

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

By : MariahRose

You know, being a Christian teen isn't easy...Especially if you're surrounded by people who don't share your faith... Check out Mariah's new 10 chapter book on how to handle your faith...And how to put it to use!

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/MariahRose

Copyright © MariahRose, 2015
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Being a Christian Teen in a Corrupted Culture

Written By: MariahRose Nelson

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Introduction

Young people in general today have more influences than ever before. It isn't just peer pressure anymore. There's bullying, gangs, and not to mention the homosexuality issue. Being a Christian teen in today's culture isn't easy. These 10 brief chapters are designed to help the Christian teen understand that the Bible *is* truth and that sin *is* real. And most importantly, that if we don't take the Bible with us into this next generation, we are going to be *a lot* worse than we are right now.

Chapter 1

You & the World

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

1 John 2:7 (NLT)

“And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.”

Just because you are in the world, doesn't mean you're a part of it. As a Christian you know that because you now have the Spirit of God in you, what the world wants for you completely contradicts what the Holy Spirit wants for you, (see Galatians 5:17). And it probably might get confusing. I know it did for me.

But that's okay, because once you became a Christian and accepted Jesus Christ; you got separated from the world and joined the Body of Christ. But does that mean you have nothing else to do with the world? NO! You still need a place to live right?

You're no longer a part of the world for your benefit, now you are in the world for Christ's benefit. You see things in a new way, which in turn causes you to live in a new way.

Have you ever wondered why you became a Christian? Well, I'll be glad to tell you why: Because God knew you'd be perfect for the job he has in mind.

Oh, c'mon, that does sound a little cool, right?

God wants to use you a kid in the world that He created. That sounds absolutely phenomenal!! But that's just my opinion, (*wink*). The Bible says that it's good for kids to come to God, especially because they are young. (Lamentations 3:27-28).

For several reasons; we have more energy, more will power, etc. but specifically because of our age!! We really don't know just how much power we have, and we'll talk about that in the next chapter.

But let's look at something. Okay, you may be young and not have much to do with politics or economics. But I'm sure you have a basic idea of where our government is at. Not in a very good place, but again that's just me.

You know that we are in an economic downfall; you probably have friends whose parents don't have jobs. I don't know where you live, but we have all seen crime. We know that our country is 3 TRILLION dollars in debt, (just so you know that's 3 with 9 zeros after it).

In other words, there's a lot going on in our country alone today. Not a lot of it is good either. But what about before all these things happened to our country? When prayer was allowed in public schools and the Bible was a history book. When the 10 commandments were presented in a court setting and everyone was fine with it. When the USA was considered a Christian Nation. (We will touch a lot more on this in chapter 5)

What happened?

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

I have thousands of answers for this question, Iâm sure you may too. But which one is the most reasonable? There was once a time when the United States was a Bible-based country. Now? Wellâto meâit seems that we are (according to that Toby Mac song) âChasing every breeze that blows our way, building our kingdom just to watch it fade away,â

In the Bible, Paul told us not to be so easily persuaded, (Ephesians 4:14) The Christian community, especially that of young people, needs to RISE UP!!

Why?

Because we are the next generation: if we keep doing everything that the world has been doing for the past however many decades; the generation in which we will be adults will be 10 times worse than it is now!! You are the next generation. Make sure itâs a good one. Remember you are a Christian. Christ lives *through* you. Can you see Him?

Chapter 2

How Much Power Do You Have?

1 Timothy 4:12 (NLT)

âDonât let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in you love, you faith, and your purity,â

In answer to the title of this chapter: You have more power than you realize.

How do I know? Because the Bible says that Jesus has all power, (Matthew 28:18) and that Jesus lives in *you*, (John 15:5) Put 2 and 2 together. You have as much power as Jesus does!!

My question to you is how are you going to use it? You may ask, âWhat do I have the power to do exactly?â

EVERYTHING THAT JESUS DID!!!! He even says so (John 14:12). It doesnât matter how old you are. Do what you can for the Kingdom of God. The Bible says that you can do something as small as giving someone in need some cold water (Matthew 10:42) and that youâd be rewarded.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

In the last chapter I talked about whatâ€™s going on around our nation today, well not all teenagers have the resources to travel around the entire nation to make a difference. I know I donâ€™t.

But all of us live in a community where something needs to be done. Do something!! What do you love to do? God has gifted you at doing something, we all have spiritual gifts. But sometimes we arenâ€™t willing to figure out what they are.

Iâ€™m telling you, all you have to do is figure out what you like to do. Look for opportunities to do it, and then do it for the Glory of God!! If you look in Romans 12; it says that if you haveâ€™l.the leadership abilityâ€™ for instanceâ€™ that you should take it seriously. It gives guidelines on how youâ€™re supposed to act as a Christian regardless of your age.

