

Teaching them to park!

Intro:

- Look at 3 things
 - How much space is enough space to comfortably park
 - Parking straight on
 - Parallel parking
 - The purpose of parking?

Parking is an organized way to make sure cars can be put in a space where people inside the car feel comfortable enough to leave the vehicle and go into their destination.

In life, we want our teens to be feel comfortable enough that they can leave their secure environment (the home), and enter into their intended destination (their future).

So how much space is needed?

- Enough space so they can get out without feeling smothered causing frustration
- *Space is critical for a successful relationship with a teen. Being a parent who is rigid and not willing to be flexible is lethal*
- *The Challenge: Teens want independence but don't have the maturity or resources for full independence.*
- A big challenge parents have is to learn how much "space" to give our kids so they learn how to be independent while at the same time limiting the space so their independence doesn't get them into trouble.

Charles Swindoll has a great statement. "Parents who are secure and mature enough to give ground, provide space, allow room, listen more than lecture, release tight control, maintain a calm and affirming attitude and a good sense of humor can look forward to some of the most invigorating and adventurous years in all of life."

- *How much space?*
 - *Depends on what's been discussed before: temperament, age, birth order, relationship with Christ, position on moral absolutes.*
 - *Age only is not justification alone for independence*
 - *Question: What am I doing or going to do to make sure my teen becomes his own person and not dependent on me?*

Tips for proper amount of space in the parking lot

- #1- Be **Reak** _____ and be **Interested** _____ (not interesting-you, but interested-them)

- What's "parent mode"? Much like "preacher mode" Sometimes being talked to not as a real person but as a "teen".
- Proper space starts with real conversations showing real interest
- Deuteronomy 6:5-9, "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates*"
- A "real" parent is one who "lives" God daily with their kids instead of "lecturing" God on a daily basis using teachable moments.

Examples of teachable moments

- *Legalization of marijuana (why not smoke?)*
 - ***I Cor. 8:13, Rom. 14:13, Rom. 13: 1-5***
- **Curfews:**
 - *Prov. 22:6-"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."* (importance of teaching them responsibility)
 - *"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets".* Matt. 7:12. (When they disagree be sure and speak to them in a way you would want to be spoken to)
 - *Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Rom.12:10*
 - *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."* Eph. 6:4. (Help them understand why it's important to be obedient)
 - I Corinthians 13:11 says, *"When I was a child, I spoke like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways"* (the more mature they respond to things like curfew the more opportunity they have for more freedom)
 - Proverbs 18:7 gives wisdom when it says, *"A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul."* (If they speak disrespectfully to you then there's a good chance they will not achieve what they are wanting)

#2- Allow For Privacy

Get Out of My Room Please!

Ever wonder why your teen wants to always retreat to the solitude of their room and not be seen for days?

Why do teens need some privacy away from parents?

What happens to the trust level when a parent snoops around in their room?

How do you fix that problem?

Remember: "Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" Matthew 7:12.

Discuss ways a parent can give teen some freedom and privacy with social media while still keeping it under control?

- A survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project showed 32% of online teens (43% of social networking ones) have been contacted by strangers and 17% of online teens (31% of social networking teens) have "friends" on their social network profile that they have never met in person. Believe it or not 1 in 3 teen girls have had sexually explicit messages, pictures, or videos on their cell phones. (Not boys but girls!). Wonder what boys cell phones are like?

