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Why do
they do
this?





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viewIT: dvds

The movie follows the beginning lives of a polar bear cub, Nanu, and a walrus pup, Seela. The story takes us along their journey from birth to maturity, eight years later, with all the struggles in-between. We see that the mothers will do anything to protect their young from other predators in this life or death struggle. The biggest threat for Nanu and Seela is surviving the harsh, changing habitat climate of the north. The ice kingdom, which has given them life, is literally melting away in front of them. Their future survival depends upon the ice.

Narrator: Queen Latifah

Directors: Adam Ravetch
Sarah Robertson

Genre: Documentary/Family

Language: English

G General audiences. All ages admitted.



Starring: Drew Fuller, Bill Cobbs, Abigail Breslin, Brian Dennehy, James Garner

Director: Michael Sajbel

Genre: Drama

Format: Widescreen

Language: English

Subtitle: Spanish

PG For thematic elements, some violence and language.

Based on Jim Stovall's best-selling novel, *The Ultimate Gift* sends a young man of privilege on an improbable journey. Trust fund baby Jason Stevens (Drew Fuller) loves all of life's gifts, as long as they're bankable. But when his wealthy grandfather, Red (James Garner), dies, Jason receives a most unusual inheritance: twelve tasks, which Red calls "gifts," to challenge Jason to grow as a man. If he succeeds, the experience will not only change Jason forever, but he will discover the real meaning of wealth.

He Is Coming

“Everything is lost...” says Terry Dinh, Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA) Myanmar’s associate country director, in response to the devastation there.

On Friday, May 16, 2008, the Myanmar government estimated that more than 77,000 people were killed and nearly 56,000 missing after the May 2 cyclone struck the country’s low-lying delta region. In the absence of a clear picture, the United Nations estimates some 1.5 million to 2.5 million survivors are in desperate need of food, water, shelter, and medical care.

In China, the picture is just as dismal. As of May 31, the Chinese government raised the death toll from the May 12 earthquake to just over 69,000, with 18,800 more missing and thought to be dead. Thousands are still missing. Eight provinces were affected and the earthquake left about 4.8 million people homeless. Wenchuan Earthquake was the deadliest and strongest to hit China since the 1976 Tangshan Earthquake, which killed more than 240,000 people. The earthquake was felt as far away as Beijing (1,500 km away) and Shanghai (1,700 km away), where office buildings swayed with the tremor. The earthquake was also felt in nearby countries.

According to a report from the United Nations, in the last decade natural disasters have increased by at least 60%. The earth is suffering and so are we. “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth up to the present time.” (Romans 8:22, NIV).

We cannot deny that the Earth has been crying out

through these natural disasters. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 24:32, 33 that “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.”

In recent years we have heard and seen so many disasters that it is easy for us to become immune to these events. As Christians we must suffer with those who are suffering, we have to cry with those who cry, and we have to help those who need help.



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Photo: ADRA International www.adra.org

Resident clean up after a cyclone struck the country’s low-lying delta region on May 2, 2008.

But it is also important to remember Jesus’ promises. “when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door” (Matt. 24:33).

Jesus is coming. He is coming for you and me. He is coming to put this world to an end, and to give us a new beginning. Remember, remember, remember... He is coming. **Are you ready to meet Him?** ☐



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COVER: Bigstockphoto.com

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A native of Savannah, Georgia, **James Black** is a graduate of Oakwood College with a Major in Theology and a Minor in Biblical Languages. He also attended the Andrews University Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs; MI. Pastor Black began his ministry in the Southwest Region Conference where he served as youth pastor and senior pastor. He served as conference youth director from 1991-2000. He is serving his second term as the Director of Youth Ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. Many youth initiatives have been launched and training resources developed under his leadership. He and his wife Maxine have three children: James Jr., Raquel, and Stefani and a son-in-law. Pastor Black lives to show young people that JESUS truly is the WAY. His favorite saying is, "The quality of your preparation will determine the quality of your performance."

Dr. Peter Landless is the Executive Director of the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (ICPA), and an associate director in the General Conference Health Ministries Department. He is originally from South Africa, where he served as head of the coronary care unit at the Johannesburg Hospital, and also the director of Nuclear Cardiology for the University teaching hospitals. He has a number of publications in peer-reviewed journals, and has been honored academically and during his military service. His wife, Rosalind, is a software engineer. He has two daughters and a new son-in-law. His passion is the blended ministry – the recognition and practice of spirituality in health.



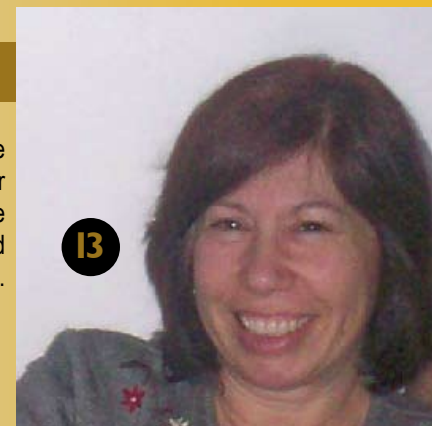
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the history of TATTOOS and BODY PIERCING

Tattoos The word “tattoo” is a borrowing of the Samoan word *tatau*, meaning to mark or strike twice (the latter referring to traditional methods of applying the designs). The first syllable “ta” meaning “hand” is repeated twice as an onomatopoeic reference to the repetitive nature of the action, and the final syllable “U” translates to “color.” The instrument used to pierce the skin in Polynesian tattooing is called a *hahau*, the syllable “ha” meaning to “strike or pierce.”

Tattoos have served as rites of passage¹, marks of status and rank, symbols of religious and spiritual devotion, decorations for bravery, sexual lures and marks of fertility, pledges of love, punishment, amulets and talismans, protection, and as the marks of outcasts, slaves and convicts. The symbolism and impact of tattoos varies in different places and cultures. Also, tattoos show how a person feels about another person, or how they feel about a relative, preferably mother/father or daughter/son.

Today, people choose to be tattooed for cosmetic, sentimental/memorial, religious, and magical reasons, and to symbolize their belonging to or identification with particular groups, including criminal gangs but also a particular ethnic group or law-abiding subculture. Some Māori still choose to wear intricate moko² on their faces. In Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand, the *yantra*³

tattoo is used for protection against evil and increase luck.

Body Piercing The modern body piercing culture emerged from the gay leather⁴ and BDSM⁵ subcultures. In 1967, New York jewelry maker Jim Ward joined the New York Motorbike Club, a gay S & M⁶ group, and experimented with nipple piercing. Ward then moved to Colorado, where he and other members of the Rocky Mountaineer Motorcycle Club experimented more broadly, with genital piercing in particular. In 1973, Ward moved to West Hollywood, California, where he met Doug Malloy and Fakir Musafar. Together these men developed the basic techniques and equipment of modern body piercing. Malloy introduced the use of the autoclave⁷ and hypodermic needle.

In the mid to late 1980s, a wave of body piercing studios modeled after the Gauntlet opened throughout the United States, Europe, and other cosmopolitan centers. The display of body piercing by celebrities like Madonna and Axl Rose⁸ helped to grow the market for these studios' products and services. The decisive migration of body piercing from sexual fetishism to commodity fetishism came with the Lollapalooza⁹ traveling festival of music performances, which began in 1991. These events greatly popularized body piercing by enlisting piercing studios as on-site vendors.¹⁰ (Wikipedia.com) ☐

¹ A **rite of passage** is a ritual that marks a change in a person's social or sexual status. Rites of passage are often ceremonies surrounding events such as childbirth, menarche or other milestones within puberty, coming of age, weddings, and death.

