



*Top* 20 *Tips*

FOR RAISING AMERICAN TEENS

# RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

## 1 NEARLY HALF OF CHRISTIAN TEENS SAY THEY NEVER READ THEIR BIBLE.

God's Word is the greatest resource we have to grow our faith, yet the younger generation is failing to participate in biblical growth and discipleship. How can we encourage young people towards this important spiritual discipline and demonstrate the vibrancy that comes from a life lived in step with Scripture?

## 2 TEENAGERS WILL SAY THEY ARE CHRISTIANS, BUT AREN'T LIVING OUT A COMMITTED CHRISTIAN WALK.

Half of the teens we talked to say they are Christian, but just 1 in 12 display the beliefs and habits that show they are committed to their faith. This includes embracing foundational truths such as believing Jesus is the only way and regularly engaging in Scripture reading and prayer. These behaviors and beliefs are critical if a teen is to mature in their faith and experience the life transformation God intends for them. How can we elevate the role of Scripture in the regular rhythms of a teen's life?

## 3 THE NUMBER OF COMMITTED CHRISTIANS IN THE U.S. IS SADLY FEW,

matching the observed global trend. But our data points to big differences in the lives of teens who hold to the core beliefs of Christianity and have a regular habit of Bible reading and prayer. It is critical that we disciple teens in these two key areas that help them move from being "nominal" Christians to being serious about their walk with Jesus.



# RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

## 4 TEENAGE “NONES,” INCLUDING ATHEISTS AND AGNOSTICS, ARE MORE FAVORABLE TOWARD CHRISTIANITY AND TO THE CHURCH THAN WE THOUGHT.

They are not necessarily mad at God, actively opposed to Jesus, or skeptical of the Bible’s message. Instead, they mostly say they just don’t think about these things. How can we spiritually awaken these “nones” and show them that there is a message worth believing that can have real impact on their lives?

“NONES”  
IDENTIFY AS  
HAVING NO  
RELIGION

## 5 MANY TEENS SAY THAT FAITH BELIEFS OR A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THEIR IDENTITY.

This is good news for the church; there is common ground to explore and expand on their openness. More teens than you might expect say they would consider coming to church if invited—so it doesn’t hurt to ask! The data also shows that the presence of a church community is a powerful force for good in the lives of young people. So how can we draw teens into our church communities for a personal encounter with the Gospel?

## 6 TODAY’S TEENS VIEW TRUTH AS FLUID RATHER THAN FIXED.

Because this generation prizes tolerance, many shy away from regularly discussing spiritual matters with others. It makes sense as they have grown up in a diverse and complex cultural context. While their inclusive attitude towards people is perhaps one of this generation’s greatest strengths, Christian teens need to know that the Gospel they believe is the only one that saves. How can we equip them to share that truth in love with those who need to hear it?



# PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND STRUGGLES

## 7 TEENS ARE STRUGGLING MORE THAN WE MAY HAVE REALIZED.

The differences in personal struggles by gender and by age are undeniable and give us some initial places to look. How can we be intentional and proactive about supporting these groups and creating safe spaces for them to discuss their challenges and seek help? Consider the unique struggles girls face in regard to their gender and the fact that we will increasingly need to empower experienced women to disciple their younger counterparts, similar to the model that Titus 2:3-5 shares.

## 8 CHRISTIAN TEENS NEED DISCIPLESHIP IN THE AREA OF SEXUALITY.

Alarming, Christian teens are more likely to be sexually active than non-Christians. Many young believers don't even believe pre-marital sex is wrong. How can we guide young people to a more biblical view on this topic that restores sex to the sacred context of marriage that God intended?

## 9 PORNOGRAPHY USAGE AND SAME SEX ATTRACTION ARE SIGNIFICANT ISSUES FOR THIS GENERATION.

The data shows that we cannot assume that age or religion protect a teen from these experiences and feelings. Even a teen who is walking with Jesus may be struggling in one or both of these areas.



# DIGITAL CONNECTEDNESS AND IMPACT

10

VIDEOS ARE PART OF EVERY TEEN'S DAILY LIFE AND CAN BE A POWERFUL VEHICLE TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE.

Teens are spending the most time on platforms like YouTube and Netflix and 96% of them say they watch video content every day. How can we use this appealing medium to reach young people for Christ?

11

SOCIAL MEDIA ISN'T THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO REACH TEENS.

Most are not spending a lot of time on these platforms every day (68% spend 1 hour or less daily). Teens are also divided on whether or not social media is helping them live their best life, so consider the content you are putting out for them and how you can help them navigate their complex relationship with their digital devices.

12

TEENS SPENDING A LOT OF TIME ON SCREENS MIGHT BE STRUGGLING DEEPLY.

Those who are spending a lot of time online may be dealing with some very serious mental health issues, so think about how you can be prepared to respond in conversations that might arise and encourage these teens towards a healthy outlook.



# IDENTITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

13

HALF OF AMERICAN TEENS BELIEVE  
GENDER IDENTITY IS SUBJECTIVE

and can be self-determined. In this landscape, where young people believe gender is their choice and their right, how do we present what the Bible has to say about identity?

14

TEENS MAY SEE MARRIAGE AS A LIFELONG  
COMMITMENT, BUT DO NOT SEE IT AS  
EXCLUSIVE BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN.

The majority of teens also don't see the need to save sex for marriage. How can we help teens not only understand God's plan for marriage, but also the benefits of commitment when it comes to covenant?

15

GIRLS HAVE A LESS BIBLICAL VIEW OF  
GENDER IDENTITY AND MARRIAGE

than boys do. Knowing this, how can we be intentional about healthy support for girls that guides them to reflect more deeply on what God has to say about these topics?

16

TEENS ARE QUITE SATISFIED WITH THEIR  
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

despite the fact that they ranked lowest on the family satisfaction scale out of all 20 countries in our study. How can we strengthen families to have deep, meaningful connections and conversations more regularly and incorporate the truth of Scripture for the challenges young people may be facing?



# INFLUENCES AND GUIDING VOICES

17

WHEN IT COMES TO SOME OF LIFE'S MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS—TEENS ULTIMATELY TRUST AND TURN TO THEIR FAMILY FOR GUIDANCE.

Parents should not take lightly the privilege they have of speaking into their child's life while teens say they are still listening.

18

SCRIPTURE AND THE CHURCH ARE BEING DROWNED OUT BY CULTURE IN THE CONVERSATION AROUND GENDER AND SEXUALITY.

The voice of culture is loud as expressed through social media and through peers, and it is setting the standard for teens on these important topics. How can we step up in this space to highlight what God has to say even if it conflicts with popular opinion?

19

THE LEAST LIKELY PLACE TEENS LOOK FOR ANSWERS IS THE CHURCH.

The witness of the church and the people in it can be effective helpers to young people developing a worldview. This data shows that teens report home as safer space for asking tough questions than church and family as more trusted than church leaders. Knowing this, how can the church better resource families to help the teens who are more likely to share their questions and struggles in the home than at church?

20

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES ARE HUGEY INFLUENTIAL IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

Teens who are already walking with Christ continue to be hungry for authentic experiences of their faith, and even non-Christians say they are open to changing their mind if they personally encountered God. How can we help create environments and opportunities for those experiences to happen?





# GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE

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