



What's Going on With Your 12th Grader?

Congratulations! You have a 12th grader! It is time to finish strong in the adolescent journey. In order to do that, let's take a look inside the mind and heart of your 12th grader.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- They have developed physically into their adult bodies.
- Sexual desire is awakened, and the temptation to be sexually active is common.
- Stress is a very real physical struggle as they work, perform in school, and prepare for the future.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The 12th grader may:

- Begin to be very sentimental as they anticipate life change
- Experience calmer moods than in previous years
- Exhibit impulsive behavior with friends and peers
- Be more capable of taking care of others



RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Integrating both physical and emotional intimacy into relationships begins.
- Friends that share beliefs, values, and interests are sought.
- The relationship with parents is more of a support system.
- They begin to feel freedom to express themselves as individuals.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

- They can handle the responsibility of most service positions in the church.
- They have much less interest in the student ministry activities and need to be connected to adult activities in the church.
- They have a greater interest in serving others and in making a difference in the world.
- Role models are developed that inspire them either toward or away from faith.
- There is a temptation to “have their fun now” and be responsible later.



Knowing Who I Am and Whose I am

KICK-START WITH ENCOURAGEMENT FOR PARENTS

Letting go is wonderful and painful all at once. Don't be afraid to enter into that discontinuity.

FRAMING UP OUR PURPOSE

It's possible to go a little crazy in your parenting during your teen's senior year. All the transition from dependence on you to independence within themselves comes to a jarring climax sometime during this year. And the reality that the baby you once held will soon live a life fairly separate from yours can be overwhelming. So we go a little crazy. First it looks a little like smothering. Then it can revert to parenting like we did when they were ten. It might have an extra dose of sadness or anger to it. Or it may look like an erratic attempt to cram in every lesson you haven't had the chance to teach. No matter what, chances are during your teen's senior year, they may think you've gone a bit loco!

No worries, though...as long as you recognize the insanity and realize all that unexplained behavior is often rooted in the fear of letting go instead of trusting God to get His work done in our teens' lives. If we see that, we'll be able to keep these truths in front of our seniors as they anticipate the thrill of the journey ahead!

Identity is about knowing whose we are rather than trusting solely in what we can do.

"When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained; what is man, that you think of him? What is the son of man, that you care for him? For you have made him a little lower than God, and crowned him with glory and honor." --Psalm 8:3-5

The most frequent questions our seniors in high school will get are "Where are you going to college?" and "Have you chosen a major?" or "What do you want to do with your life?" And while none of these questions is inherently the wrong question, none of them is the most important question. What if we spend more time asking our teens, "Who do you want to become?" Chances are they won't even use their college degree in the same field or stay with the same career for more than seven years. So why set them up for an identity crisis that is based on what they choose to do?

Why not help them shape their plans for the future based on a truth of whose they are and who that makes them? If they know they are a child of God, created to do good works, no matter where their feet land, they will not question their purpose or identity. They will enjoy the adventure of living out that identity and purpose in creative ways. God loves to surprise us with a different plan than we had in mind.



"Passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, 'Come after me, and I will make you into fishers for men.'" --Mark 1:16-17

This may be one of the hardest truths for parents to walk out. We feel safer when our kids have a normal, safe plan for their lives and look like they can take care of themselves. But Jesus is not a "safe" Redeemer. He is dangerous and often unpredictable. He is dangerous because He calls us to step out of our comfort zone. He loves to challenge us to do a 180-degree turn. God calls us to trust His plans, not our own. Sometimes His plans for our teens mean they won't go to college right away, or ever! Yikes! His plans sometimes mean they will need to live simply, because their income won't make them wealthy or even middle-class comfortable.

We can help them build a healthy identity if we help them answer the question, "Who do I want to become?" Help them make a list of answers to that question and then show them you aren't afraid to wade into the answers they come up with.

The final test has one vertical question and one horizontal question.

"Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. A second likewise is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The whole

law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." --Matthew 22:37-40

If you are having trouble coming up with words to share with your senior at this Family Experience, you can't do much better than the words of the two greatest commandments. Remind your teen that if they don't do anything else in this life, there are two things you want to make sure they do.

First, make sure their vertical relationship with the Creator and Savior is the most important love they ever give away. Second, be sure to give the same love that flows from their vertical relationship with God to their horizontal relationships with others. May they love others as God has fully and wholeheartedly loved them. That will just about sum up anything that needs to be said!

We can help them build a healthy identity if we help them answer the question, "Who do I want to become?"