² **Tā moko** is the permanent body and face marking by Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand. It is distinct from tattoo and tatau in that the skin was carved by uhi (chisels) rather than punctured. This left the skin with grooves, rather than a smooth surface.

³ **Sak yant**, also called **yantra tattooing**, is a form of sacred tattooing practiced in Southeast Asian countries including Cambodia and Thailand. Sak yant are normally tattooed by Buddhist monks or Brahmin priests.

⁴ The **leather subculture** denotes practices and styles of dress organized around sexual activities and eroticism (“kink”). Wearing leather garments is one way that participants in this culture self-consciously distinguish themselves from mainstream sexual cultures. Leather culture is most visible in gay communities and most often associated with gay men (“leathermen”), but it is also reflected in various ways in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and straight worlds.

⁵ The term “**BDSM**” is an abbreviation derived from the terms bondage, discipline, dominance and submission, sadism and masochism.

⁶ **Sadomasochism** group.

⁷ An **autoclave** is a pressurized device designed to heat aqueous solutions above their boiling point to achieve sterilization. It was invented by Charles Chamberland in 1879.

⁸ Born **William Bruce Rose, Jr.**; February 6, 1962, frequently called Axl Rose, is an American musician, best known as the frontman of American hard rock band Guns N' Roses

⁹ **Lollapalooza** is an American music festival featuring alternative rock, hip hop, and punk rock bands, dance and comedy performances, and craft booths.

¹⁰ Information taken from www.wikipedia.com.

cover story



by James L. Black, Sr



BODY PIERCING and TATTOOS

A Biblical Perspective

Some fads spread faster than others. Some fads last longer than others. Some fads never end. Such is the case when it comes to tattooing and body piercing. The enticement of both practices has become a major challenge for many Christian youth and the question remains, "to do or not to do?"

THE PHYSICAL COMPLICATIONS OF BODY PIERCING

By Dr. Peter N. Landless

SO YOU WANT TO UNDERGO BODY PIERCING? The body is wonderfully designed and each tissue and organ has specific functions and characteristics. How does body piercing affect one physically?

Skin is the tissue most affected by body piercing. Other tissues which may be affected include the tongue, inside of the lips and the external genital areas. These latter organs are covered by skin or a modified structure similar to skin known as a mucosa. This lining of mucosa or skin is designed to protect from infection and irritants as long as it is unbroken and intact. The skin and mucosa of the mouth, tongue and genitalia produce protective fluids and oils. These help to ward off and sometimes trap infectious agents such as bacteria. Some of the fluids, especially saliva, have antibodies present as well to aid in the protection against infection and invasion by bacteria. In the tissue under the outer layer of skin are specialized immune cells (Langerhans cells) which are part of the skin's defense system.

The mouth and genital tract are home to certain bacteria which, when the lining is damaged or broken, may cause infection, abscesses or even septicemia (bacterial infection in the blood stream). It is for these reasons that infection is a common complication of mouth, nose and genital piercing. The presence of conditions that weaken the immune system may lead to infection and complications. Medical conditions which weaken/impair immunity include diabetes and HIV and AIDS. Allergies and chronic skin conditions such as acne and psoriasis may add to the chances of physical complications from skin piercing. Some people tend to form excessive scarring or keloids; in such individuals, body piercing may cause an overgrowth of scar tissue.

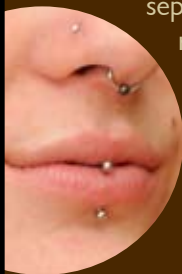
Apart from local bacterial infections, serious **viral diseases** may be spread through body piercing, which is not done using totally clean equipment and aseptic technique. These include hepatitis B, C, and the Human Immune Virus (HIV). The likelihood of spreading these infections is related to reuse of needles on more than one client, especially needles that are not solid (such as those used for administering injections). The effects of these viruses are not trivial and such infections should be avoided at all costs.

Piercing may also cause **nerve injury or damage to nerves**.

Over time, tongue piercings may result in direct damage to the teeth. Tongue, lip and cheek piercings may cause gum irritation and inflammation. Even nontoxic metals such as gold, platinum, titanium, and surgical steel may result in allergy in a small group of susceptible individuals. Allergy is a more significant problem when cheaper and impure metals are used.

There is additional caution and danger for those who may have **heart valve abnormalities**. If the piercing technique is not totally aseptic and sterile, there is a possibility of the affected heart valves becoming infected. This can be a life threatening condition. It is also worth noting that some blood transfusion agencies will not accept blood from an individual who has had a body piercing or tattoo in the previous twelve months. This is due to the risk of hepatitis B, C and HIV transmission mentioned previously.

From the physical viewpoint, body piercing is not without real and potentially significant risks. Maybe the old adage best describes the situation: "If it's not broken don't fix it!" The complications will be far less. **a**



Wikipedia's definition of tattoos is, "A tattoo is a permanent mark made by inserting pigment into the skin for decorative or other reasons. Tattoos on humans are a type of decorative body modification, while tattoos on animals are most commonly used for identification or branding."

A Harris Poll finds that 16% of all adults have at least one tattoo. The highest incidence of tattoos was found among the gay, lesbian, and bisexual population (31%) and among Americans, ages 25 to 29 years (36%) and 30 to 39 years (28%) (The Harris Poll #58, October 8, 2003). Furthermore, the United States Food and Drug Administration estimates 45 million Americans have at least one tattoo. Based on the statistics, it is likely that if today's teenagers have not yet asked to get a tattoo, they have at least had thoughts about getting one.

To combat this phenomenon, the Seventh-day Adventist Church provides a list of Bible texts in an attempt to convince our youth to avoid such practices. If this method fails, we typically provide a historical perspective. If this too is unsuccessful, we tend to resort to scare tactics about health issues and the detriments of tattooing and body piercing. Should every attempt avail naught, we conclude that young people are lost and there is no hope for them. It is my belief, however, that consideration of a unique biblical perspective suggests otherwise.

The two most common Scriptures cited in the argument against tattooing and/or body piercing are Leviticus 19:28 and 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Leviticus says, "You shall not make any cutting in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks on you." Later, Paul to the Corinthians says, "Or 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? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

I have to admit that the many interpretations I have read from Christian youth ministry professionals regarding these Scriptures are disturbing.



"We can't get matching nose rings. I'm saving that space for Peyton. But my eyebrows are available."

Almost all of them point to scholars who agree that these texts refer only to practices that were common among pagan religions. Such cultures would tattoo their religious symbol upon their loved ones before burial. (Mary Fairchild, "Your Guide to Christianity" <http://christianity.about.com>).

I must take issue with such scholars, because based on the Scriptures, they must either ignore or refuse to address the most important part of the texts, "...nor print any marks upon you; I am the Lord" (Lev.19:28). If they are choosing to let the Bible speak to them in a way that supports only what they want to do, then this practice fits directly into the Judges 1:25: "...every man did that which was right in his own eyes." **Such scholars lead many supposed believers to erroneously conclude that there is nothing wrong with anything. Everything is innocent and grace will automatically fix it.**

If God was offended by markings on the dead (Leviticus 19:28), it follows that He must be much more concerned about the living. It is the living, after all, who can model His glory. Why would He be pleased with

the living cutting or marking their bodies?

