



# Christian Parenting for Teenagers

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Session 5:


Ten Mistakes Parents Make with Their Adolescents (#1 - #5)



# Ten Mistakes Parents Make When Raising Their Adolescents

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1. Do as I say not as I do.
2. I am the adult, I am right.
3. Because I said so, that's why.
4. You want to be what?
5. This room is a pig's den.
6. Can't you do anything right?
7. Where did you find this guy?
8. How can you dare to fail?
9. Do you mind if we talk about something else?
10. I'm kind of busy right now.



# 1. Do as I say, not as I do – Failure to be a consistent model

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- The way we talk, the way we respect each other, the way we are honest with each other and in our dealings,
- For example, IRS, traffic laws, padding expense accounts, lying on the phone conversations, respecting the law, respecting the word of God, seriousness in our worship, etc...



## 2. Failure to admit when you are wrong “I am the adult, I am right”

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- None of us can live perfect lives. Humility, openness, and willing to admit that we are wrong “please be patient with me, God isn’t finished with me yet.
- For fear of losing control, we may pretend your adolescent, not only knows your imperfections but he looks hard for them. He expects a parent to be willing to admit his mistakes.



### 3. Failure to give honest answers to honest questions

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- “Because I said so, that’s why.”
- This approach may work with children but not with adolescents.
- By not giving logical answers to their questions, adolescents will resent us.
- We should be able to reason together with our adolescents just as the Lord said, “Come, now, let us reason together.” (Is. 1:18) We should teach them why the proper behavior is important.
- Teens are so much influenced by their peers, and they get most of their information from T.V. and internet. What they need is discrimination and the ability to make proper judgments. They want to know the reasons behind what is expected of them.
- Teen-agers seek advice and get information most frequently from peers. Surprisingly, parents come as a strong second.



### 3. Failure to give honest answers to honest questions (continued)

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- We are not afraid to expose Christian truths.
- Explaining “why” needs reasoning through the consequences of certain actions. If your answer is not satisfying, the alternative is experimentation.
- Parents should answer the why behind every rule, for example, sexual behavior within a Christian context. God did not hand down the ten commandments to frustrate people.
- Our teens need to know that the standard for them are based on the Word of God.



## 4. Failure to let your adolescent develop personal identity

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- “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov. 22:6) Children should be nurtured according to their own identity. God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. (Rom.12:6) We are to be aware of our strengths and appreciate them
- Discover what they are good at and find out their interest. We’re seeking the teen’s happiness not our own.
- Trying to mold a teen into the pattern of the parent is the most devastating for a teen, for he feels that nothing can please his parent.
- The more affirmation and self esteem a teen gets at home, the less he will seek it elsewhere.



## 5. Failure to major on the majors and minor on the minors

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- Let go with certain minor things so you can have a chance to emphasize important matters. The long hair of teen age boys in the 70's used to cause major anxieties in the minds of parents. A son's long hair maybe a real threat to the father's sense of control. This minor issue may occupy most of the conversation time between parents and teens.
- Minors are things like hair styles, clothing, food preferences and messy rooms. These are things which eventually will be straightened out and will not affect teens permanently.





## 5. Failure to major on the majors and minor on the minors (continued)

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- Teens will act like teen-agers with short attention spans, As such , they may no not keep their promises.
- Most of the things we expect from teens are things we spend our whole lives learning.
- As long as teens are devoted to their parents and to God, as long as they are respectful to others and conscientious about their school work, it does not matter very much how they dress.
- You cannot tell a book by its cover. Pharisees are whitewashed tombs.



## 5. Failure to major on the majors and minor on the minors (continued)

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Here are the major things:

- Honoring the Lord's Day, setting aside time for Bible reading and prayer.
- Respect for authority including God, the government and parents.
- Developing a giving generous spirit.
- Honesty.
- Integrity
- Trustworthiness



## 5. Failure to major on the majors and minor on the minors (continued)

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### Developing self-esteem

- Respect their opinions: young people whose opinions are respected tend to develop a positive self-image. Ask your teens: How do you feel about this? What's your opinion on this subject? What are your friends at school saying about this?
- Respect their property: is considered respect of their personhood
- Respect their privacy.