

# CG YOUTH NEWSLETTER



Volume 1, Issue 5  
April 2019

## 12 Things Every Christian Teenager Should Know

by David Qaoud | Filed under: Christian Living Teenagers

I haven't been a teenager for several years, but I still remember those days like it was yesterday. I reflect back on junior high and high school with mixed emotions. Part of me feels joy for all the things the Lord allowed me to experience. The other part of me feels sorrow for not feeling well prepared to deal with life. Now that I'm in my late twenties, I feel like I can offer a few pieces of advice to Christian teenagers. What are they?

Here's 12 things every Christian teenager should know:

### 1. Obey God

You were created by God to live for him (Colossians 1:16). You'll only be happy if you do so. At this stage, you're probably starting to experience peer pressure to sin in some way (e.g., drinking alcohol, premarital sex, etc). Don't give in. It's not worth it.

The things the world has to offer are temporarily gratifying. But the things that God has to offer are eternally satisfying. God is not a killjoy. He has your greatest interests in mind. The Bible really means it when it says that God is the only true source of satisfaction in this life.

### 2. Obey your parents

John Calvin puts it this way:

"... we are to show them [Your parents] respect, obedience, and thankfulness, and to render to them every service possible. For it is the Lord's will that we should act like this to those who have given us life. And it is of little importance whether they are worthy or unworthy of this honor for, whatever they may be, they have been given to us as father and mother by the Lord, who has willed that we should honor them."

**Ouch. If you're like me, Calvin's quote convicts you.**

I know that you probably think your parents are uncool, and they sometimes get on your nerves (believe me, you get on their nerves too). But God ordained that they — yes, your mother and your father — would be your parents, and he commands that you obey them. While I may sometimes disagree with my parents, I always regret it when I disobey them. Obey your mom and pops.

### 3. Obey the authorities

Paul says, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1). Paul then calls the authorities as "God's servant" and "ministers of God" (v.4, v.6). The words in Greek that Paul uses for these two verses is the exact same words that Paul uses when speaking about Christian ministers of the church elsewhere. Here's the point: God wants you to respect and obey them.

At your age, it may seem cool to be rebellious to authorities. But that is exactly one of the biggest problems with your generation and mine: a lack of respect for authority. Whether it's a police officer or tax collector or pastor or grandparent, you have to understand certain people have authority over you, and you have to obey.

### 4. Get plugged into the local church

God's plan A is the church, and there's no plan B. I hope and pray your parents are going to church. If they're not, ask them to start going. If the church has a youth group, get plugged in. Go to the summer camps. Invite your friends to youth group. Get involved right now. Give your life, time, and energy to God's bride.

### 5. Develop a devotional life

When I say "devotional life" what I mean are things that you do in private to grow in godliness. Focus in on Bible reading and prayer (but journaling, worship, scripture memorization, and other disciplines are helpful too). I read the Gospels over and over again when

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 6 Things Teenagers Need

1. Develop your distinct identity and a sense of your uniqueness.
2. Progressively separate yourself from dependency on your parents.
3. Develop meaningful relationships with peers and others outside the family.
4. Develop your capacity to relate well to the opposite sex.
5. Gain confidence and skills to prepare for a career, and adult responsibilities.
6. Fashion your faith, values and basic attitudes toward life.

At Arise, we are here to help you develop any of these important qualities. Just reach out and ask for help.

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I was a teenager, and it changed my life. It is not an exaggeration when I say that one of the best things I've ever implemented in my life is the regular rhythm of personal devotions. The value is incalculable.

**6. You probably shouldn't be dating anyone**

Definitely not in junior high, and probably not in high school. With that said, there are some who married their high school sweetheart. These stories can happen, but they are few and far between, especially nowadays. For every one couple that starts dating at your age and ends in success (marriage), there are hundreds that end in disaster.

Got a girl or guy you're eyeing at school? Cool.

Tell your parents, tell your youth group leader, pray, and then proceed with great caution. I didn't date until I was 26 (and now we're married!) and I don't regret it one bit. Sure, my life at times felt lonely when I was in my late teens and early twenties. But the slight sting of loneliness is a far lesser pain than permeant heartache from someone of the opposite sex. Again: you should probably wait before you date.

**7. Learn to steward your singleness well**

I've written a lot about singleness, which you can find here. Singleness is a blessing even if it sometimes feels like a curse. Allow the Lord to shape your character as you look to him in this season.