Paul's message to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 6:19-20) is both a clear and awesome Scripture regarding how we should treat our bodies. The problem with this text is that it does not provide "the what" or "the who" of which Paul is speaking. The questions, "what am I and who am I?" are addressed elsewhere in the Scriptures, but not here. Thus, the Corinthians text does not always build a foundation for a convincing argument about why the body should be respected.

In contrast, the Genesis account on how the world was created is of special importance to creationists. Since I am a created being, my foundation is in Genesis—as is my understanding about my body.

A youth once asked me why I did not pierce or tattoo my body. I shared with him Genesis 1:26. During the creation of the world, God was actively creating everything and responding that "it was good." However, when it was time to create man, God changed the tools and the pace. God not only used His hands instead of His voice, but also seemed to be more specific in the details of how He wanted man created. The text says, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness: let them have dominion...'" So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

The creation of man was intentional, careful, and specific. It seems God was particular with the details of who was doing the creating and who was being created. I also noted that this was the first time God did not say, "it was good." It could be that a perfect God did not have to validate the obvious. A perfect God did not have to compliment Himself on something created in His image. When God formed us from the dust of the ground and breathed His breath into our nostrils, it became personal. We became a unique and peculiar work of art by the Creator. That the creation was good was a given!

So, what do we say to God when we alter His creation with tattooing and body piercing? If His image is perfect, then we should want to be only like Him. Yet, rarely can someone tattoo or pierce themselves. Generally, it takes an artist or technician. So the questions we have to ask are: **What am I saying to God when I allow someone other than the Creator to reconstruct, redesign, or alter the way my body was created?** What am I saying to God when I allow someone to place their creativity on the Creator's work of perfection? Do I believe God made a mistake in my design? Did



God give me all the holes I needed in my body during creation?

Certainly, in His omniscience, God knew earrings would become a common fashion. How could He forget to put extra holes in my ears? How could He ignore the fact that these man-made practices would become popular? Why would God not give me the natural designs I want instead of allowing me to go through the pain of a tattoo artist to add permanent color and designs for my enjoyment? Maybe God really does not have a problem with all of this, though. Could it be that we are making a fuss over nothing?

God admits one thing: He is very particular about His stuff—mainly, His perfect creations. The enemy is always trying to counterfeit God's perfection. In the entire Bible, I find only one occasion where God admits He has a personal problem—an issue, if you will. God's admission of having a problem is found in Exodus 20:3. He says, *"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carve image- any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or the earth beneath...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I the Lord your God, am a jealous God..."*

God admits He has a problem with jealousy, and there is nothing positive about jealousy. I can imagine that when we allow a body piercing or tattoo artist at the mall to alter, change, or add to God's creation, He says, "I have a serious problem with that. I knew what I wanted on you when I created you. Everything I created was very good. How can you improve on very good?"

God says to His children, "I love you so much that I gave you internal tattoos." In Jeremiah 31:33 God reminds us that *"I will put my laws in their minds, and write it on their hearts: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."*

God says to His children, "I love you so much that I took all the body piercing for you. My hands, feet, temple, and side were all pierced for you. So, save yourself the pain." God adds, *"I was wounded for your transgressions, I was bruised for your iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripe we are healed"* (Isaiah 53:5).

Check out this encouraging statement by Ellen White as she uses the lost coin to describe how God feels about those He loves.

"The coin, though lying among the dust and rubbish, is piece of silver still. Its owner seeks it because it is of value. So every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God's sight accounted precious. As the coin bears the image and superscription of the reigning power, so man at his creation bore the image and superscription of God; and though now marred and dim through the influence of sin, the traces of this inscription remain upon every soul. God desires to recover that soul and to retrace upon it His own image in righteousness and holiness" (*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 194)

Following a statement like this, all I can say is "Lord, remember me!"


I pray this brief Biblical perspective will be a blessing to those who are struggling with the decision to alter or scar God's perfectly created beings. But, I am also concerned with how we as a church will deal with those who are yet to join the church that have already practiced tattooing and body piercing. Please remember that people cannot change how they were before they met the Lord. For many new believers, all these symbols and piercing now represent their past. Truly, many who walk with the Lord have a testimony.

It is not our responsibility to force people to have surgery, cover their scars, or otherwise alter portions of

the testimony of who they are. Such an attitude can be more offensive to God than the tattooing and body piercing that spurs it. After all, we would never ask a former alcoholic to get a liver transplant, ask a former prostitute to douche, ask a former smoker to have their lungs replaced, or call someone unclean because they ate pork. Once a person has accepted truth, it is our obligation to allow them to walk in it without judgment.

I was reminded of this fact very recently when I met a leader at a youth training event. I was particularly impressed with his fire for God, but couldn't help but notice obvious tattoos on both arms when he wore a short-sleeved shirt on the last day. In spite of my views, yes, I could not help but notice and I wondered how people in the church responds to him. It was obvious during the

weekend, however, that he was determined to help our youth see Jesus. Although some might have been asking what influence his tattoos had on impressionable youth, I am convinced that his current testimony speaks louder than his past. By his speech, it is obvious that he is a new creature in Jesus and in his heart, the "old things have passed away and all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Truly, "*man looks on the outward appearance but God looks at the heart*" (1 Sam. 16:7).

Let us encourage society and each other to get spiritual tattoos that are placed on our hearts by God. For it is these things that are written within that will shine in our daily walk with Jesus. Ultimately, these are the best demonstrations and decorations of who we are—God's perfect creations. 

CONSIDER THIS FIRST!

1. Do I acknowledge God as my creator and being created in His perfect image?
2. God created me as "very good," can I improve that?
3. Am I pleased with the natural look God has given me?
4. Do I want to glorify God with what I am doing to my body?
5. Do I need permanent symbols on my body to express what's in my heart?
6. Have I prayed about this decision during my daily devotion?
7. Did God impress upon my heart to do this?
8. Is my life in Christ an example for others to follow?
9. Is this something that will strengthen my relationship with Jesus?
10. Will I have any regrets?



keeping it real

with Jonatán Tejel



WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

The phone rang. She was crying her parents said she had to get rid of her tongue-ring or leave. Can she stay with us? My wife and I agreed that she could stay with us for a few days.

She was still crying when I opened the door. She could not understand why she had to choose between her body-piercing and living at home. We talked. We tried to make sense of her dilemma. I really wanted to understand *why* she did it. I asked her, she had no answer. After several seconds of silence she said, "I pierced my tongue because it's cool."

This is the problem. Many times young people, and us older ones too, do things without thinking of the consequences. We like to push the limits. Everybody else is doing it so it's okay. But is it really okay? Is it really okay to allow the world to have a greater influence on us than Jesus and his standards? No.

For Christians, tattooing and body piercing is wrong. You are not going to find any Scripture that encourages this practice. Our most important job is to gently lead them to Jesus and show them every day that Jesus cares and He understands.