You have the authority to make a difference. Whatâ€™s holding you back? It canâ€™t be your age, thatâ€™s something you can use to your advantage. Thatâ€™s really all I have for this chapter. But remember God made you for a reason. I encourage you to find out what God wants you to do while you are on this earth, doing this will teach you to place yourself in His Will!!

Chapter 3

Donâ€™t Conform

Romans 12:2 NLT

â€™ Donâ€™t copy the behaviors and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know Godâ€™s will for you, which is good and please and perfect.â€™

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Don't conform to what you see.

That's one of the biggest problems we have in the teenage generation of today. Not to mention the education systems. Everybody wants to be like someone else! Why not be you? Unless you have the same problem that Pink did in her song "Don't let me get me" you need to be yourself.

I see this in my community all the time. Before I became a Christian, and even still sometimes now, I try to be anything other than who God has made and called me to be. If you don't want to be the way God made you! How will He use you?

One of my favorite people in the world is Joyce Meyer, and something that she says is that: Your first most important relationship you have is between you and God! The second is the one that you have between you and yourself.

You never get away from yourself!! You are always with you!! She points out that it's miserable to be around people you don't like. What happens when you don't like yourself? Tricky situation, right? WRONG!!

What I want to know is; why don't you like yourself? Is it because of what people say about you? Well, I'll tell you what I think about that. WHO CARES? When someone bullies someone else it's usually because they're insecure about themselves. Wanna know how I know?

Because I used to be one of the biggest bullies in the elementary school that I went to. I picked on *everyone*!! And because I did this, no one wanted to be friends with me, so I focused on making enemies: I didn't like myself because I thought I was too tall, too smart, too loud, too irritating, too obnoxious.

But, let me tell you, when God gotta hold of me, He told me what He thought of me; (Psalm 139:13-14).

Maybe you don't like your situation. Compared to your other friends you're boring and lame. I totally get it. But you seem to forget that you are more than what you see. God made you from the inside out. And considers you beautiful, He thinks about you *all* the time, (Psalm 139:7).

And most importantly besides all that; God, the Creator of the Universe, *wants to be your best friend*. You probably don't believe me. That's okay, you don't have to. Read it for yourself in Hosea 6:6 (NLT) "I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me, more than I want burnt offerings,"

He wants us to know Him!!

There is so much today that pressures us to abandon our faith. The world doesn't understand what we believe so they smash it. Jesus told us that in the last days Christians will be persecuted. But, hey, check this out, when you get smashed because you're a Christian, thank God!!

I am so serious.

One of the more major issues today is homosexuality. Okay, first of all let me establish this. I have several gay friends. I love them, and I hang out with them. But because I'm a Christian and I follow Christ, I do not agree with their life style.

You see, the issue of homosexuality is kind of getting out of hand in this country. I believe that God created the first family, and that it consisted of a man and a woman, and at one time that was the standard for

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

the American family. But we've gotten so far away from that, it's crazy.

Homosexuality is wrong; God says so, (Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13). But at the same time Christians are dealing with it wrong too. I totally think that if you have people in your school who are gay that you should be friends with them!! What a great way to share Christ!!

But don't let their lifestyle influence your beliefs. There are some churches today that consider themselves to be gay friendly! What?! A Gay Friendly church? That's a contradiction in terms!!

A lot of Christians are getting somewhat frustrated I believe. And I totally get that. But when we express our frustration in anger and hatred, we start to drive those stuck in darkness even further into their darkness; when we should in fact be coaxing them into the light. I just wanted to touch on that issue.

Chapter 4

Be Who God Made You to Be

Psalm 139:14 KJV

I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well

Do you know who you are? You are a Child of the LIVING God. (Just thought you should know that) Do you become a different person when you're around a different crowd a people? I used to, and it got me into a lot of trouble when all those different crowds collided with one another.

Be YOU!! What does that song by Cymphonique Miller say? Only you can be you, and I can be me! So be who God created you to be, stop pretending. Do not Fake it till you make it because you will never make it.

Do you know what the word Worship means? In Isaiah 58:5-7 it talks about false and true worship. Remember this was written around 700 BC, so I'll try to give my commentary on it. This is what it says in the New Living Translation:

(v.5) you humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

think this will please the Lord?

(v.6) No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free and remove the chains that bind people.

(v.7) Share your food with the hungry and shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help.

Okay, so basically, what this says is that you shouldn't *act* like a Christian, BE ONE!! So many times, especially as teens, we get caught up in the motions, trying to look good to others. No, bump that. Another great passage I encourage you to read is Matthew 23. (We'll talk a lot more on this in Chapter 8)

Be a Christian, and you won't have to try, because it will come naturally. Let God work on you!! Remember the Scripture verse for this chapter.