**8. Re-Think Your Social Media Habits**

One popular teen star quit Instagram. I'm not saying you have to follow her footsteps. But a growing concern of mine — and this is true for myself and my generation as well— is that we're using social media to create our identity. The validation that you're looking for, in Christ, you already have. Post Jesus and God and Positive Life Comments.

**9. Get a job (if you can)**

My mom made me get my first job when I was 15. It was tough, but I quickly learned communication, social, interpersonal, and financial skills that helped shaped my character. If possible, get a job.

**10. You can make a difference for Jesus right now**

You don't have to wait until you have gray hair to make a difference for Christ.

I think of Jaquelle Crowe, who just published her first book, *This Changes Everything*, dedicated to Christian teenagers. I think of Brett and Alex Harris, brothers and co-authors of a revolutionary book, *Do Hard Things*, aimed against low expectations for teens. I also think of

my little brother who was a great source of godly encouragement to his youth group as a teenager. And the list goes on.

Of course, there's a refining process that every teenager must go through. Hopefully, your most fruitful years are ahead of you. But as Paul says to Timothy: "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim 4:12).

**11. Don't worry about the future**

Recently, I facilitated a group discussion for two Christian youth groups. It was so encouraging to interact with them. One thing, however, stood out to me: many of the young kids are already anxious about their future.

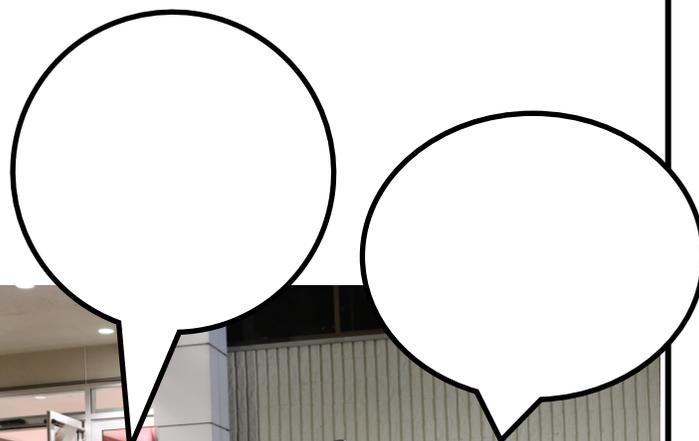
Anxiety is a tricky thing, isn't it? In one sense, God commands us not to be anxious (Philippians 4:4-6). In another sense, you can't help but feel bodily reactions to seemingly fearful situations. It's part of what makes you human. The thing that has helped me the most is growing in my understanding of God's providential care for me. If he takes care of the birds, he'll also take care of you. And that includes your future.

When your future arrives, Lord willing, what you need to know is that God will be right there with you— and that is more than enough.

**12. Have fun**

Finally, have fun. Why? Because you're a teenager for crying out loud! Enjoy your fast metabolism, non-receding hairline, sugar-filled drinks, and life without (many) bills. It doesn't last forever.

I hope you enjoy your teenagers years. They go by fast. And hopefully, this article helps a little. I hope the Lord blesses these years, and may you remember this quote by C.T. Studd as you continue to walk with the Lord: "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last."



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Send your caption to [katarina@cgyouth.ca](mailto:katarina@cgyouth.ca)

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**The ARISE Vision**

2 Timothy 2:22

“Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

God and the Gospel is preached

Ongoing Discipleship

Serving in the church

Parent partnerships

Equipping youth to know, love, and worship God

Loving the world in practical ways

**The ARISE Purpose**

- We want youth to know, love and worship Jesus in full authenticity.
- Connections are important to youth and we want to build relationships.
- Communication is key in understanding one another and helping one another.
- Community is what every youth seeks and we work to provide a safe place.
- Commission has youth will be challenged to reach outside the walls.
- We value parents and seek to build partnerships with them.

**Practical Ideas**

**For Being A Christian At School**

Ever since the day I accepted Jesus, I've had to answer the question: "What does a Christian look like?" They look like Jesus.

What did Jesus do? A lot of stuff, but one thing he did was help people and that always led him into conversations about the kingdom of God. So here's how this matters for you in your every day life at school. This month, figure out one way to help people in your school.

Here's some ideas to get you started:

- You could assist students with special needs.
- You could volunteer for a background role in the school play, like running sound or lights.
- You could participate in a fundraiser.
- You can look for lonely or student's not fitting in.
- You could volunteer with a club.
- You can pray for your teachers, students and school.
- You could start a club that meets a specific need you notice.