1 Who should be blamed for the breakdown in the relationship? The parents? The young girl?

2 If you were the parent what would you have done?

3 If you were the youth leader what would be your reaction to the initial phone call?

4 Would you ask to speak with her parents first? Would you let her stay at your house?

5 As a youth leader, how should you react to members who have body piercings and tattoos?



THE PARTY

by Patti Emanuele

LIFE ISSUE: FAMILY, SELF ESTEEM, CONFIDENCE

BIBLE PASSAGES: 1 Corinthians 12:12

CENTRAL BIBLE TRUTH: We are part of God's body, and there are many parts, each equally important.

TEACHING AIM: As Christians we don't need to mark our bodies to belong to a group, we already belong to God's family.

THEME: Every generation has a mark that distinguishes it from previous generations. This will be the generation remembered for creating the most personal form of media there is – a permanent story painted on young bodies. The reasons are many, some in this generation will recall a struggle to survive. They will remember vividly words such as divorce, separation, fatherlessness, abandonment, abuse and blended families. This generation has lost their special place in that thing called family.

CHARACTERS: School friends, Ross, Nadine, Eric, Karen, Kati, and Justine.

SETTING: Outside a local junior high school on a warm spring afternoon. School has just been dismissed.

SCENE I

Eric slaps hands with Ross.

Eric: "Hey man, what's up?"

Ross: "Not much except... (Ross raises his shirt to reveal a curling snake tattooed on his belly).

Eric: "Wow, that's cool man. When did you do it?"

Ross: "There was a party last week."

Eric: "You did this at a party?"

Ross: "There was a bunch of us there. It was at Carla's house. She had a guy there who had done tattoos before and for just a few bucks he did all of us."

Eric: "Your mom let you do this? What did she say?"

Ross: "It was easy to go. She had to work a late shift. Dad's support didn't come in so she worked extra. She hasn't seen it yet. She'll go wild probably. But hey, I think it was worth it."

Eric is silent for a moment.

Eric: "Yeah it gets tough at my house too when my dad's money doesn't come in on time. What do you think your dad will say when he finds out?"

Ross: "Believe me, he won't find out. He never comes to see me anymore. Anyway, I'm busy. I've been hanging out at these parties, you know. The kids call them Straight Edge parties.

Just then Nadine, Karen and Justine join Eric and Ross.

Nadine: "Wow, it's hot out here. How ya' doin' Ross after last week's party?"

Eric: "You were there?"

Justine: "Yeah, we all were. It was cool. I got my belly pierced. Wanna see?"

Eric backs up from Justine and shakes his head.

Eric: "No, that's okay. What exactly is the Straight Edge? Why are you having parties? Should I care that I'm not invited?"

Karen: “Straight Edge is simply hanging together. We can get tattoos, body piercings all for free or next to free. It’s cool.”

Eric: “Oh, yeah, I’ve heard of this. It’s all about abstinence, no drug use, or smoking. I watched a film on it at youth group.”

Karen: “Exactly Eric. We know that you are a Christian and we figured you wouldn’t understand. That’s why we didn’t ask you to come to the party last weekend.”

Justine: “There’s another party this weekend Eric. We’ll listen to music, do the tattoo thing for those who want to and plan some events. Do you want to come?”

Eric: “Just tell me where it is. I’d like to see this for myself. Not everything I learned about the Straight Edge movement is so cool.”

Karen gives Eric a hug.

Karen: “Great! Here are the directions to my house. See you there.”

SCENE 2

Eric arrives at Karen’s house on Friday night. There’s loud music blasting from the windows. Cars are parked all over the front lawn. Eric shifts his weight from his left foot to his right foot and rings the doorbell.

Party Goer yells: “Come in! It’s open!”

Boy: “First timer?”

Eric: “Yeah. That’s Minor Threat playing isn’t it?”

Boy: “Yeah, they were the first to use Straight Edge and teach us about self-control. Self-control at any cost.”

Eric: Where’s Karen? I’d like to talk with her.”

Boy: “Come this way.”

Boy gestures for Eric to follow him through the gyrating bodies to the kitchen. There are newspapers on the floor and spots of blood on the counters. A girl is sitting in a chair while a guy is pushing a needle through her eyebrow.

Karen: “Monica, here just chew the ice. It will help with the pain.”

Karen looks up and sees Eric.

Karen: “Eric, glad you came. Now, you’ll get to see what Straight Edge really means.”

Just then someone turns down the stereo and makes an announcement.

Speaker: “Hey everyone, listen up. Justine is going to tell us about our battle-plan for the week.”

The room grows quiet.

Justine: “This is it kiddies. We got to stop everyone we know from using drugs, having sex and smoking the weed. No matter what the cost. I know of several parties next weekend where this stuff is going on. It’s our job, our duty to put an end to all this stuff. Who’s with me?”

The kids in the room begin to cheer.

SCENE 3

Eric waits for Karen and Justine after school. He folds up the newspaper he has been reading as Karen and Justine approach.

Eric: “I’ve been waiting to talk with you two.”

Justine: “What about?”

Eric pulls the newspaper out that he has been reading and begins to unfold it.

Eric: Look at this headline. Did you guys go to this party?” Eric points to the caption at the top of the paper. “Violence breaks out at teen party. Teen group, Straight Edge takes credit.”

Justine fidgets nervously.

Justine: “Eric you don’t understand. Change sometimes means violence. We just want everyone to have a better, healthier life. If they abstain from all that stuff they’ll be happier.”

Eric: “Are you happy Justine? Are you happy Karen? What do you really believe in? Do you know that you don’t have to get a tattoo, or a nose pierced or break up parties to be happy?” Can we take a moment so that I can tell you what group I belong to and who is really going to make you happy for the rest of your life.

Karen: “I get it, you want to talk about being a Christian

and Jesus right?"

Justine: "I don't mind listening. To tell you the truth I don't like all the violence."

Eric: "Why don't we take a walk on the football field?"

Lights fade and all three friends walk to the side of the stage.



SCUTTLEBUT

by Patti Emanuele

LIFE ISSUE: Relationship

BIBLE PASSAGES: Ephesians 6:1

CENTRAL BIBLE TRUTH: Parents and children should try and understand each other. God tells children to obey their parents, and parents should not antagonize their children. If we begin to remember how much we love and respect each other, we will be able to communicate.

TEACHING AIM: Sometimes it seems that getting a tattoo is the issue, but really the need is to stop and listen to each other.

THEME: Open discussion between parents and teenager is the goal of most families, even when the topic raises strong feelings.

CHARACTERS: Kelly—teenage daughter, Brian—younger brother, mom, dad, and baby Julia.

SETTING: Its dinner time at Kelly's house. Kelly and her family are sitting at the kitchen table. Everyone is talking all at once. Kelly is trying to tell her parents about a decision she has made that day.

Kelly: "Barb got her nose pierced today."

Dad turning to his wife: "This food is really good honey."

Kelly: "You're not listening."

Mom: "Sure we are, Kel. Oh, why does this baby always spit out her food in the middle of a nice dinner?"

Brian holding his nose: "Not to mention that she needs a diaper change. Mom, please."

Kelly: "Dad, you don't understand. I've got to do it."

Dad: "Got to do what Kelly. You really should explain yourself better.

Dad gestures to Brian while Kelly continues to talk to him.

Dad: "Johnny, pass me those potatoes, will ya."

Mom: "Brian, take your elbows off the table and close your mouth when you eat."

Kelly growing exasperated: "Dad, Mom, listen to me!"

