

## Help Your Kids Know What's True



Ever since your children were born, you've been teaching them right from wrong—first to keep them physically safe and then to help develop their character. By adolescence, some of those teachings no longer seem black and white. Outside factors such as friends, media, and teachers compete for your kids' attention and hearts.

When doubts creep in, teenagers begin to re-evaluate what they've been taught. Everything gets scrutinized: their upbringing, their moral beliefs, and even their faith. Kids may question if Jesus is the only true path to salvation or if all people really worship the same God.

According to our society, declaring something to be an "absolute truth" is a sign of close-mindedness. But if everyone can proclaim their own truths and set their own rules, then moral chaos results. In fact, with such relativism, anything goes.

Although teenagers initially may be enticed by a lack of rules—or rules they can set themselves—the Bible is clear that this path leads to death (Proverbs 14:12).

As Christians, we know that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). In the Bible, God's true Word, we read that faith in Jesus is the only way to salvation. The Bible also provides the Law, which serves as our rules for living (The Ten Commandments).

You can't shield teenagers from exposure to other belief systems. But you can help them develop a strong, unshakable faith. Read on for ideas about instilling in your kids the firm foundation of eternal truth.

**Youth minister Greg Stier insists that "doctrine" isn't a dirty word. Teenagers (and parents) might view it as impractical, irrelevant, and divisive, he says. But it's really "the pathway upon which we come into the presence and power of God." Stier offers these suggestions:**

1. **Remember that doctrine simply means teaching.** Don't get so occupied with spending quality time with your kids that you neglect to find out exactly what they believe.
2. **Focus on the four "Go" truths that every teenager should know.** These are God, God's Word, God's Son, and the Gospel.
3. **Teach teenagers that it's okay to reject false doctrines.** For example, make sure kids know that Jesus was sinless, that the Bible is 100% accurate, and that good deeds won't get them into heaven.
4. **Equip kids to live out their beliefs in real, relevant ways.** Biblical instruction without practical application leads to the breeding of hypocrites.

### Youth Ministry Notes

Our Family Ministry staff will soon be located at 301 N. Washington St., on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Chris McPeek has already moved over there, to a really cool corner office. Lora Gravatt, our new Pastor for Children and Family Life, will be located there starting June 23, when she officially begins her ministry at Columbia; and Mary Beth Olson and I will be moving over shortly. (No change in our phone extensions.) We are very excited about Lora's arrival, and about Columbia's great new family ministry suite, and hope you'll be able to visit us there soon.

A couple of meetings I want to highlight:  
Mandatory meeting for **Student Life campers and parents, Sunday, June 22**, 5:30pm in The Garage (301 N. Washington St., 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.)  
Mandatory meeting for **BWA Youth Congress trip participants, Wednesday, July 16**, 6:30pm in The Garage.

Summer's almost here – please know that we are praying for your families as school ends and summer plans start. We wish you many blessings, and joy in your journey.

For the Student Ministry Team, *Betsy Pankey*

## Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

**What types of beliefs have your teenagers been exposed to? Can they articulate their faith? Find out by using these discussion starters:**

1. How do people get to heaven? Can you get there by being good? Why or why not?
2. Will people of other religions be in heaven, too? How would you defend this answer to someone who believes otherwise?
3. Should everyone be allowed to set their own morals and rules? Is it okay to impose your beliefs on someone else? Why or why not?
4. When you're making decisions, where do you turn for advice? How do you know if you've made a correct choice?



## Focus on Prayer

### PRAY THAT:

1. Your teenagers will have a deep faith in the one true God and will reject false beliefs.
2. God will protect your teenagers from doubt and help them take a stand for their Christian faith.
3. Your teenagers will desire to read and study Scripture and rely on it for encouragement, strength, and decision-making.
4. God will use your teenagers to tell other people about God's truth.

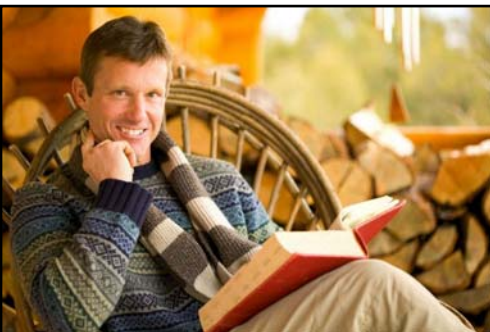
### Verse of the month

**"For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father, who is over all and in all and living through all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)**

These days, it's considered politically incorrect to call another faith wrong. Instead, we're told to be inclusive and accepting. But unless people believe in the Triune God, believe that the Bible is God's Word, and believe in salvation only through faith in Jesus, they aren't really Christians. It may sometimes seem that there's freedom in allowing and exploring many truths. But real freedom comes from knowing there's just one Truth.

## What's Up With Kids

**At SimplyYouthMinistry.com, youth-culture author Walt Mueller offers this advice about knowing what's true:** In a world where there are many "experts" sharing conflicting opinions on the purpose of life, how to live, and how to raise and relate to kids, it's good to know there's a compass we can trust, handed to us by the One who created life, teenagers, parents, and families. That compass is the Bible. In 2 Timothy 3:16, Paul lists four valuable uses for Scripture:



- 1. The Bible offers sound instruction.** It's the only true source of knowledge about God's world. Like the instruction manual for a complicated appliance, God's Word helps us understand and bear through the complexities of life, including our changing kids and their confusing world.
- 2. A growing knowledge of the Bible helps us evaluate and test everything else that claims to be true.** All worldviews and advice should be measured against the blueprint of the Bible.
- 3. The Bible serves as a diagnostic checkup and trouble-shooting guide.** As we look at our own lives and approaches to parenting, the Bible helps us see where we've gone wrong while offering clear guidelines and instruction on how to correct our course.
- 4. The Bible is a road map that helps us stay on course in all our tasks and activities.** It lays out a clear path for right and godly living. Teenagers desperately need godly parents whose disciplined and regular study of Scripture pays liberal dividends in Christlike love and direction.

