAP!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Easter: No Group

On 04/05/15 from 6:00PM to 8:00PM

Stay home with your family and celebrate Easter together!

CIY Believe

On 04/24/15 at 4:30PM to 04/25/15 at 9:00PM

Believe is weekend conference specifically designed for Middle School students. This will be the most impactful event we go to this year! Don't miss out! Visit chmac.org/believe for more info!

Five Things Your Kids Need to Know About Forgiveness

By Jim Liebelt

As adults, we know that forgiving someone who has hurt us can be extremely difficult. Kids are no different. They struggle with forgiveness too. Yet God calls us to forgive others, as a way of life; forgiving others just as He has forgiven us. Parents are key to the process of teaching kids about what forgiveness means and looks like.

Modeling forgiveness for your kids is an important place to start. You can be sure that your kids are watching you to see how you handle situations when you are hurt—and when you hurt others. What messages are you sending your kids about forgiveness?

Additionally, your kids need to know that forgiveness is more than saying the words, “I forgive you.” Here are five things your kids need to know about forgiveness:

1. Forgiveness means letting go of real hurts inflicted by others. We like to say, “forgive and forget.” But while the “forget” part sounds nice, forgiving does not primarily mean forgetting. It means letting go of the past hurt that someone has inflicted on you. Forgiveness does not make the offense against you okay, but it transfers the weight of dealing with the offense from you to God.
2. God forgives unconditionally. 1 John 1:9 reads, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins...” Notice it doesn’t read, “If we confess our sins, get our act together, and never sin again, He will forgive our sins.” God forgives completely through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. His offer to forgive extends to everyone, every sin, every time.
3. God makes the first move toward us in forgiving. God doesn’t wait around until we are sorry. Romans 5:8 reads, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Now that’s good news!
4. God wants us to forgive others just as He has forgiven us. God freely grants us forgiveness through Jesus Christ—and we are to follow God’s example and extend forgiveness to others. Colossians 3:13 reads, “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”
5. Forgiveness is a choice. God commands us to forgive. Forgiveness is an act of the will. We can choose to forgive. When we do, we leave the past behind, choose not to be bitter, give up seeking revenge, allow God to deal with the offender, and do our best to let go of the pain and consequences of the hurt we’ve suffered.

Think Before You Speak

By Doug Fields

It's not breaking news that some parents can be quite nasty to their children. Parenting includes the responsibility to verbally reprimand kids. Sometimes, something needs to be said. But how we as parents speak to our kids is important!

No parent is above making occasional snarky remarks to their kids. I've done it. You've done it. We all fall short. It's just that some parents develop a pattern for regularly criticizing their kids.

Constant criticism from parents can do a lot of long-term damage to a child's self-image and the confidence they need to become a functioning, responsible adult. A sharp remark or rebuke may feel good. It may even succeed in delivering your point – in the short-term. But frankly, criticism is a lousy long-term parenting strategy, and it will never deliver the positive results you seek in your kids.

The bottom line is that when you make critical remarks to your kids, you don't win! You wound your kids and create relational distance between them and you. So here's an important key to successful communication and healthy relationships between you and your kids:

Don't say everything you think, and think before you speak.

Of course, this is easier said than done. Still, it's an entirely biblical principle! "Watch your words and hold your tongue; you'll save yourself a lot of grief." —Proverbs 21:23 [MSG]

When your child triggers an emotion in you and you want to react with a verbal dagger...don't.

When your child injures your pride and you want to say something that will be a zinger comeback and put him or her in his or her place...don't.

When your child exhausts your patience and a strong verbal reaction will make you feel better...don't.

Words are always powerful. But misguided words hurt, and they hurt deeply. According to the Scripture, "The words of the reckless pierce like swords..." —Proverbs 12:18a. Using reckless words is like stabbing another with a sword. In almost every instance, it's best to keep the sword in its scabbard.

A home filled with constant criticism is a breeding ground for rebellion and negativity. So when your child has pushed your buttons and your emotions are running hot, save the hurtful comment. Give yourself a timeout to cool off. Consider the issue that needs to be addressed. Think about what you need to say before you say it. Then, make an appropriate and constructive comment. For most of us, thinking before we speak is a learned skill, not a natural talent. So keep practicing, and along the line you'll find yourself thinking more and criticizing less.

An Introduction to Generation Z (aka: your teen)

By HomeWord.com

When you think of today's teens you might assume that they all belong to the Millennial generation. But while Millennials will continue to influence culture for decades to come, if you are now raising teens, it's likely that they belong to Generation Z, a new and emerging generation of teenagers.

Even though research into Gen Z is in its infancy, two things are consistently agreed upon by students of culture: 1) Gen Z teens are now on the scene, and 2) they, like all previous generations, will carve out their own unique characteristics and have their own distinctive values, attitudes and behaviors.

Researchers have started turning the lens of examination on Gen Z. One recent study by Northeastern University compiled information obtained from surveys of over 1,000 teens 16-19, and this study may be one of the first to attempt to build our understanding of this new generation.

Here are some characteristics of today's teens that were obtained through the study:

- Today's teens are concerned about the costs of going to college and the debt that is often part of the college experience.
- Two in three fear they might not be able to find a job after college.
- Four in ten expect to be self-employed during their adult career.
- More than half believe that anyone should have a right to become a U.S. citizen no matter how they enter the country.
- Half receive their news online. Only two in ten get news from watching television.
- While technology is simply a part of everyday life for teens, two in three (69%) prefer to interact with friends in-person over interacting online, with only 15% preferring online.
- 70% would not use electronic methods (online, phones, texting, etc.) to ask someone out on a date.

Questions for Parents

1. If your teen is planning on attending college, how can you help prepare her/him to deal with the financial aspects?
2. If your teen expresses concern about accumulating significant debt to attend college, how can you help her/him think through alternatives to amassing debt?
3. How does your teen view today's significant social issues like immigration?
4. What points of tension might you experience with your teen based on their views of these social issues?
5. Does your teen prefer to connect with friends online or in-person? Why?
6. How can you encourage your teen toward more in-person interaction with their friends?
7. How can you influence your teen toward better integration between life issues and their faith?