

By the grace of God we raised our three children the best we knew how, but in 2017 the stakes are higher than they have ever been. Today's world has changed drastically over the last ten years. For example, we parented before social media, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and sexting. Today is the new tomorrow when it comes to raising a teenager. Everywhere our children go and everything they see, from TV commercials to magazines at the checkout aisle in the grocery line, not to mention technology, they are bombarded with sexual temptation. They are inundated with other people's opinions about sex.

John 10:10 The thief (Satan) comes to steal, kill, and destroy (our families). However, Jesus has come so that our families might have abundant life.

Seven Discussions Every Parent Must Have With Their Teenager:

1. The Discussion of Dating

Song of Songs 2:7 (MSG) Don't excite love, don't stir it up, until the time is ripe—and you're ready.

Candy Gibbs:

“Many families allow their thirteen and fourteen year olds to date by dropping them off at the movies, letting them watch movies at one another's homes, texting and talking on the phone, and going to school dances together. Statistically, if young people start “dating” in the sixth grade (which is very common), then 91% of the time they will have sex before graduating high school. Sex is progressive. If we allow the progression to begin too young, we are simply fighting a losing battle. It is far easier to delay dating and similar activities than it is to allow it and then try to pull back the boundary.”

2. The Discussion of Sexting

1 Corinthians 6:18 (NKJV) Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

As a pastor, parent, and poppa, I am concerned about the well-being of our teenagers; as parents, we simply must invade their privacy. Checking text messages, looking at your cell phone bill to see if there are unknown numbers, and installing applications and programs to help you monitor are so important. You simply must know what is going on in their world, anything less than that is simply negligence.

3. The Discussion of Pornography

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (NKJV) For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God.

4. The Discussion of Technology

Psalms 101:3 (NKJV) I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.

In my opinion, the biggest obstacle in our families today is isolation. Somehow our culture has convinced us that it is okay for us to all live separate lives, that teens need to have constant contact with their peer group and could care less what you have to say. That is simply not the case. Your children are a part of your family and you need to function as such. Stop texting each other inside the same house.

5. The Discussion of Social Media

Proverbs 15:22 Plans fail when there is no counsel, but with many advisers, they succeed.

Snapchat:

This APP allows users to send photos that will "self-destruct" within ten seconds, encouraging kids to feel more comfortable "texting and sexting" with peers. Once the recipient opens the picture, the timer starts, and the image self-destructs once the time has expired. This app gives kids a false sense of security in sending inappropriate pictures or texts; however, damage can still be done within a specified time frame.

6. The Discussion of Cell Phones and Texting

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

7. The Discussion of Homosexuality

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 (NKJV) Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Brandi Burgess-Daughter of Rick Burgess of the Rick & Bubba Radio Talk Show:

"At 27 years of age, it is time to tell my story. I can no longer avoid my own eyes in the mirror. I have been silent, I have apologized, and I have wept. I have gone to therapy. And now, I need to tell my story. I need to tell other queer people, feminists, or activists that their voice matters, that they are not alone. I am a queer person living in Philadelphia. I am an actor, theater maker, and educator. I am an activist for gender equality, feminism, social justice, and a better tomorrow."