Dad puts down fork, mom stops mopping up baby Julia.

Brian mutters: "This is gonna be good."

Dad: "Okay, Kelly, let's talk. What do you really have to do?"

Kelly: "I have to get at least a nose-ring, maybe a tattoo."

Dad stops chewing and puts down his fork. Mom gasps.

Dad: "Really? Why is that young lady?"

Dad stares at his daughter. Kelly is 15, but he still sees a 6-year old making a mess with the ketchup.

Kelly: “Everyone’s got a nose-ring dad. It’s really cool. Even Jenna’s mom let Jenna get one. You know her mom; she goes to our church.”

Kelly turns to her mother seeking support. Her mother wipes baby Julia’s mouth with her napkin and clears her throat.

Mom: “Yes Kelly, I know Jenna. She is a nice girl. The problem is once you’ve pierced your nose, you will have it forever.”

Dad: “Kelly, how’s it going to look at a college entry interview or on a job interview? You’re not going to be a young kid forever, you know.”

Mom: “Dad’s got a point, Kelly. I mean, do you know all the changes a body goes through as you get older?”

Dad: “Yeah, and it’s not pretty.”

Mom shoots Dad a sharp look across the table.

Kelly notices the look and says: “Uh, this is about me, remember?”

Brian: “I don’t know why you want to get your nose pierced. I think it’s gross. I wouldn’t want a girlfriend who’s done that to her face. Although maybe with you, Kelly, it might be an improvement.”

Kelly picks up her plate from the table, pushes her chair back angrily and plunks her silverware in the sink.

Kelly: “You guys just don’t understand. It means something to me.”

Kelly stomps upstairs and goes into her bedroom.

SCENE 2

Later, Kelly is doing homework in her bedroom and there is a knock on the door.

Dad: “Kelly, it’s me, can I come in?”

Kelly reluctantly gets up from the bed. She steps on her cat’s tail by accident. The cat screams.

Kelly: “Sorry, Cali.”

Kelly flings open her bedroom door. Her dad is standing there holding a chocolate sundae.

Dad: “How about some ice cream?”

Kelly knows Dad is saying he’s sorry.

Kelly: “Come on in dad. What do you want to talk about? As if I don’t already know what that is.”

Dad: “Give me a break will you? I’m old you know.”

Dad gives her a wide grin. Kelly and her father sit on her bed and begin to eat their sundaes.

Kelly: “Thanks, Dad. This is really good.”

Kelly scoops up a huge spoonful and shoves it into her mouth.

Dad: “I still want to talk about our conversation at the dinner table.”

Kelly: “I think it’s all been said. You just don’t understand.”

Dad: “Help me to understand, Kelly.”

Kelly: “Okay, it’s like this. All the cool kids have tattoos or body piercings. It’s not a bad thing. I want to be unique, Dad, special.”

Dad is quiet. He continues eating his ice cream.

Kelly glances at him, waiting for him to reply.

Dad: “Kelly, you are unique. God made you and broke the mold. You are special in His eyes. The Bible says that He knows even the hairs on your head. You are so special to him, so one of a kind that His Son, Jesus, died just for you. Nothing you do to the outside of your body will ever make you more unique or special.”

Kelly: “There’s one more thing, Dad. I want to express my love for Jesus by getting a tattoo. Not a big one, something small, maybe a cross or something. It means a lot to me. I want others to know that I am proud to be a believer in Christ.”

Dad is silent for a moment. He keeps eating his ice cream.

Dad: “I’m proud that you want others to know that you love Jesus. Why don’t we go downstairs and discuss that

with your mother? There are many ways that you can show your love for Jesus, Kelly. You can start by telling others that He died for them so that they can be with Him in heaven. Can we at least discuss this together? Come on, Julia is asleep, and Brian's watching TV. We can talk without interruption."

Kelly: "I was hoping you would just say "yes," but I guess we could talk more about it."

Kelly and her father leave her room and start downstairs.

Dad: "Kelly..."

Kelly: "Dad?"

Dad: "You left the bedroom light on."

Kelly laughs and runs to her room and switches off the bedroom light.



Say What?

by Jon Brooks

LIFE ISSUE: Family, Family Relations

BIBLE PASSAGES: Proverbs 6:20-21; 13:1, 18; 15:1-2, 32; 23:22; James 1:19

CENTRAL BIBLE TRUTH: You can listen and in listening be heard.

TEACHING AIM: To lead youth to identify and list how to be effective listeners and effective verbal communicators in their families.

I. Fellowship and Worship (15 minutes)

- Inquire at your local library in order to obtain copies of the *American Manual Alphabet* for each youth. As youth arrive they will find the chairs paired off and facing each other. Hand each youth a copy of *American Manual Alphabet*. Explain that they are to work in pairs to complete this exercise. Point to a large sheet of paper on which you have written instructions that direct them to use their handouts as a tool to sign a complete sentence. Ask volunteers to "sign" their sentences to the whole group. Instruct the rest of the group to try to guess what each volunteer is trying to communicate.

- Lead the group in singing some of their favorite action songs. You may start with an upbeat chorus, such as "Jesus Is a River of Love." Then move to more praise Christian action choruses, such as "From the Rising of the Sun", and so forth. The importance is on the actions, as they are a means of communicating.

2. Comparing Two Types of Communication (10 minutes)

- Ask a previously enlisted teenager to read the following passages using only sign language: Proverbs 6:20-21; Proverbs 13:1, 18; Proverbs 15:1-2, 32; Proverbs 23:22; James 1:19.
- Call on another previously assigned youth to read

aloud the same verses. Ask the group to respond to the two types of communication by answering these questions: Which one was most effective? Which one was the most difficult to understand? Why? Point out to youth that communication is difficult and that it is accomplished only when the person you have sent a message to receives and understands the message sent.

3. The Bible Speaks (15 minutes)

Share the following insights with the youth, using the following information. As you present this information, write the key points and accompanying Scripture passage on a large sheet of paper.

Be Slow to Speak

- God's Word puts the stress on listening when it comes to communication (James 1:19). Listening is an active form of communication. It takes much concentration to really comprehend what the sender wants to say. Many individuals have a difficult time listening because they are already considering their response, even as the sender is still trying to communicate an idea. The Bible clearly advises Christians to be slow to speak. This is to allow the individual enough time to hear first and then determine a response, not vice versa. When others sense that you are genuinely listening, they most likely will return the favor.

Whom You Listen to Is Important

- The Bible clearly states that whom you listen to is important (Proverbs 23:22; Proverbs 6:20-21). The world would have teenagers believe that listening to one's own desires is best. It is quite clear that God's plan is for you to listen to the instruction of your father and mother. God has instilled in parents a danger signal for their

children. Parents react when this signal goes off and their main desire is to protect their children. Sometimes adults don't communicate effectively their fears or feelings of hesitancy. Many times they cannot pinpoint why they feel as they do. Despite this reality, the Bible remains clear about whom you should listen to. It would be wise for Christian young people to listen to their parents, even when they might disagree.

Experience the Rewards of Effectively Listening to Your Parents

- God wants Christian teenagers to experience the rewards of effectively listening to their parents (Proverbs 13:1, 18; Proverbs 15:32). Teenagers need to allow God to protect and provide for them through their parents.