IDEAS FOR RELEASING A PERSON OF TRUE IDENTITY IN CHRIST

- Add an H to their name (symbolically) to represent God breathing His life into them.
- Make college visits and intentionally discuss what God can do in their lives there.
- Have dinner/lunch once a week together their senior year.
- Plan and pay for five adults who are significant in your teen's life to take them to lunch during their senior year and to pray for their future.
- Encourage your teen to find a mentor the first semester of college.
- Make sure your teen knows how to do laundry and knows how to change a tire (Really!).
- Ask your teen what they need from you during their senior year in order to finish well.

Guide for Planning a Manhood/Womanhood Ceremony

TOP 10 WAYS YOU CAN MAXIMIZE THE MOMENT:

1. Discuss the ceremony with your 12th grader. Should it be private, public, formal, or casual? They can help choose the format, but they can't choose whether or not they will receive the Blessing of the ceremony.
2. Decide who to invite. Send them not only the details of the evening but give them an idea of what you expect them to share with your 12th grader at the ceremony. That will give them time to prepare.
3. Be ready for questions. Your teenager might see this as strange or awkward, which is actually pretty typical. It will be something that will be more easily understood when experienced.
4. Learn to be comfortable with questions and utilize the answer, "You'll have to just wait and see" quite a lot.
5. Prepare to give them a symbol. Decide what you will give them and what meaning you are going to attach to it. If you can, try to make this a surprise for your 12th grader. Surprises are typically pretty fun.
6. Write down what you plan to say. Not only will it calm your nerves to read it, but you can also give a written copy of it to your 12th grader for them to keep. For help in planning what to say, you can download "The Guide to Giving a Blessing."
7. Bless identity, not performance.
8. Be creative. Every ceremony is completely different because it comes from the heart and mind of the parents leading.
9. Pray. Give all of the guests an opportunity to pray over your teenager.
10. Scriptures of Blessing. Here are some Scripture references that you might want to read during the ceremony. (listed on the next page)

<i>Isaiah 49:25</i>	<i>Proverbs 4:18</i>	<i>Deuteronomy 6:7</i>
<i>Isaiah 44:3-4</i>	<i>Proverbs 4:22</i>	<i>Proverbs 1:8-9</i>
<i>Psalms 112:2</i>	<i>Psalms 119:11</i>	<i>Psalms 128:1-6</i>
<i>Psalms 127:3</i>	<i>Jeremiah 32:38-39</i>	<i>Hebrews 12:9-11</i>
<i>Isaiah 54:13</i>	<i>Zechariah 9:11</i>	<i>1 Peter 2:9</i>
<i>1 Corinthians 13:11</i>	<i>Psalms 91</i>	<i>Genesis 18:19</i>
<i>Proverbs 20:7</i>	<i>Psalms 144:12</i>	<i>Jeremiah 1:5</i>
<i>Numbers 6:24</i>	<i>Psalms 127:3-5</i>	<i>Psalms 127:1</i>
<i>Proverbs 27:11</i>	<i>Psalms 139:13-16</i>	<i>Proverbs 23:24</i>
<i>2 Timothy 2:22</i>	<i>Proverbs 22:6</i>	<i>Joshua 1:6-15</i>
<i>Proverbs 2:20</i>	<i>Ephesians 6:4</i>	<i>Romans 8:28</i>
<i>Proverbs 4:8</i>	<i>Jeremiah 29:11</i>	
<i>(good for womanhood ceremony)</i>		

Risk vulnerability. If the ceremony is cold or unfeeling, it won't work. This will be significant when you are willing to open your heart and hold a mirror up to the soul of your 12th grader so they can see their identity in your words.

YOU CAN'T MESS THIS UP....Relax and enjoy the moment.



12th GRADE VIDEO SCRIPTS

12TH GRADE: MANHOOD/WOMANHOOD CEREMONY

A few years ago, I was asked to participate with a dad who wanted to hold a special evening of blessing for his 18-year-old son. He asked a few of his men who have been influential in his son's life to attend, and after each of these men spent some time sharing, it was the father's turn. It was amazing to watch. He began by asking his son to kneel down on the ground in front of him. Then, he went over to the closet. He brought out this huge Braveheart sword that he had bought for this evening. And then he laid this sword down on the son's shoulder, and he said something to him that I will never forget. He said, "Son, I know many 30- and 40-year-old men who act like children because no one ever told them that they were men. So tonight, on your 18th birthday, based on the authority of God's Word that He has given me, I say to you that you knelt down as a boy; but you will rise as a man."