## MUSIC SPOTLIGHT



**Background:** Lyfe Jennings' musical aspirations began in the church choir and led him to form a band as a teenager. Then an arson charge landed him in prison for 10 years. While there, Jennings developed his "honest" musical sound, influenced by Erykah Badu. Two days after his prison release, he recorded a demo CD. One month later, he was singing at The Apollo, receiving five consecutive amateur-night victories. After moving to New York, Jennings quickly signed with Columbia Records.

**Albums:** *Lyfe Change* (2008), *The Phoenix* (2006), *Lyfe 268-192* (2004)

**What Parents Should Know:** In *Lyfe Change*, Jennings' main theme is relationships. He makes several questionable references to women. Jennings mentions life on the street and in jail. The lyrics also discuss prayer and looking for God in daily life.

**What Jennings Says:** "If music is your dream, then you need to be prepared to do anything for it, clean floors, work in a mailroom, anything to get in that door.... You [also] need a backup plan; nothing here is promised."

**Discussion Questions:** What are you willing to do to achieve your dreams? Do you have a backup plan just in case, or is that inviting failure? Explain. How will you react if your dreams don't turn out the way you'd hoped?



**Background:** Kevin Max was a member of the Christian group dc Talk, which sold more than 8 million albums and won numerous Dove and Grammy Awards. In 2001, the group broke up to pursue solo careers. Max went through a difficult time, including a divorce and feelings of bitterness and rejection. But during the next few years, God transformed Max's life. His third solo album, *The Blood*, is the "completion of a seven-year journey of me coming to grips with who I am as an artist."

**Albums:** *The Blood* (2007), *The Imposter* (2005), *Stereotype Be* (2001)

**What Parents Should Know:** *The Blood* is a soulful, R&B-esque Gospel compilation with guest appearances by artists such as Amy Grant, Vince Gill, "American Idol" finalist Chris Sligh, and former bandmates TobyMac and Michael Tait.

**What Max Says:** "I've been through some tough things, but I've found a purpose in life, which is to really be responsible to who I am as an artist, as a person, and as a believer—to take seriously the things that God has given me."

**Discussion Questions:** Have you found your purpose in life? If so, how has it been shaped by your life experiences? Do you consider yourself to be a "responsible" Christian? What does how you live say about God and your relationship with him?

## FILMWATCH

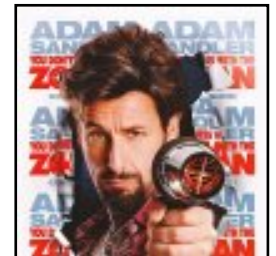
**Movie:** *You Don't Mess With the Zohan* (released June 6)

**Genre:** Comedy

**Rating:** PG-13 (for crude and sexual content throughout, language and nudity)

**Synopsis:** Zohan (Adam Sandler) is an Israeli counterterrorist killing machine who decides he'd really like to become a hair stylist. He fakes his own death and makes his way to New York City, where he's a big hit with his female clientele. Zohan catapults to fame and fortune, but success and secret identities don't mix. When Zohan's past catches up with him, he must once again call on his military skills.

**Discussion Questions:** What do you think God is calling you to do? Do you have any gifts that you've kept secret or downplayed for some reason? Would you be willing to take some risks or leave a "safe" environment to pursue God's plans for you? Explain.



# June 2008

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Graduate Sunday Last Unplugged/BTE until Sept. 7						
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Father's Day						Student Ministry BBQ @ the McPeeks, 4pm
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
12:30 Youth Council 5:30 Student Life Parents/Students meeting Discipleship Group Silent Retreat	Discipleship Group Silent Retreat	Discipleship Group Silent Retreat	Discipleship Group Silent Retreat	Discipleship Group Silent Retreat	Discipleship Group Silent Retreat	
29	30					
12:30, 229 VBS Junior Lifeguard training 4pm, 301 Student Life Chaperones Meeting						

**Columbia's Youth Ministries**  
103 W. Columbia St.  
Falls Church, VA 22046

**Regularly Scheduled Activities:** Sunday morning Ignition Groups (Bible Study) at 9:45 and 11:15  
Sunday evening activities will resume September 7.

**July 1-6: Student Life Camp.**

**July 16:** BWA participants meeting 6:30pm, in The Garage

**July 20:** Rising 6<sup>th</sup> Graders transition to WIRED Ignition Groups

**July 24 – August 4:** Baptist World Alliance Youth World Conference, Leipzig, Germany

**August 29:** Lock-In for High School (families are invited to come for movies at 6:30)

**September 5:** Friday Night Lights resumes

**September 7:** Unplugged and Beyond the Edge resume; Parents meeting, 5:30pm

**September 26-28:** Summit Lake Retreat for High School students AND 8<sup>th</sup> Graders; \$90

**November 8:** Understanding Your Teenager Seminar