Learn to Distinguish Between Responding and Reacting to Another's Communication

- An individual's response, verbal and nonverbal, will indicate how well the person listened. Christian young people must learn to distinguish between responding and reacting to another's communication (Proverbs 15:1-2). Responding occurs when an individual strives to listen to what the other party is saying, regardless of one's own emotional feelings. Reacting occurs when an individual can no longer be objective as a result of surrendering to emotions. The result is often an emotional reply, at which time communication starts to break down. Many Christian young people find this to be a great weakness in their lives. They react, especially if the sender is sending a message that they would rather not receive. One who responds has learned to truly listen and hear the heart of the communicator, not the words alone!



4. Helping You Hear (10 minutes)

- Create a poster listing the following 9 steps, entitled “Helping You Hear.” Direct attention to the “Helping You Hear” poster. Walk through the following practical suggestions listed on this poster.

To help visualize what you are trying to guide youth to apply, ask two teens to face one another and act out the suggestions listed. Because so much of effective listening deals with body position, make sure you thoroughly explain and illustrate each step clearly.

Helping You Hear (title of poster)

1. Face the person who is talking.
2. Make eye contact.
3. Listen without interrupting.
4. Listen for total meaning.
5. Catch the emotion.
6. Empathize by trying to feel what the person talking is feeling.
7. Avoid trying to think of what you will say next. Wait until the other person is finished talking.
8. Keep an attentive posture—body leaning slightly toward other person, arms uncrossed.
9. Allow a little time before responding. Immediate feedback makes individuals feel as if they have not been heard.

5. Sharing and Praying (10 minutes)

- As the lesson concludes, direct youth to pair up with the same partners they worked with in Step 1. Ask the youth to share with their partners a hurt, a prayer request, or something that God has shown them during this lesson. As the youth begin to share, encourage them to practice the listening skills they were shown previously on the poster. Throughout this exercise, display the poster as a reference for the youth. This is a most crucial time for application of the lesson. Express the importance of this time to the youth.
- Point out that every teenager wants to be heard and now is the time for that to happen. Explain that if they will effectively listen to their partners, then they will most likely be listened to when it is their turn to share. After sharing, direct youth to pray for one another’s concerns.

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SECOND THOUGHTS

By Patti Emanuele

LIFE ISSUE: Decision Making

BIBLE PASSAGES:

Psalm 119:34

CENTRAL BIBLE TRUTH:

We must trust God with every decision that we make.

THEME: Decision Making

TEACHING AIM: To help youth make wise decisions.

CHARACTER: Friends Jill and Stacey, Willy the tattoo artist, a frightened make customer, a guy with an iPod accompanied by a girl, and a man as last customer.

SETTING: A tattoo parlor on the edge of town.

Jill gazes at tattoo parlor and turns to Stacey**Jill:** “I can’t believe I’m doing this.”**Stacey:** “Come on, don’t be such a chicken.”

Stacey takes Jill by the arm and pulls her through the front door of the tattoo parlor.

A boy is listening to his Ipod and a girl looks up from her cell phone. Both stare at Jill and Stacey. The room is quiet.

Stacey announces: “Uh, yeah, we want to get tattoos.”**From the back a man pushes aside a cloth curtain and enters the room. He is dressed in black pants, and is wearing a sleeveless t-shirt. His arms and bald head are covered in various tattoos. He glances at the two girls and grins. His gold tooth glimmers in the florescent light.****Tattoo man:** “Okay, I get that. I’m Willy.”**Willy places his hands on his hips and says, “Who’s going first?”****Stacey gives Jill a push forward.****Stacey:** “My friend Jill is going first. She can’t wait.”**Jill turns her head quickly to glare at Stacey.****Jill:** “I’m not sure,”**Willy:** “Well, make up your mind, I don’t have all day. I suppose you’re scared, is that it?”**Just then a young man with long blonde hair bursts through the door. His arms are covered with Christian symbols.****Young man:** “Hey, Willy, you gotta put a fish on my foot. I mean, come on, it’s time for another tattoo, and I need a fish, maybe two”**Willy glances at the Stacey and Jill. Willy crosses his arms and taps his foot:**

“Well, girls, are we doing it or not? You want a fish too? Then maybe your mom and dad won’t be upset. They can’t get upset over a Christian fish, can they?”

Stacey: “You’re right, they can’t. See Jill, it’s gonna be okay.”

Willy: “I have to go back there and finish with this guy. [Willy points at man who wants a fish tattoo.] You decide what kind of tattoo you want. I’ll be right out.”

Jill: “You know, I think I can do this. I’m not scared anymore. Let me see, what spiritual reason should I have for doing this? We have to come up with a reason, right?”**Jill and Stacey are silently thinking.**

Stacey: “I think it is a good opportunity to demonstrate courage. We are strong in the Lord.”

Jill: “You’re right. God does say that

we can do all things through Him who strengthens us.”

The guy with the iPod leaves. The girl follows him out of the store. Jill and Stacey are alone. Suddenly there is screaming.**Jill:** “What’s that?”

More screaming can be heard.

Stacey: “It’s coming from the behind that curtain.”**The young man who wanted the fish tattoo runs from the back of the store past the girls and out the front door.****Young man as he passes Jill and Stacey:** “Run girls, run for your life!”

Willy emerges from behind the curtain. He is holding a bloody needle.

Willy: “I seem to have an open appointment. Okay, girls, who’s going next?”

Jill: “Let’s get outta here!”**Stacey:** “Right behind you.”**The two girls run through the doors, pile into their car, and race off leaving the tattoo parlor behind.****Willy to the audience:** “Can’t imagine why they ran outta here.”**Man walks through front door.****Man:** “I didn’t expect it to be so empty in here.”**Willy:** “I happen to have an open appointment.”

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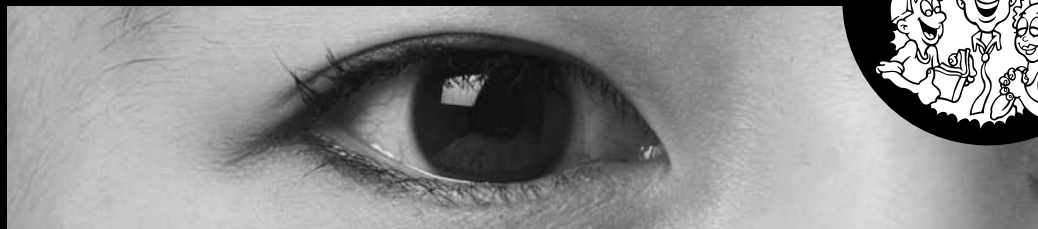
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WATCH & DISCUSS THIS DVD

SOUL SEARCHING

INTRODUCTION

“Soul Searching: A Movie about Teenagers and God” is based on the findings of the book *Soul Searching: the Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, by Christian Smith and Melinda Denton (Oxford University Press, www.oup.com), which reports on research conducted by the National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR, www.youthandreligion.org). The movie introduces major themes and findings of the book, but also goes further in depicting some of the inner lives of a number of different kinds of American teenagers referenced in the book. Individuals and groups of movie viewers, including perhaps classes and discussion groups of youth leaders, may find that “Soul Searching” generates provocative ideas and issues for discussion and debate. The following questions are offered as potential starting points for such reflections and discussion:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS


1. American popular culture often portrays teenagers as rebellious, distant from the adult world, alien creatures from “another planet,” impossible to understand, driven primarily by “raging hormones,” at odds with their parents, and something that adults must simply try to survive. In what ways does the story of this movie agree/not agree with those stereotypes? What are the implications of this for the religious and spiritual lives of teenagers?
2. What in this movie surprised you? Why was it a surprise? What are the implications of these surprising findings and stories for how we might understand American teenagers and their religious and spiritual lives?
3. What are some of the influences and issues that seem to challenge or undermine the religious faith and spiritual practices of American teenagers? What kinds of struggles and doubts do some teenagers have around issues of faith?
4. What is “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism” (MTD), according to the movie? How different from or similar to more traditional religious faiths is MTD? In what ways do you personally see MTD as a positive kind of faith versus a problematic development in American religious culture? Why? Do you see MTD around you in your own life?
5. The movie and the research stress the issue of teenagers being able to articulate what they believe, why they believe it, and what difference it makes. How important or unimportant do you think the ability to articulate faith is? Why?