Direction from God's Word

- *"Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning." Prov. 9:9.*
- How about this paraphrase for our teens? ***Instruct a teenager and he will be wiser on how to handle uncertain things. Teach a teenager who is growing in Christ and he will become smarter of the ways of the world and the ways of God.***
- *"If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer." Prov. 9:11.* This is a great verse in helping your teen understand how they respond to your guidance goes a long way toward their freedom.
- *"He who seeks good finds goodwill, but evil comes to him who searches for it." Prov. 11:27.* Privacy can be a great thing for a teen's maturity if they use it for good. However, if they use that private space to search our bad things than usually nothing good comes out of that.
- *"The way of a fool seems right to him; but a wise man listens to advice." Prov. 12:15.*
- Teenagers have a really hard time listening to advice, especially when it comes to keeping yourself pure and staying away from trouble. They often think they can't and won't get trapped into bad activities. Teens will often think certain activities in private behind closed doors are harmless and there's nothing wrong with it. Parents this applies to certain video games as well.
- *"A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke." Prov. 13:1.* Just had to throw that one in for the dads.
- *"The fear of the Lord leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble." Prov. 19:23.*
- *Apply this verse to teen's privacy in their room and life in general. How would it relate to their choices?*

Okay, now we have to teach them to park straight on!

Symbolically we're talking about shooting straight with our kids. This is where we have to tell it like it is in the area of money, sex, friendships, family, behaviors, school, jobs, extra-curricular activity, church, or in other words life in general. Who is going to tell our kids the truth when it comes to some of the most important things they think about?

According to most studies dad only spends about 7 min. a day talking to their teen while mom spends twice that much (15min) talking in a meaningful way to their teen. Or to put it another way, parents spend 1.763% of each day talking to their teen in a meaningful way on average.

So how do you shoot straight with your kids? **Shooting Straight starts with....**

- **Step 1-You Can't Fool God**
- When it comes to teen sex...
 - When it comes to teen sex what wisdom do you think your teen is developing about it? What insight are they getting from all the media and print they hear and see every day? What plan do they have in place? Does any of their thought process internally go against what God would want?

Our teens have to know that we know that they have secrets and we are not going to try and force it out of them. (Think about your secrets from your parents when you were a teen)

Just because I didn't know what was going on it was important that they know that God always knew what was going on.

- Proverbs 21:21 says, *"There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord."*

The idea is that no man's wisdom or insight or plan that would be against the Lord will succeed.

- In chapter 10 verse 9 of Proverbs it says, *"The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out."*

There is another side however...

- Proverbs 16:3 says, *"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."*
- **Step 2-Earn Trust through Respect**
 - Ask yourself why a teen would not trust what their parent is telling them?
 - Teens will start to listen more frequently to their parents when they feel their parents respect them as a soon to be young adult rather than a kid.
 - When a teen does something that is not worthy of our respect we often will let them know by attacking the person and not problem
 - We must make it clear to our teens that we respect them and trust them as a person but we will be cautious when they do something that that discourages trust.

- The critical thing for parents to remember about gaining your teens trust in what you say is how you respond to their blunders emotionally and verbally. Remember, teens are emotional beings and feel everything.

5 Steps to help our teens trust and respect us

- **Step 1-Speak honestly with respect:** -*“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body” Eph. 4:25.*
- Give example of how this can be done if your teen comes home drunk and you’re more than upset. What steps of conversation would you take to make sure your teen still heard the truth with respect?
- **Step 2-Keep it under control-***“in your anger do not sin, don’t let the sun go down on your anger” Eph. 4:26.*
- Give an example of how you can talk to your teen in anger without sinning AND how would you communicate to them so that you don’t go to bed angry without solving the problem?
- **Step 3-Keep it tactful-**Watch your words and guard your tone. *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Eph. 4:29*
- According to this verse what is the ultimate goal of the parent when talking to your teen?
- What do you think “according to their needs” means and how would you apply that in your conversation with them?
- **Step 4- Keep it private-***“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice”. Eph. 4:31.*
- Notice the progression this verse takes from private sin to public sin.
- When there is strong disagreement between teen and parent it must be dealt with in a private manner. The quickest way to lose respect in the eye of your teen is to take a disagreement with them PUBLIC
- **On side note, never joke with your teen in a sarcastic way and then say “just kidding”. You might think it’s harmless but the teen will hold those words against you.**
 - *Like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death is one who deceives their neighbor and says, “I was only joking!” Prov. 26:18-19. Your teen will feel like you are deceiving them and shooting flaming arrows straight to the heart.*
- **Step 5-Keep it compassionate--***“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Eph. 4:32*
- Your teen will learn to trust you when you take the lead and show them compassion and forgiveness when they screw up
- They will start to run to you for advice when they realize every decision they make is not a make it or break it decision with you

Now the really hard part-Parallel Parking!

