

GROWING UP IN GOD'S FAMILY

What's Right about Adolescence?

Genesis 22:1–7



LET'S BEGIN HERE

If we are not careful, we could easily get the impression that adolescence is a disease with headaches and heartaches, pressure and pain as its only symptoms. Not so! Adjustments and struggles may be present, but not to the exclusion of tremendous growth and remarkable achievements. These can be some of the most exciting years of one's spiritual pilgrimage. All adolescents are not horizontally irresponsible and vertically insensitive. As we shall soon discover, there are cases in Scripture where people this age lived exemplary lives in spite of the odds against them.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Positive Traits Found Among the Young

- Willingness to risk (Genesis 22:1–10)
- Sensitivity to God (1 Samuel 3)
- Commitment to integrity
- Determination to stand



Quotable

*As we grow older,
we may lose the
desire to risk.
We call it wisdom,
but it could be
cowardice.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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A CLOSER LOOK

Adolescence: A Study in Contrasts

Like teenagers, adolescent Christians are a complex blend of contrasts. For instance, compare our descriptions of them from the message “Adolescents in Adult Bodies” with our points in this message:

Adolescents in Adult Bodies	What's <u>Right</u> about Adolescence?
Instability when the going gets rough	Willingness to risk
Insensitivity when the will is challenged	Sensitivity to God
Irresponsibility when the world becomes appealing	Commitment to integrity; determination to stand

Which set of characteristics is accurate? How should we paint adolescent believers—with harsh lines or flowing curves? With dark tones or pastels?

The answer is: both.

If you're in this stage of spiritual growth or if you intimately know someone in this stage, you likely understand. One week, adolescent Christians are ready to pitch their faith; the following week, they're signing up to follow Christ to the ends of the earth. One day, they're playfully tagging along with the world; the next, they're standing for God with determination.

Jesus' disciples rode that same roller coaster of faith. One night they said they'd die for Christ, but when the soldiers came, “they all left Him and fled” (Mark 14:50). But look how they turned out: they eventually leveled their mountains and valleys into a consistent walk with Jesus.

If your faith has ups and downs, don't get frustrated. Keep going! Paul said Christ's patience is “immense” (1 Timothy 1:16 NIV)—just the kind of patience every teenager needs.



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2. Scriptural Examples of Positive Traits Found Among the Young

	Scripture	Test	Strength
Isaac	Genesis 22	To obey his father, regardless	Willingness to risk
Samuel	1 Samuel 3	Environment that was not conducive to godliness	Sensitivity to God
Josiah	2 Chronicles 34	Bad political track record . . . gross violations	Commitment to integrity
Daniel	Daniel 1	Peer pressure	Determination to stand



LET'S LIVE IT

In every trial there is a watershed moment. Will you give in to something or stand up to it? Play or fold? Stay or leave? The choice can be difficult. Perhaps now is the time to decide what you're going to do. Write down your resolution. And remember: God will give you the unique strength you need to pass this test.



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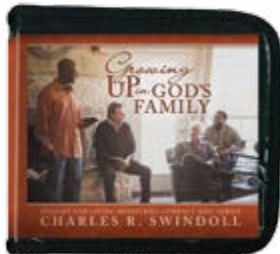
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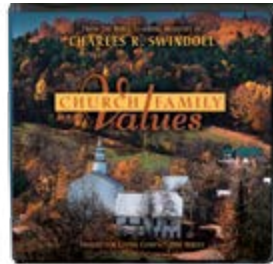
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Tools for Digging Deeper



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by Charles R. Swindoll
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**Dropping Your Guard:
The Value of Open
Relationships**
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