- 6.** What larger cultural, social, and institutional forces and influences are important in forming the lives of American youth? How do those forces and influences relate to the religious and spiritual lives of youth? What are possible implications for religious communities, traditions, and congregations?
- 7.** How might the religious faith and lives of youth be challenged or encouraged differently or similarly in different socioeconomic and geographic settings? What are the key issues that confront a life of faith in, for instance, an impoverished inner city as compared to affluent suburbia? What are the similarities across such different settings that are common to most American teenagers?
- 8.** How, if at all, did hearing from these teens affect your own perspectives or beliefs about the religious and spiritual lives of teenagers?
- 9.** What role do parents and families normally play in the faith lives of their teenage children, according to the movie? How is that illustrated in the lives of the youth portrayed in the movie? Was this surprising to you? Why or why not?
- 10.** According to the movie, what role can religious congregations play in shaping the faith of teenagers? How is that illustrated by some of the teens depicted in the movie? What might

religious congregations do differently in light of the findings of the NSYR as portrayed in this movie?

- 11.** What does the movie suggest about the influence of “role models” in the lives of teenagers? What can non-parental adults do to positively influence the lives of adolescents? How much of that happens in our culture and society today? Why or why not?
- 12.** According to the movie, religious faith and practice makes a difference in practical outcomes in teenagers’ lives. Did this research finding surprise you? How and why do you think this happens? What are the causal forces at work in religion influencing life outcomes?
- 13.** If you were to have to tell a clergy person or youth worker or youth minister what the implications of this movie are for their work with teenagers, what would you tell them? Why? How do you think they would react to what you have to say?
- 14.** If this movie would have had the time to portray a greater diversity of religious types of American teens—such as Muslim, Pagan, Eastern Orthodox, Buddhist, or Unitarian teenagers—what do you think, based on the teens it did portray, it would have found about their religious and spiritual lives? Why?
- 15.** According to the movie, 85% of American teenagers believe in God,

yet only one-third attend religious services regularly. Why do you think so many teenagers are apathetic?

- 16.** If you are a teenager, how did you react to this movie? Why? If you have a teenager, how do you think they would react to this movie? Why?
- 17.** If you worked with the teenagers portrayed in this movie or were the parent of some of these teenagers, what would you want to tell them about their faith? Why? How do you think they would react to what you have to say?
- 18.** A movie is never simply a direct visual representation of academic research. Do you think a movie like “Soul Searching” can represent research scholarship well or not? In what ways is a movie constrained by the nature of the medium in its ability to represent academic scholarship?
- 19.** What do you think might have been missing from the movie? What are stories that you think it might have profitably told? What other pieces of the puzzle would you like to see filled in?
- 20.** After watching the movie “Soul Searching” (and perhaps reading the book, *Soul Searching*) what questions do you still have about the religious and spiritual lives of teenagers, in America and worldwide? What else do you think would be interesting and important to investigate? 

20,000

attend Philippine-wide Youth Congress

BY WILSON A. SIA II

Valencia City, Bukidnon, Philippines

Seventy thousand Adventists flooded Mountain View College (MVC), as pilgrims to the Holy Land for the Third Philippine-wide Youth Congress at Valencia City, Bukidnon in southern Philippines on April 14-19, 2008. Organized by the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) Youth Department, more than 20,000 young people from the three unions within the Philippine archipelago participated in the congress.

The kickoff program boasted a grand parade around the MVC campus. The Philippine flag led the march and delegates wearing their congress shirts carried their flags representing the Adventist Youth (AY) in the Central Philippines, North Philippines, South Philippines with bands announcing their arrival. The General Conference Associate Youth Director, Dr. Hiskia I. Missah was the main speaker. He delivered his inspirational message on the congress theme "Youth, It's Time". SSD Youth Director Jobbie D. Yabut, opened this massive youth gathering in a drizzly, yet festive Monday afternoon of April 14, 2008.

Pastor Yabut certainly opened the doors with his keynote message “Youth, It’s Time to Start” on the congress’ opening night of the congress. He told the young audience to make the best use of their time. He also congratulated teens for choosing to be part of this event for their self-enrichment. And he enjoined the delegates to actively participate in the sessions, workshops, and more than 20 team-building games, which will be useful in having balanced and effective youth ministry.

Thousands in merry bands coming from all over the country came to witness this rare gathering, with the entire event broadcast live by the Hope Channel on local TV Channel 7 and a local FM radio station. World Youth Director Dr. Baraka G. Muganda, World Pathfinder Director Jonatán Tejel, World Associate Youth Director Dr. Hiskia Missah, Singapore Youth Director Simon Siew, and Kaleb Sagala from Indonesia were the invited resource speakers. Each were there to inspire and encourage delegates with their presence and messages.

Dr. Muganda shared wisdom on how to have a happy marriage, starting right from choosing whom to court, and from wedding to staying in the marriage, in his April 18 presentation entitled “Anatomy of a Happy Marriage.” Reflecting on the overwhelming support of church leaders and members to his congress,




Muganda thanked all attendees in his Sabbath message, “A Healthy Manifestation of Spiritual Growth and Maturity among Church Members in the Philippines.” “So far, this is one of the biggest youth congresses I have ever attended since I became the GC Youth Director in 1995,” he added. Muganda also underscored that he loves the young people of this church so much and he wants all Adventist youth to be saved and be translated to God’s everlasting kingdom.

In the light and context of Luke 8: 22-25, Muganda admonished young people to “Hold on! Hold on! Hold on to Christ! No matter what happens, for your redemption draws nearer and nearer.”

The closing program on Sabbath afternoon, April 19, was highlighted by a mass baptism of 89 precious souls; investiture of 93 youth leaders as MasterGuides; the awarding and

recognition of outstanding youth leaders; and a commitment service.

At the conclusion of the congress, Pastor Missah preached a sermon entitled “Youth It’s Time to Thank,” invoking the youth to be thankful always in all circumstances and reminding them of the countless reasons why we need to be thankful for this congress. “See you in the next youth congress to be held in the earth made new by God, where Christ is the organizer and speaker,” he added.

Thousands of candles were lighted up for the commitment service before Muganda offered the commitment prayer. A resounding singing of the congress theme song “Youth, It’s Time” filled the MVC Alumni Church as the delegates sang the lyrics: “Youth, it’s time to take the call; let every soul reach one and as soldiers of Christ we will not give up the fight! Youth, take courage! Youth, it’s time!” 