Now let's get down to this passage. No one in my school is homeless, starving, or doesn't have clothes! How about you? If there are kids in your school like this! Help them, obviously. But what happens if they aren't?

Well, if you have friends like mine, they don't like Bible thumping (coming up with a Bible verse for *every* situation), they don't like it when people try to preach to them, or act holier than they are. I totally get it; my friends are the same way.

So now what? Everything that God wants you to do to worship Him, are things your friends can't stand! What do you do? I'll tell you. I know for a fact that your friends aren't turned off by someone who takes time to be there for them, listens to their problems, and helps them. That's who you should try to be.

Jesus tells us that not everyone who calls Him Lord will get into heaven, only those who do the will of God. (Matthew 7:21) You can act like a Christian all day long, but God knows your heart. He knows everything thing you think and everything you say before you ever think or say it.

There's obviously a reason that you're a Christian! Because God wants you to be!! So now that you're a Christian, take it to the next level! Go show the world that you are a follower of Christ!!

Something that I had a serious problem with when I first became a Christian is that, I used it to my own social advantage. I remember reading passages of Scripture on Saturday night just so I would have them memorized by Sunday morning so I could recite them and people would be impressed with me.

Finally I realized what I was doing and I literally begged God to forgive me and change my heart. And that's what He did: He completely changed my entire mindset and train of thought.

To wrap up this chapter I'd like to say this: It is a process. I'm sure you know people, maybe even people your age who know the Bible and apply to their lives. I, for one, am definitely not there yet. But the more you read, the more you study, and the more you seek God: the more you will discover that your mind, mouth, heart, and spirit are filled with His Word.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Chapter 5

The Bible as History

Ecclesiastes 1:9 & 6:10 (NLT)

“History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new,”

“Everything has already been decided. It was known long ago what each person would be, so there is no use arguing with God about your destiny,”

I must say this is my favorite chapter in this book, because I am into history. It amazes me to think how far away we as a nation have gotten from Biblical principles, and I am sure it will amaze you too.

In this chapter we will discuss what the Bible has to do with the USA, and what significance it has to our history as the human race. We will look at different governmental documents that prove our founding fathers believed in God and Country. We will also go through different quotes from different presidents talking about their views on God.

Everything that is happening now, has happened before, and will happen again. The Bible is not only the history of the human race; it is your history of your family. Some people believe that the Bible is just a collection of fictional stories and philosophical teachings.

But this is proven to be false when studied deeper, we see that all prophecies that were made in the Bible in connection to this generation have either already been fulfilled or are in the process of being fulfilled. Of course because you are a young Christian, I wouldn't really get into all the prophecies of the Bible, though it would be okay to do so if you're interested in such things.

Now, let's look at the connection between the USA and the Bible. The Bible is the foundation on which this country was laid, it is the backbone of law in this country, whether the government wants to face it or not. As a matter of fact, Woodrow Wilson, the 28th president of our country even said this about the Bible, *“I am sorry for men who do not read the Bible every day. I wonder why they deprive themselves of the strength and the pleasure.”*

And, in the founding years of our country and well into the 1800s, the biggest church in Washington D.C. was the US Capital building; yes, that is right, the Capital building was transformed into a church every Sunday. The very seats where Congress sat were pews on Sunday. The podium, where the speaker of the

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

house stood was the pulpit. And hereâs the best part. The choir was the Marine Core Band. Yep, the government had the full package every Sunday.

There are also several minor details that prove the Bible is the basis of this country. In the 1950s when Dwight Eisenhower was president, he signed the bill that declared the national motto of the USA to be â In God We Trustâ. Want proof? Take out any piece of American money right now and you will find that phrase somewhere on it.

I wonder if the founding fathers of the United States would even recognize this country if they were here. I doubt it. I say this because our founding fathers believed in God and Country. Letâs look at some historical governmental documents that prove my opinion. The very first sentence of the opening paragraph of the Declaration of Independence says this; â *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.*â

Not only that, but the very last sentence in the Emancipation Proclamation, that Abraham Lincoln issued on January 1, 1863, states this, â *And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God,*â

This proves that our founding fathers expected the United States to be a God fearing nation. Now, letâs talk about some landmarks. Letâs start with the Washington Monument; on the east face, at the very top of the Monument, in Latin are the words â *Laus Deo*â which means: â *Praise Be to God.*â Of course, no one can read these words because of the height of the Monument, but that was the point, they were meant for the Heavens to see.

Letâs look at four major land marks in Washington D.C.; the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the US capital. Have you noticed that the four of these land marks form a cross in Washington D.C.?