You know what? That was one of the most powerful parenting moments I have ever witnessed. Watching the look on that man's face--when he stood, he stood with pride. You see, he was a

man because his dad said he was. The Blessing in that moment was unleashed. When you unleash your Blessing as a parent, you're unleashing your teenager to change the world. Who wouldn't want to give that kind of Blessing to their son or daughter?

We want to help you exercise your biblical au-

thority to proclaim to your son or daughter that he or she is now an adult in this Family Experience we call "Manhood/Womanhood Ceremony." We will begin by giving you Kick-starters that will 1. Encourage you as a parent in starting this conversation 2. Give you God's purpose and design

for identity 3. Give you ideas for releasing a person of true identity in Christ. When you bless your teenager during this time, you're focusing less on their performance and more on their identity.

In this Family Experience, we will have you begin by talking with your teenager about what they want this experience to look like. They will probably have an opinion on whether it is a small, intimate gathering or a huge party. Ask them to list for you those who have been influential in their life. The answer to that question

When you bless your teen during this time, you're focusing less on their performance and more on their identity



will serve as the guest list for the ceremony. When you invite attendees to be a part of the occasion, we recommend that you ask them to prepare a special word of encouragement that defines and affirms what it looks like to be a man or woman who finds their identity in Christ. Write down ahead of time the word you want to share with them. Make sure you state to them they are no longer a child; they are no longer an adolescent; they have now reached adulthood. Choose a gift for this ceremony that will be a symbol of the night you declared them to be an adult. We have provided you with a Parent Guide to help you plan this Ceremony and give you suggestions for scriptures to use as well.

One of the great privileges given by God to a parent is the ability to unleash their teenager into adulthood. If you are wondering whether or not it's a big deal, just talk to an adult who never received their parents' Blessing. It's a huge deal. It's a chance for you to launch your teenager into the world of understanding who God made them to be. This will be a foundation of truth that will carry them for a lifetime.



Child
of

THE  KING

Dear Parent,

Before you can fully give a Blessing to your teenager, you might need to receive a Blessing yourself. Tragically, many parents of teenagers who desire to give a Blessing never received one from their parents. Use this Biblical guide to receive a Blessing from your Heavenly Father. Take a moment and imagine God Himself speaking these words over you.

Take time with this document. Read through the Scriptures, and as you read it let the Biblical understanding of your identity in Christ serve as your Blessing.

Once you complete this you will be free to read this same powerful statement to your teenager during their Manhood or Womanhood Ceremony.

ENJOY!



“I am a Child of the King”

**Because of who Jesus Christ is, and
because He is my Savior and my Lord:**

**I am a child of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords,
seated with Christ in the heavenly realm. I am chosen, accepted,
and included – a citizen of heaven and a member of God’s
household.**

**(Rev. 1:8, John 1:12)
(Eph. 2:6, I Pet. 2:9)
(John 14:1-6, Eph. 2:19)**

I am loved by God unconditionally and without reservation.

(Rom. 5:6-8, I John 4:10)

**I belong to Him, having been bought by Him with the
precious blood of Jesus. I have eternal life and will be
saved from all of God’s wrath to come – guaranteed!**

(I Peter 2:9, I Cor. 6:19)

I am a Christian. I am not just different in what I do.

(I John 5:11-13, John 3:16)

**My identity has changed. Who I am has changed. Everything has
become brand new.**

(Rom. 5:9, Eph. 1:13-14)

(I Peter 4:16)

I am a dwelling place in which God lives by His Spirit.

(II Cor. 5:17, Gal. 2:20)

I have access to Him anytime, anywhere, for any reason.

(Eph. 2:22, I Cor. 6:19)

**I am God’s creation – His workmanship. I was created by Him
and for Him, so who I am and what I do matters.**

(Eph. 2:18, Phil. 4:6-7)

**I am spiritually alive. I have been set free from the fear of death
and have been given life to live and enjoy to the full.**

(Ps. 139, Eph. 2:10)

(Col. 1:16, Gal. 6:7-9)

I am forgiven – completely, totally, and absolutely.

(Rom. 6:8-11, Heb. 2:14-15)

(John 10:10)

**I have been rescued from the dominion of darkness and
brought into the Kingdom of light – the Kingdom of the Son.**

(I John 1:9, Ps. 103:8-13)

(Col. 1:13)

I have been set free from the penalty of sin and the power of sin.