Whatever it is, look for a way to serve. When someone asks you why you do it, tell them, "I am a Christian and I follow Christ!" Answer any questions they have and invite them to church. The Bible says in Matthew 20:26-28, "But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

**What does a Christian look like at school? A servant. How can you serve your school this year?**

**A Call For Christian Youth  
To Give Everything To Jesus**

Changing a world is a big job. So big, you might say, "Why bother?" Here's why. There's one thing (besides death) that is absolutely certain in life. You will either be a part of changing the world around you – or the world around you will change you. It will slowly but surely seep into the pores of your skin and **before you know it, you'll look like everyone else, you'll talk like everyone else, you'll think like everyone else.** You will lose sight of the person that God created you to be. You will lose YOU!

"Ok, so I don't want to lose ME. I want to make a difference. Where do I start?"

The Bible gives us 4 things we can do...

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. – Romans 12:1-2

1. Give all of you to God
2. Say no to what the world tells you to be
3. Say yes to what God tells you to be
4. Think like God, not the world

The Bible also tells us that hanging with the wrong crowd will ALWAYS get us into a whole lot of trouble Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character. – 1 Corinthians 15:33. **You must choose. Every day of your life, all you have to do is say YES to Jesus.**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
International Guitar Month National Kite Month National Poetry Month National Pecan Month National Welding Month Stress Awareness Month	1	2 Arise 7:00-9:00pm Choose Wisely 2	3 Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	4 Enock C Birthday	5	6
7 Mini Jolt 1st Service Inah & Irah C Birthdays Brendan L Birthday	8  COWBOY	9 WESTERN THEME NIGHT Arise 7:00-9:00pm Choose Wisely 3 **Dress Up!	10 WESTERN THEME NIGHT Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	11	12 Fishy Friday INDOOR SOCCER TOURNEY 7:00-10:00pm Jolt and Arise	13  Fishy Fridays
14 Mini Jolt 1st Service  WEEK OF FASTING & PRAYER	15	16 Arise 7:00-9:00pm Choose Wisely 4 Special Guest	17 Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	18	 GOOD FRIDAY THE DAY DEATH DIED	20
21 NO MINI JOLT  No is the morning star, No is the life, No is the resurrection, No is the savior. May his blessings be upon you on Easter and always.	22 Easter Monday	23 Mark D Birthday Arise 7:00-9:00pm SOAK Pastor Rico Poetry: Write A Poem With Theme Jesus and Me	24 Julie C Birthday Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	25	26 K <sub>4</sub> 7:00-10:00pm \$5.00	 K <sub>4</sub>
28 Mini Jolt 1st Service National Karaoke Week	29 Leadership Dinner All Leaders Attend Michael And Avie Hosting 6:00pm to 8:30pm	30 ARISE Beauty and The Beast 13055 Huntley Avenue 6:45pm to 8:30pm *Get dropped off there			 Building Authentic Friendships   MAR 21 Men's Retreat May 3-5 Sign Up Now On-Line Or At Church	



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Foster Care Month Gifts from the Garden Month Barbecue & Salad Month National Bike Month National Hamburger Month			May 1 JOLT Beauty and The Beast 13055 Huntley Avenue 6:45pm to 8:30pm *Tickets free at the door	2 Terrance T Birthday	 Building Authentic Friendships   MAR 21 Men's Retreat May 3-5 Sign Up Now On-Line Or At Church	
5 NO MINI JOLT  National Teacher Appreciation Week	 NERD NITE	7 NERD NIGHT Arise 7:00-9:00pm Others First 1 **Dress Up As A Nerd	8 Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	9  YO MAMMA	10 Fishy Friday Yo Mommy Night 7:00-10:00pm Jolt and Arise	11  Fishy Fridays
12 Mini Jolt 1st Service  Happy Mother's Day	13 Christian P Birthday	14 Arise 7:00-9:00pm Others First 2	15 Karla A Birthday Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	16	17	18
19 Katarina V Birthday Dean V Birthday Mini Jolt 1st Service	20 Victoria Holiday	21 Arise 7:00-9:00pm Others First 3	22 Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	23	24 Nelson N Birthday BOWLING 7:00-10:00pm \$20.00	 Bowling
26 Vincent G Birthday Mini Jolt 1st Service	27 District Pro-D	28 Arise 7:00-9:00pm SOAK RICO	29 Jolt 6:30-8:00pm	30	31 Rheana U Birthday	