Itâs phenomenal.

Now letâs talk about a few more Presidents and their views on God and Country;

Today, people are trying to take the â Godâ out of â God and Countryâ. Itâs impossible, and even if we could take God outâ!What would we replace Him with? The very God that weâre trying to get away from is the reason for this nationâs prosperity.

In the first chapter I mentioned about when the 10 commandments were presented in a court setting and the people were okay with it. Right now, you could not even imagine such a time. What happened to those â *Good Olâ American Values*â that we used to have? God is getting kicked out of *everywhere!!*

Letâs talk about 9/11 for a minute. I donât know how old you were when September 11, 2001 hit Americaâ! I was 3. But still, when I read about it today, it does something to me.

The men who put together those attacks on my country violated something inside of meâ! I donât know what it is, but every time I read or watch something on 9/11, anger wells up. I know it sounds silly, but Iâm being honest.

Anyway, I was reading a story about a born-again Christian pastor who was POSITIVE that Jesus was coming back in 2001, so when 9/11 hit, he thought his predictions had come true. He was wrong. He later

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

converted to an atheistic culture. When asked about this he said with a sarcastic tone, "Where was God during the 9/11 attacks?" And he went on ranting and raving on how Christians contradict everything the Bible says and everything else.

But that question stopped me. *Where WAS God during all that?* I asked myself. Then it hit me. It was around that time that God completely got taken out of school systems, government systems, and everything else.

God was where everyone was trying to put Him: OUTSIDE. Check out Isaiah 65:1 in the New Living Translation, here it is:

(v.1) [The Lord says] "I was ready to respond but no one asked for help. I was ready to be found but no one was looking for me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am' to a nation that did not call my name."

If we as a nation would've gone to God, I honestly believe He would've done something. Okay, back to the Bible being used in court rooms. Well, guess what? It's not that way anymore, The Sharia is what's used in the court rooms today.

What is the Sharia you may ask? It's the Muslim law. Let's see if this makes sense to you cause it doesn't to me; A country that was based off of the Christian faith and used the Holy Bible to establish a foundation for the law of the country decides that it will use a completely different contradictory law to govern its court rooms.

No, I still don't understand.

Here's the crazy thing. Since the United States of America declared its independence on July 4, 1776 all the way through the 1980s, the USA has been considered a Christian Nation. Not anymore though, but the 80s were only about 20 years ago. How could so much change?

These are questions I don't have the answer to at the moment, but I want to find out, and you should too. We are all in this together. (*High School Musical*, haha). But seriously, we represent the next generation, what part are you going to play?

Now here's the fun part of this chapter. The Bible used to be a school book. When kids started to read in school, the Bible was the first thing they would read, and because not a lot of other translations had developed at the time, they used the King James Version.

Not only that, but the Bible was used as a history book in higher grades as well. Today it's getting to the point that the higher ups in the country want to get so far from the prospect of Christianity that they've started to censor Jesus Christ out of history books, and trying to get Him out of history itself. What is that?

All religious activity was taken out of schools in 1963 in the case of *School District of Abington Township, Pennsylvania VS. Schemp*. The description of the case reads this,

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

(1st Amendment, Establishment Clause) A Pennsylvania State law required reading from the Bible each day at school as an all-school activity. Some parents objected and sought legal remedy. When the case reached the Court, it agreed with the parents, saying that the Establishment Clause and Free Exercise Clause both forbade States from engaging in religious activity. The Court created a rule holding that if the purpose and effect of a law is the advancement or inhibition of religion, it exceeds the scope of legislative power. (Taken from *American Government* By: William A. McClenaghan)

This is crazy!! I mean think about it really, the Bible and *all religious* activity was taken out of schools because a group of people opposed it! Think about what you could do if you and a couple of your friends created a little group opposing something in your community that you'd like to see changed! You can make as much difference as these parents did!!! And how much more so because you are young!!!

You never know, you might be the teen(s) that get the Bible *back* into our government and school systems!

One more thing I'd like to touch on before we wrap up this chapter is a very controversial subject that I know very little about scientifically, but I'm going to share my opinions and my beliefs on it anyway; Evolution.

To be honest, frankly, I do not like this word. It has caused so much confusion and misunderstanding that even some Christians have strayed away, so we know this can't be God, because God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). Let's look at the facts; evolutionists believe that man evolved from ape. Okay, even if that were true I would ask where did the ape come from?

Some say that the human race is the result of an astronomical catastrophe known as The Big Bang!

Common, really? I may only be 13 but I'm not stupid.

Do you really expect me to believe that something in space blew up, and as a result of that explosion life developed on planet earth and continued to mature, advance, and grow in intelligence with every passing generation?