When teaching your teen to Parallel Park you can't do it for them. They have to do it by themselves and learn the hard way no matter how many times they have to keep trying. Often they will get very frustrated and want to quit. Parents too may get exasperated with the number of times the teen tries to get it right but they must let the teen do it. We can't do it for them or they will never learn how to get into the right space. So it is with life. We could step in and save our teen some anguish and pain but they will never learn how to properly handle certain situations if they don't do it themselves. I think one of the most difficult things a parent has to learn with their teen is to watch the teen fail when it could have been avoided. You can only protect them for so long. Eventually they'll be on their own and must learn on their own.

Steps to help them parallel park

- **#1- They have to Commit to Parallel Park**
- Committing to parallel park means the parent will help the teen through this difficult stage of learning to go back and forth until they get it right.
- Proverbs 16:3 says, *"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established."*

Discuss as parents what kinds of plans you have for your teens?

In what areas of your plans for your teens do you think they may have to try more than once to get it right?

- *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

What do our teens need from us in order to FEEL like there is a plan that will give them hope and help them prosper?

3 Ways to become a parallel park encourager

A. Help them know that no matter how many times they fail God will always be a safe place to run. *"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe." Prov. 18:10*

B. Help them know that God don't make junk and He has given them the tools to make it when it's difficult. *"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline". IITim. 1:7* He gives them a way not to fear if they call upon Him. There is a unique power they can draw upon that will help them love and be self-disciplined enough to solve this problem.

C. Help them not discard the importance of God's Word in everyday living. *"You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word"*. They will have hope and feel protected from making major mistakes in life if they focus on His Word and apply it in their life. Encourage them to read His Word often

Step #2- They have to agree to pull alongside another car.

- At a moment in time when the car is stopped it is maneuvered so that it is next to another. Our teens need many opportunities to pull alongside another.

- A parent should always make it available for the teen to have the opportunity to have mentors and companions when trying to do difficult things. Two are better than one and strength is found in more than one
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 says, *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.*
- *As a parent it is our responsibility to make sure our kids know they never have to go at it alone.*
- **#3-They need to check for obstacles coming their way**
- In order to properly parallel park the teen will need to look in their rear view mirror and make sure there are no obstacles in the way so they can start to back up.
- An obstacle is anything that would prevent our teen from being able to complete the difficult task. Some of those obstacles are discouragement, anger, frustration, lack of patience, depression, and a desire to quit. Parents need to stay on top of this for their teens and provide ways for them to develop endurance.
- Romans 5:3-4 *“More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,”.*
- Usually failure is something that a teen has to live through and not be lectured through

Colossians 1:11 says,

- *“May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.”*
- Colossians tells us that the only way they will be able to truly endure is to be strengthened by God and to receive a “power” that only He can give.
- The unique thing about this verse is it implies that the teen will be able to receive power from God so they can endure these difficult things in their life so that they will develop patience and joy.
- There’s nothing better for a teen and their instructor to watch him or her pull back and forth properly because they took their time and had patience to maneuver the car properly into the spot

Conclusion

- Well there you have it. We’ve learned about making sure our teens have enough space to be able to park properly. We’ve talked about making sure the teen pulls in the space straight on by shooting straight with them. Finally we talked about what is required to parallel park and help the teen continue to try and not give up no matter how many times it takes to go back and forth. With the right amount of love and support we can as parents teach our kids how to park in life.
- Take a few minutes and ask God to help you offer patience and wisdom as you teach them how to properly park in a very busy world.