BY JONATÁN TEJEL

I'm going to express my theology of Youth Ministry by giving you 11 steps on working with young people based on biblical principles.

In some parts of the world only a small percentage of our Adventist Youth remain in the church; many actually end up leaving the church completely.

Studies also show that a lot of young people live with loneliness, low self-esteem, anger, confusion, pain, no sense of purpose, treatment of indifference, un-met expectations, and many other negative emotions.

We have before us a very big challenge.

This article is not intended to analyze the reasons our young people do not want to remain in the church. Instead, the purpose is to make us aware of principles we can use to reach our youth, help them remain in the church, and lead them to Jesus and His love.

We have to show them through our example how to become disciples of Jesus. "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12, NIV.

The goal of youth ministry is to save the youth. This has always been and will always be our ultimate goal. This is a big challenge that youth leaders have to face every day in their ministry.

Let's look at some of the decisive principles we can use to win our Youth for Jesus and for service in the church.

“ Sometimes we talk too much and we can't **feel** the pain of others. ”



periscope

the
theology of

working with young people in
YOUTH MINISTRY



1. Modeling and Communication—Genuine faith begins at the heart of the family. Evangelization should start in the cradle.

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6, NIV.

“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.” Deuteronomy 6:7, NIV.

2. Exhibit true and consecrated love for our children and for our youth.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34-35. 34, NIV.

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.” 1 John 4:7-8, NIV.



3. Make them feel the need to have a deep and personal relationship with Jesus.

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people”. Jeremiah 31:33, NIV.

“You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.” John 6:67-69, NIV.



4. The youth have to see that God and we are interested in each one of them individually. They have to feel that their salvation is our concern also. We should organize group and individual activities to achieve that.

“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.” Matthew 10:29-30, NIV.

5. You must learn to listen—by listening you will discover what young people and teenagers need.

Don't try to talk to their minds if you are not talking at the same time to their hearts. Sometimes we talk too much and we can't feel the pain of others. Empathize.

“For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:10, NIV.

6. Talk the youth language. I read somewhere that a certain organization conducted a worldwide survey. The question was asked, “Please, give your honest opinion regarding the lack of food in the rest of the world.” The results were disastrous.

The Europeans didn't understand the meaning of lack.

The Africans didn't know what food was.

The North Americans asked about the meaning of the rest of the world.

The Cubans asked for explanations about the word “opinion.”

The Venezuelan government still talking about the meaning of honest.

Paul used different ways to share the Gospel depending on the group he had in front of him.

“When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ...”

1 Corinthians 2:1-6, NIV.

7. Salvation is a free and personal choice. Give the youth the choice and respect it! We frequently make the common mistake of ignoring them, despising them, or “attacking them” if their choice is not the same as ours. This is not correct; they have to feel that even if their choice is not the same as ours we love them just as much.

“The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.” Ezekiel 18:20, NIV.

8. If a youth leaves the faith and is living a lifestyle contrary to what they know is right we must become like the Prodigal Son's father, we must have an attitude of hope for their return (Luke 5:11-32, NIV).



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9. *We have to integrate them into the church from a young age (6-7, or earlier).* Because of a lack of integration in the church and the attraction of this world, we have to face the problem that many of our teenagers may leave the church.

“He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.” Luke 4:16, NIV.

“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:14-15, NIV.



10. *Give them the possibility and the motivation to have the need to testify about Jesus.*

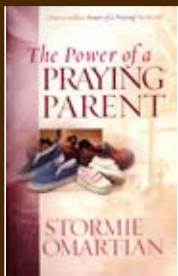
“Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” 1 Corinthians 9:16, NIV.

“Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. but if I say, “I will not mention him or speak any more in his name,” his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.” Jeremiah 20:8-9, NIV.

11. *Share with them a practical experience of evangelism.* When the youth feel for real that their mission is to proclaim the Gospel, and we give them the opportunity to make this a reality, their lives can be transformed by the Holy Spirit.

“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, and discharge all the duties of your ministry.” 2 Timothy 4:5, NIV.

Youth work can sometimes be a challenge, but it is still one of the most rewarding journeys you can take. Be hopeful. Be faithful. “Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.” (Isaiah 40:30-32, NIV). ☐



Award-winning author, singer, and songwriter Stormie Omartian and her husband, Michael, spent 20 years raising their children...and

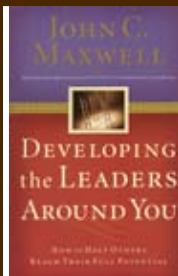
learning the power of praying for them. Now, in 31 short, easy-to-read chapters, Omartian shares how you can pray through each stage of your child's growth, from early childhood through adulthood.

Learn how to turn to the Father and place every detail of your child's life in His loving and capable hands:

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- Character development
- Peer pressure
- School
- Marriage
- Friends
- Relationship with God
- Family relationships
- Adolescence
- Career choices

Whether your child is 3 or 33, it's never too late to discover the joy that comes from being a part of God's work in his or her life. Being a perfect parent doesn't matter. Being a praying parent does.

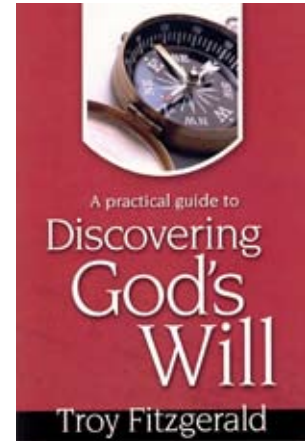
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Be Still

Both Dave and Marlene are accomplished musicians and were individually successful in their own musical spheres when God brought them together to begin a music ministry that would have a greater impact than either would have accomplished alone.

Dave began playing piano before the age of three and Marlene began violin lessons at the age of three. Dave is currently a music instructor and the music director for Centerville Seventh-day Adventist Church. He holds a B.S. degree in business marketing and is pursuing an M.B.A. in finance. Marlene received her B.S. in music performance with violin emphasis from Southern Adventist University and currently is an orthopedic physical therapist, with an M.P.T. from Andrews University. They both enjoy the outdoors in a variety of ways, including gardening, hiking, camping and bird-watching.

Dave and Marlene's unique traditional music style reaches out to a wide range of listeners. Be Still contains 14 meditative hymn arrangements including "Fairest Lord Jesus," "Be Still My Soul," and "Softly and Tenderly."

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We dedicate this praise CD to you, our friend. You who listen to us with an open heart and are willing to come before the presence of God as you listen to these praises.

Thank you for your support in this ministry and for inspiring us. We hope that as you listen to these songs your spirit may be lifted up to the presence of the Lord.

Join us in exalting the One that deserves all the glory, honor, and praise.

As long as we have strength in our bodies, together we will continue praising God.

for interesting information check out <http://www.wikipedia.org/>

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia homepage as it appeared in early 2006. The main heading reads "Welcome to Wikipedia" with the tagline "the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit" and a note that it has over 2,361,888 articles in English. Below this, there are sections for "Today's featured article" (The Battle of Blenheim), "Did you know...", "In the news", and "On this day...". The "On this day..." section highlights May 5th as George's Day in various countries and the start of the American Civil War. The page also includes navigation links, search bars, and a sidebar with "Featured content" and "Recent deaths".