I mean really, look at the brain itself. It is so complex, so wonderful, so organized. Everything is wired, completely connected in every way. Not to mention the fact that human beings are electric! The nerves in our bodies are electric, not to mention the spinal cord. Everything in you is connected one way or another.

I'm sorry but you can't tell me that God isn't real and you can't tell me that our founding fathers didn't believe in God and Country.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Dating Jesus

James 4:8a (NLT)

â Come close to God, and God will come close to youâ

Okay, enough with the heavy, but that was an interesting chapterâ Wasnâ t it? Well, I really do hope you found it interesting. But letâ s dive into something a little more personal.

Letâ s talk about your relationship with Jesus. In chapter 3 I talked a little bit about how God wants to be your best friend. Well, Iâ m going to expand a little more on that in this chapter.

First, let me ask you thisâ You have 24 hours in a day, how many of them do you give to God? Itâ s totally okay if you donâ t have an answer, or you feel the need to jump into your Bible or pray.

I want you to know that God really wants to have a relationship with you. I mean He obviously does, He died so that He didnâ t have to live without you.

When Jesus was on the crossâ arms outstretchedâ imagine Him saying, â I love you this much!â

When I got saved, I was told, â Now you have to read the Bible and let God transform you from the inside out,â Between you and me, I had no idea what that meant. That person proceeded to give me my own personal Bible. And Iâ ve had it ever since.

I soon learned that when you spend time with God, Heâ ll meet you half way. I understand that itâ s hard to *fit* God into your schedule; with school, family, friends, sports, maybe even band or school politics.

Yes, I totally get that itâ s hard to fit God into your schedule. Thatâ s because youâ re not suppose to *fit* God in. Make plans to spend time with Him. When you plan something, it gets done.

Now when you make plans to spend time with God, this is to be your special time with just you and Him and nobody else. Get a Bible reading plan, some devotional books, and talk to God.

Donâ t be afraid to interact with your Bible, to underline and emphasis passages of scripture. When you start to spend time with God, He literally starts to work on you from the inside out, and in my opinion, nothingâ s better.

People donâ t seem to realize that we are at the peak of our access to Godâ s Word. We practically have an unlimited amount of access to biblical and Christian resources. You need to take advantage of this.

Why?

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Because there is a time thatâs coming in which we will have to fightâ literally fightâ for our Bibles. Thereâs coming a time where our Bibles may even be taken away from us. And the only Word youâll have left is that which you planted in your hearts.

A frequent mistake that I used to makeâ and still do actuallyâ is that when I read my Bible, I read it in the carnal sense.

This is not a good idea.

Because when you read it in the carnal sense, you donât get anything out of it (John 3:6). When you start to read your Bible, pray and ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word. He will, believe me.

I used to think that in order for me to have Bible study; Iâd need to be in a church on Wednesday nights. I later learned that that isnât true. I can have Bible study when itâs just me.

You can too. Like I said earlier in the beginning of this chapter: Make time for God and when you sit down to spend time with Him, donât just open up your Bible and start reading wherever your finger lands: you wonât get anywhere playing Bible roulette.

A good method that I learned is to start with things that youâre curious about. Search the topic, read the Scripture references, pray, and study it for yourself; in the next chapter we will expand more on getting it for yourself. The Bible is Godâs Wordâ !You canât read it the way you would read any other book,

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God is LIVING. And that statement couldnât be anymore true. The Bible can transform you into a totally different person if you let it. But you must remember God will only go as far as you let Him. Donât let anything stop you from growing closer to God; donât let anything take His spot as #1 in your life. Build yourself on Him: He is always there.

Chapter 7

Getting it For Yourself

â Without my own study of the Bible, I might still be lost, perhaps confused by the teachings of some New Age cult. It was the Bible that turned me into a Christianâ

Pastor Doug Bachelor

God wants YOU to get it.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

It's alright to go to church every Sunday, and attend midweek services to an extent. But when that becomes the only source of God's Word that you get in your life, something's wrong. You shouldn't become dependent on church services.

Something that bugs me is how people sit in a pew every Sunday and watch God use *someone else* for His Glory. They let someone spoon feed them the word, as Joyce Meyer would say. Don't get me wrong, I love my church and I adore my pastor, but seeing God use my pastor in several ways motivated me to want to be used by God too!!

Think about it, when you go to church, and sit in the little pew, and hear the little message "What good is it? I'm sure you have heard of Jesus' parable of the farmer scattering seed, right? If you haven't you can check it out in Luke 8:5-8, 11-15. Jesus talks about 4 different types of soil in this parable. We are going to focus on the second one. Here it is:

The seeds on the rocky soil represent those that hear the message and receive it with joy. But because they don't have deep roots, they believe for a while, but then fall away when they face temptation, (Luke 8:13 NLT)

If you are not rooted and grounded in the Word of God, you won't get anywhere. It is very important that you study the Word of God for yourself. Make it personal!!

