



PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE

RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 11+

Preparing for adolescence is a big deal. Parents play a vital role in guiding their son or daughter to thrive as a developing teenager. The adolescent years will challenge your child's identity, and they will constantly be asking, "Who am I?" without verbalizing it that way. Your job as a parent during this phase is to continually speak truth from God's Word about whose they are.

While discovering their identity, many changes are happening during this phase:

- **Physical:** Your children are experiencing extreme hormone imbalances that cause many questions and topics to discuss. It is important to frame the physical changes as much more than a plea for sexual abstinence. Your son or daughter needs a vision for how these internal and external changes will prepare their body for the joys of marriage and the miracle of creating new life.
- **Emotional:** Your children are facing insecurity regarding their physical changes, and the hormone imbalance could be causing some extreme highs and lows. You will notice your child begin developing deep commitments and passions.
- **Social:** Your children will have a greater desire for belonging to a group of friends. They will have a greater need for the approval of others, and you will consistently need to remind them about the insecurities that are paired with comparison. Their insecurities will lead to increased attention to clothing styles, hair, hygiene, and similar things. For some kids, they might not care enough about hygiene and hair, and parents may need to guide them in understanding their need to care for those things.

- **Spiritual:** Your children will begin owning their faith by asking more complex questions about God and their beliefs. You should be ready to field those questions with gentleness and truth. They will have an increased desire to connect socially at church and have an increased ability to understand a relationship with God.

TEACHER TO COACH

At this stage, parents will start to see a pivot in their role. The shift moves from teacher to coach. Up until this point, children have been taught the truths of Scripture and placed in environments to gain knowledge about God, the Bible, and His world. Now, the task is helping your child own their faith and practice it themselves. You are now a coach. You cannot have faith on behalf of your kids. Therefore, your job is to guide and direct your child toward trusting in Jesus.

PURITY

Purity is much more than refraining from sex until marriage. Purity is living free from sin, guilt, and anything that might change, suppress, or lower the quality of God’s creation. Psalm 119:9 says, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.” While Jesus is the only person who lived a perfectly pure life, He calls us to imitate Him by fulfilling the purpose for which we were made. A commitment to physical purity is only part of the story. Addressing sexual purity without addressing underlying issues will be hollow and broken.

Parents should communicate the standard God provides in Scripture about sexual purity. Children need to know they were created in God’s image (Genesis 1:27), and their bodies belong to God first and their future spouse second. The Bible says, “Flee from sexual immorality... your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit... you are not your own... So glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:18–21).

WHAT IS BIBLICAL SEX?

- It is good!
- It is two becoming one, God’s design for creating unity within marriage (Genesis 2:24).
- It is a gift from God for a husband and wife to show their love and create life.
- It is between one man and one woman (Genesis 2; 1 Corinthians 7:1–5; Proverbs 6–7).

- It is to be saved for marriage (Hebrews 13:4).
- It is meant to be enjoyed within God’s boundaries to promote maximal intimacy within a marriage (1 Corinthians 6:18).

Be sure to give a positive vision and celebrate the joy of sex within the context of marriage. If parents are not careful, children will only hear negativity about sex if it is not celebrated as a beautiful gift from God for marriage. Nothing gives a better view of God’s design for marriage like watching their parents love and cherish one another and speak positively about the joy of marital intimacy.

DELAY TEMPTATION

Kids want to start dating younger than ever before. One study showed that a child who starts dating at twelve years old has only a 9% chance of remaining a virgin at eighteen years old. However, if they wait until sixteen, they are 80% likely to be a virgin at eighteen years old. God created us with intimate desires, but those desires can be awakened too early if the door is opened early. Talk to your child about purity before allowing them to date and continue the dialogue after they start dating. If possible, delay the temptation by attempting to push back the dating timeline.

. **FAITH PATH PLAN**

Child’s Name: _____

How will you be intentional about your child’s spiritual growth in the coming year?

- ☐ Plan an overnight stay to complete Passport to Purity by Dennis and Barbara Rainey.
- ☐ Pray daily *with* and *for* my child.
- ☐ Set aside intentional times to have conversations around Scripture regarding purity.
- ☐ Write letters to your child sharing your heart and Scripture instead of just rules.
- ☐ Have your child write out what they want in a future spouse.
- ☐ Give your child a gift to symbolize their commitment to purity (ring, necklace, watch, etc.).
- ☐ Other _____

The next step on the Faith Path is Rite of Passage, recommended around age 16. The season leading up to this milestone creates important space for reflection and growth. It is a natural time for families to revisit milestones they may have missed or to strengthen practices already established in the home. As you prepare for Rite of Passage, continue giving your child room to own their faith. Your home should be a safe place to ask hard questions, wrestle honestly with belief, and learn what it means to follow Jesus faithfully in today's digital culture.

ADDITIONAL READING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Birds and The Bees Without the Butterflies by Traci Lester

Preparing for Adolescence by James Dobson

Passport to Purity by Dennis and Barbara Rainey

30 Days: Turning the Hearts of Parents by Dr. Richard Ross

Lies Young Women Believe by Nancy Leigh DeMoss and Dannah K. Gresch

Preparing Your Son for Every Man's Battle by Stephen Arteburn

Preparing Your Daughter for Every Woman's Battle by Shannon Ethridge

The Focus on the Family Guide to Talking With Your Kids About Sex

Interviewing Your Daughter's Date by Dennis Rainey

Sticky Faith by Kara E. Powell and Chap Clark



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