(Rom. 6:16-23, Gal. 5:1)

**I am an enemy of Satan and at war with spiritual forces of evil, but
greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.**

(I Peter 5:8, Eph. 6:12)

(I John 4:4)

**If God is for me, it doesn’t matter who or what stands against me,
because nothing and no one can separate me from the love of
Christ –**

(Rom. 8:31, Eph. 1:18-23)

not hurt, pain, loss, problem, or brokenness;

not persecution, trouble, difficulty, or danger;

not abandonment, abuse, addictions, or appetites;

not desires, food, sexuality, or relationships;

not life or death, angels or demons;

not my past, the present, or the future;

no power, no person, no place, not anything in all creation;

(Rom. 8:35-39)

not even Satan himself shall prevail.

(Col. 2:15)

**I am in the hands of Jesus, in the hands of God, and nothing and
no one can snatch me out of God’s hands.**

(John 10:27-28)

I will fear no evil because God is with me, and

(Ps. 23:4, II Tim. 1:7)

He has promised to never leave me nor forsake me.

(Heb. 13:5)

God’s presence is with me everywhere I go –

(Ps. 139:7)

to the heights of heaven,

through the valley of the shadow,

to the ends of the earth – forever and always.

(Matt. 28:19-20)

I am a child of the King and choose this day to live as one.

“You are a Child of the King”

**Because of who Jesus Christ is, and
because He is my Savior and my Lord:**

**You are a child of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords,
seated with Christ in the heavenly realm. You are chosen,
accepted, and included – a citizen of heaven and a member of
God’s household.**

**(Rev. 1:8, John 1:12)
(Eph. 2:6, I Pet. 2:9)
(John 14:1-6, Eph. 2:19)**

You are loved by God unconditionally and without reservation.

(Rom. 5:6-8, I John 4:10)

**You belong to Him, having been bought by Him with the
precious blood of Jesus. You have eternal life and will be
saved from all of God’s wrath to come – guaranteed!**

**(I Peter 2:9, I Cor. 6:19)
(I John 5:11-13, John 3:16)
(Rom. 5:9, Eph. 1:13-14)
(I Peter 4:16)**

You are a Christian. You are not just different in what you do.

**Your identity has changed. Who You are has changed. Everything
has become brand new.**

(II Cor. 5:17, Gal. 2:20)

You are a dwelling place in which God lives by His Spirit.

(Eph. 2:22, I Cor. 6:19)

You have access to Him anytime, anywhere, for any reason.

(Eph. 2:18, Phil. 4:6-7)

**You are God’s creation – His workmanship. You were created by
Him and for Him, so who You are and what you do matters.**

(Ps. 139, Eph. 2:10)

**You are spiritually alive. You have been set free from the fear of
death and have been given life to live and enjoy to the full.**

(Col. 1:16, Gal. 6:7-9)

You are forgiven – completely, totally, and absolutely.

(Rom. 6:8-11, Heb. 2:14-15)

**You have been rescued from the dominion of darkness and
brought into the Kingdom of light – the Kingdom of the Son.**

(John 10:10)

**You have been set free from the penalty of sin and the power of
sin.**

(I John 1:9, Ps. 103:8-13)

**You are an enemy of Satan and at war with spiritual forces of evil,
but greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.**

(Col. 1:13)

**If God is for you, it doesn’t matter who or what stands against you,
because nothing and no one can separate you from the love of
Christ –**

(Rom. 6:16-23, Gal. 5:1)

not hurt, pain, loss, problem, or brokenness;

(I Peter 5:8, Eph. 6:12)

not persecution, trouble, difficulty, or danger;

(I John 4:4)

not abandonment, abuse, addictions, or appetites;

(Rom. 8:31, Eph. 1:18-23)

not desires, food, sexuality, or relationships;

not life or death, angels or demons;

not your past, the present, or the future;

no power, no person, no place, not anything in all creation;

(Rom. 8:35-39)

not even Satan himself shall prevail.

(Col. 2:15)

**You are in the hands of Jesus, in the hands of God, and nothing
and no one can snatch you out of God’s hands.**

(John 10:27-28)

You will fear no evil because God is with you, and

(Ps. 23:4, II Tim. 1:7)

He has promised to never leave you nor forsake you.

(Heb. 13:5)

God’s presence is with you everywhere you go –

(Ps. 139:7)

to the heights of heaven,

through the valley of the shadow,

to the ends of the earth – forever and always.

(Matt. 28:19-20)

**You are a child of the King and I pray that this day you choose to
live as one.**

Parent’s Signature _____ Date _____

Parent’s Signature _____ Date _____

Teenager’s Signature _____ Date _____