A good way to start is to get yourself a good Bible reading plan and work your way through the Bible. For me, I started to read 5 chapters a day at minimum. Sometimes I'd read them at different intervals throughout the day or maybe all at once. There were good days when I read more than 5 chapters, and even better days when I didn't want to read 5 chapters but I did it anyway and God revealed something to me when I did it.

You see, when we take the time to study our Bibles, and to get to know God, He rewards us for it. He will let you know that He's there. I can't stretch to you how important it is to get to know God for yourself!! Because once you get to know Him for yourself, He'll reveal to you what He wants you to do.

Let me ask you something. Do you know why Jesus Christ came into this world? To save the people from sin, right? Okay. Let's go back to Genesis. In the very beginning, when it was just Adam, Eve, and God; where everything was perfect. Adam and Eve had DIRECT contact with God. They could talk to God whenever they wanted to, and God enjoyed their company.

But one day, Satan decided that he wanted to come and mess everything up. (*You can study this topic for yourself -> Something happened between the verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1*). And unfortunately, he succeeded. Sin entered the world, and that direct contact that human beings once had with God was now gone. Moving on through the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy: God gave the Israelites His rules and regulations in order for them to regain direct contact with Him. Obviously, if He didn't want anything to do with them, He would not have done everything in His power to make them know He was the One True God.

Then God sent Jesus into the world to die for us so that we could once again have that everlasting relationship with God. Check out Luke 23:45. When Jesus died, direct access to the Father became available to us once again. So now, we can come boldly to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16). I don't really know

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

what else to say regarding this subject, except that it's really important for you to get to know God for yourself. It will change your life.

Chapter 8

Don't just Act

Matthew 7:20 (NLT)

â [Jesus said], â Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions,â â

Don't just act like a Christian BE ONE!!

So many times today, young people think they can get away with *acting* like a Christian. Going through the motions. They think they're fooling people! But what does it matter what people say? You shouldn't care what people think, only what God thinks. Remember after Saul messed up and Samuel went to crown a new king?

In 1 Samuel 16:6, it says that Samuel took one look at Eliab and assumed that God has chosen him to be king. But God told Samuel, *â Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart,â (1 Sam. 16:7)*

I had this problem. I used to *act* like a Christian, but deep down in my heart I was far from God. How did I get back on the right track? My godmom told me that, *â No matter how much you think no one understands you, God knows everything about you, He knows your heart better than anyone,â* Though I didn't get that statement in the sense in which she meant me to, it convicted me to the core.

I realized that if I'm just acting, will that really get me to Heaven? The Bible says, in Galatians 6:7 (KJV); *â Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,â*

He really got down on me because of that. He let me know that He had a plan for my life, but as long as I was going to pretend, I was going to get anywhere. I'm so grateful that God allowed me to make a U-turn and come back to Him! It reminds me of one of my favorite pictures.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

The Bible says that God is not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL turn and be saved, (Ezekiel 33:11). But as long as we are wallowing in our own mess, we are preventing ourselves from being saved.

A big problem for me when I had just got saved was that, whenever I went around my worldly friends, I would turn into a completely different person. And let me say she was far from the Christian Mariah. This wasn't a good look to my church. I got in *big* trouble when my church found out what I was doing.

I had to choose who I was going to serve. You know, the Bible talks about eating off the devil's snack tray as my pastor would call it in 1 Corinthians 10:19-22. There are several examples of people throughout the Bible who *acted*.

Let's look at some examples from both the OT and the NT (Old and New Testaments). We know the story of Samuel; his mom Hannah prayed that the Lord would give her a son, and if He did, she would give her son back to Him. And that's what she did. So, when Samuel was weaned, she took him to the Temple and left him there to serve a priest named Eli.

Eli was a good priest, but his sons Hophni and Phineas who also served in the temple, were wicked. The Bible says that they were scoundrels who had no respect for the Lord, (1 Samuel 2:12 NLT). Now these boys were *priests*, they had the most important job in Israel.

So anyway, going through 1 Samuel 2:12-17, it tells us all of the bad things that the sons of Eli did; they used their authority to their advantage. Now, I know that this may not come immediately to your head, but it does in mine! Didn't we the USA just have a problem with *priests and pastors* molesting young boys? This was happening all the way back in the B/C ages! We can go all the way back to Sodom and Gomorrah.

But back to the story! The worst part was that Eli knew that his sons were wicked!! Check out 1 Samuel 2:22. It shows what Eli said to his sons in verse 23-25, and at the end of verse 25 it says that the boys would not listen, because God was already planning to put them to death.

Think about that, God was planning to put two *priests* to death. Priests have the privilege to serve God throughout their entire lifetime. They have direct access to God. I mean really, who would want to mess that up?

I say all that to say this; Eli's sons had authority, the greatest authority in Israel. They were the ones who the people and judges (Israel didn't get their first king until 1 Samuel 8) went to in order to get right with God. They interceded on behalf of the people. They practically had Jesus' job! But they

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

abused their power, and that costs them their lives. I won't ruin the story for you though, go check it out in 1 Samuel 2:12-36; 4:10-11.

Now let's go to the NT and into Jesus' time. So, in Jesus' day and age they still had priests. But now they didn't just have the temple. They had synagogues, which are basically just churches.

But the priests were divided into two main groups Pharisees and Sadducees. (*It wouldn't be a bad idea to compare these two groups to the two political groups today known as Democrats and Republicans*). So, the passage that we're going to look at is Matthew 23. This is where Jesus criticizes the religious leaders.

In just the first 3 verses of chapter 23, Jesus is already making His point. Check out verse 3;

So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don't follow their example for they do not practice what they teach. (Matthew 23:3 NLT)

Wow, that's deep.

Even back in Jesus' time, *hundreds* of years after Samuel's time, people were STILL trying to fool God. The problem with the religious leaders was that they did everything for the publicity, to be recognized, and honored. In verse 7, Jesus says that the religious leaders love to walk through the marketplaces and receive respectful greetings and be called Rabbi.

This is absolutely true, and it still is today. The religious leaders fed off of and craved the people's attention. But that's where their mistake was; they were seeking approval of men and not of God. That was one of my BIGGEST problems before I ever got into a church. When I went to school in Romulus, I used to crave attention from anyone. I didn't care whether it was good or bad as long as I was getting attention.

Yeah, that didn't work out too well.

I learned to do ALL things to the glory of God and to do them to the best of my ability. But anyway, there are so many more examples of people in the Word who acted the way they thought God wanted them to act. Even the Israelites, after God led them into the Promised Land, they started worshipping God out of obligation, and only came to Him when they were in trouble.

Believe me when I tell you that is the LAST thing God wants. It all comes back to the same point. God desires RELATIONSHIP. He is the Creator of *relationship*. And He is a relational God. That pretty much wraps it up for this chapter.

But please remember; don't act like a Christian; BE ONE. God desires you to come to Him. Go!! Don't hesitate, it will be the best decision you will ever make, not to mention the most important.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Chapter 9

Witnessing

â Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit,â (Matthew 28:19)

Witnessing isnâ t a favored word among Christian teenagers, but it really is important.

The Scripture verse for this chapter is part of what many people call â The Great Commissionâ which consisted of Jesusâ last words to His disciples in the Gospel of Matthew. From what we see in this verse, Jesus is telling us to make disciples. This is not something that a lot of people like to do. I know I didnâ t.

Contrary to belief (*wink*), Iâ m not really a social person, especially with people I donâ t know. Even though I am *extremely* extroverted Iâ m a shy person. We all may have been created differently but we are all created in the image of God.

A lot of teens donâ t want to witness because they donâ t know how. You fear what you donâ t know, right? Well, witnessing is very simple, and once you get the hang of it, you wonâ t want to stop. I guarantee it. Because when we start to do something we know God wants us to do, why would we want to stop? Exactly, we wouldnâ t. So letâ s get into a few brief tips on witnessing.

First, what is witnessing? Iâ m glad you asked. A lot of people would say that witnessing is just spreading the Good News of Jesus.

I respectfully disagree.

Witnessing is SO much more than that. Witnessing is penetrating the secular culture to bring people to Christ. You see, it may be good to bring the *news* of Christ to the person. But you have the ability to *bring the person to Christ*. And thatâ s what witnessing is all about.

Itâ s even better because youâ re young!! What I mean is that, you already know what your unbelieving friends are like. You are familiar with the secular teenage culture. So you already know how to present the Gospel in a comfortable way to your friends. Like I mentioned in Chapter 4, your friends wonâ t be turned off by you being a good friend. And that is a great way to win them to Christ.

Thereâ s a familiar story of a young girl, maybe about 14 or 15 who had a large group of secular friends. But one day, while hanging out at the mall with this group, the subject of church came up. The group knew that this girl went to church and was a Christian, so they all looked to her and the â leaderâ asked â Sarah why do you believe?â The girl thought about giving a small quick answer to get the spotlight off of her, but than she reconsidered. This would be a great opportunity to get her friends to come to church with her and maybe even get saved.

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

So many times, teens don't reconsider and they lose a great opportunity to open the door for Jesus. You see, Jesus just needs a door, and as soon as that door opens He can begin working in someone's life. You can be the one that opens the door!! It doesn't take much. Let's look at some Bible based tips on how to witness.

First, let's take a look at 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. This book was written by Paul, and this specific passage shares his way of witnessing. Though we will only be looking at the second part of verse 22, I encourage you to read the entire passage. Here's 1 Corinthians 9:22b (NLT):

Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.

This verse basically speaks for itself. What Paul did was he found something in common with the person he was witnessing to. So, if the person was weak he would make himself to be weak, (1 Cor. 9:22a) or if the person was not under the law he would live apart from the law as well, but he wouldn't ignore the law of God (1 Cor. 9:21) and so on.

This is a very good witnessing principle. Because it allows us to relate to those who are suffering, much the same way Jesus relates to our suffering. Another really good witnessing principle is to remember this one thing: **How did you find out about Jesus?** Chances are, through someone else. Well, guess what? **Someone else is going to know Jesus through you.**

One last tip on witnessing before we close up this chapter is this; Do you remember how you felt before you met God? Well, there are people in the very place you're reading this at who feel the same way. You know what it's like *not* to have God. So you should make it your goal to get as many people to God as possible.

Chapter 10

Who and what is Evil?

Isaiah 14:12 NKJV

How you are fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Evil is real, and right now, evil is stronger than you.

I hope you don't get confused by the verse of this chapter. Do you know who Lucifer is? Well, to give you a basic run down, Lucifer is who the Devil used to be.

Let me tell you how it happened! (Or rather, the way my 14 year old brain conceived it to happen)

Now, this is before God created the Earth, remember what I said in chapter 7? About how something happened between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1? Well, this is where that comes in. Lucifer was the commander of the choir in Heaven. He was very handsome, he was favored above all other angels, and he was the first angel to be found with fault (we'll get into this later). His form was perfect and he was more majestic than any of the others.

But Lucifer was jealous and envious of Jesus Christ, though he wouldn't show it. Whenever the other angels bowed down to Christ, he followed suit. But God knew his heart.

Lucifer believed that he was good enough to be God, and that he should be. And unfortunately he led other angels to agree with him, thus creating a rebellion; though some angels tried to talk some sense back into Lucifer reminding him of the consequences of what he was planning to do.

But he refused to listen. He told those angels who were devoted to God that they were His slaves. These angels stood in amazement as they watched Lucifer successfully incite rebellion. Lucifer promised those who followed him a better government and a better law than the one that God had already established.

He continually insisted that the law of God (which, by the way, is as sacred as God Himself) was contradictory to what God claimed His character to be. The faithful angels warned the rebellious to close their ears to Lucifer's deceptive speech, and to go to God and confess to Him what they had planned to do.

A lot of Lucifer's followers began to take heed to the suggestions of the faithful angels and once again gained confidence in God and in His Son. Lucifer then told them, that he knew God's law well, but that if he were to submit himself to obedience that his majesty and honor would be taken from him. He said that he had gone too far to turn back.

He said that he would gladly take the consequences but he would never bow down to God and His Son again. He tried to deceive them by saying that God would never forgive them, but that they would have to face the same fate he was headed for. (Honestly, I really don't think Lucifer had ANY idea what his consequences would be for what he had done).

Thus, Lucifer, the Light-Bearer, became Satan, the Adversary.

Lucifer now Satan became the enemy of God. He is the one who brought sin into the world (Gen. 3), he is the reason why our world is in chaos (Ephesians 6:12), he is the reason that Jesus Christ came and died for you and me, (John 3:17). He is the reason.

I wanted you to know his background so that you can know that he was not always the way he is now. But what this chapter is about is the things that Satan is using to get to the younger generation of the Church in today's world.

The Bible says that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and if you remember when sin entered the world; man died spiritually and eventually physically. That was Satan's goal. He wanted to destroy

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

what brought God joyâ His creation. Unfortunately, he succeeded, and he still is today.

Satan doesnât like you. Wanna know why? Because you belong to God. And Satan is going to do everything in his power to change that; but you must be strong!! The culture in which we live today practically clings to the secular lifestyle. I understand that it gets hard sometimes, believe me I know. Iâm just like you, but that is why we must build ourselves up in our faith (Jude 20).

I attended a bible study a few weeks ago in which one of the elders of my church was telling me how her husband would âsaturateâ himself in the Word. Everywhere he went, the Word was somewhere close by. Thatâs the way i

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Being A Christian Teen in A Corrupted Culture

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-01-27 20:32:19