

15+ Bible Truths for Parents of Struggling Teens

Encouraging, Powerful, Life-changing Verses from the Bible
and Advice from Victory Academy for Boys

Truth

for Parents of Struggling Teens



Thank you for downloading this resource from Victory Academy for Boys. At Victory Academy for Boys, we believe the Bible is the inspired truth of God and is “breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” We believe that “his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.” These Scripture verses from 2 Timothy and 2 Peter focus on the importance of the Bible to encourage us, correct us, equip us for every good work (like parenting), and more. We have compiled a list of Bible verses that we feel will be of specific help to parents of struggling teens. We have added some notes of explanation and advice that we hope you’ll also find helpful. We know the battles you face, as well as the discouragement, frustration, and sense of hopelessness you feel; and we care. If you feel we can be of help to you and your family, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at Victory Academy for Boys.

Before reading through these verses, take a few minutes to pray. Ask God specifically to encourage and instruct you through his Word. Ask that his Holy Spirit would speak these truths to your heart and strengthen you in your inner spirit for the struggles you are facing. Pray that these promises would come alive and that your faith to believe them would be strong.

May God bless the reading of these Bible truths to your heart and life.

Sincerely,
Mark Massey
Executive Director
Victory Academy for Boys
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Proverbs 13:24

Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him. **Note:** Most Bible scholars would not interpret this to mean that we must spank (and certainly we must not beat a teen), but that we should be diligent in disciplining them using appropriate means: a system of discipline and, when appropriate, allowing for the natural consequences of their actions.

Proverbs 29:15

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. **Note:** Two elements are essential to a child learning wisdom: pain and instruction. If either of these two elements is left out of our active parenting, we just simply aren't doing our job. The main point of this proverb is that parents must be active in training their child, with a proper balance of teaching that is "backed-up" by a system of consequences. These consequences must be painful enough that the child will listen to the teaching. The pain would need to be appropriate for the purpose of aiding the learning process. For a young child, that might be a spanking (you can read further about how to biblically spank in our resource, "Spanking Suggestions"), while taking the cell phone would be far more painful for a teenager. As the proverb implies, actively parenting takes time, and if that time isn't given, the result is often a child that is a heartache to a mom (and a dad).

John 14:26

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **Note:** What a comfort to know that, if we are sensitive to the Spirit of God, He will teach us how to parent our children through the tough things that they face. The bonus is that if our children are Christians as well, the Spirit will lead them and teach them Himself. We should be encouraged that the Creator has already planned and implemented the process of teaching you and helping you to apply the Truth.

Psalms 119:9

How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. **Note:** Take some encouragement from the fact that this question was asked several thousand years ago. There really is nothing of significance that is truly new. It has always been a struggle for a young man to live a pure, clean life. The solution lies in the young man's need to check and crosscheck his thinking with what God has said in His Word. As a teen grows up and matures in his thinking, it is important for parents to intensify their involvement and interaction, so that there is ample opportunity to engage their thinking and challenge (in a positive way) their conclusions and applications of God's truth to their behavior (life). The Bible is a crucial part of raising godly children. Family devotions, personal time with God, and attendance at a church with preaching and teaching that the teen respects, engages with, and responds to is imperative. Accomplishing this may mean major changes in routine, church, etc.

Matthew 5:19

Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **Note:** Often we want to bend the Bible truths and relax them to help excuse ourselves or our children. We must be careful to apply the truth of Scripture accurately to our family and to ourselves.

Matthew 5:1-48

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. ... **Note:** Not only does this passage describe again the characteristics of a true Christian, but it also describes the way that parents should interact with their children. Doing otherwise can "provoke them to wrath" and cause them to stumble.

Proverbs 25:26

Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked. **Note:** This is another verse about the importance of holding firm regarding what is right and what is wrong. The answer is not to compromise with sin in our child's life, although there are times we have to pick our battles and deal with priorities of sinful behavior. Those sins which are more grievous and carry greater consequences must be disciplined first, while allowing the Holy Spirit to deal with lesser sins we may see as parents. Tackling too much at once in your child's life can overwhelm them and cause them to be discouraged and want to quit trying.

I Peter 5:7

Casting all your anxieties on him (the Lord) because he cares for you. **Note:** Children are likely the number one worry parents have. Finances come and go, VBS will run or not without you, the car either will make it the next hundred thousand miles or it won't, but we as parents always have, close to the front of our minds, a great concern for how our children are doing. Our children face great challenges as they grow up. We question how they will deal with sexual issues, finances, their jobs, marriages, friendships, and a myriad of other decisions they will have to make as they grow up. Recognizing God cares more about who your child is and what his decisions will be on the crucial issues of life should encourage us in at least two ways. We should be excited that God is at work in your child's life, because God is a good Father who will discipline, correct, and instruct him/her. Secondly, we should be very quick to drive all issues of our parenting back to God and His Word so He can give us the answers we need. When we cast our cares upon God, we should be engaging with Him in His Word and prayer, so that He can direct and empower us to address the needs that our children display.

Matthew 10:16

“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. **Note:** This verse tells us to be vulnerable, innocent, peaceful, yet not stupid when dealing with others and giving them Gospel truth. The application for parents of struggling teens is that we need to expect them to hurt us (like a wolf may hurt a lamb). When they do so, we need to react peacefully and kindly, yet wisely. We need to make sure we maintain our innocence (like a lamb) and not give them cause for blaming us. We need grace to maintain control in not saying or doing anything as a reactionary response to the hurt. This includes yelling, cussing, belittling, or worse. As a snake takes cover when an enemy approaches, we need to be wise enough to know when we need separation between our child and us or our family.

Luke 18:1

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. **Note:** I believe what the old preacher, Charles Spurgeon, said back in the 1880's is still true: "I can suppose a father [being so burdened for a lost son would resort to] setting apart a day of prayer, going on wrestling with God without any intermission; pleading with him till, as it was said of the famous martyr of Brussels, he would so pray that he forgot everything except his prayer; and when they came to call him to meat, he made no answer, for he had got out of all earthly things in his wrestling..., that he could not think of anything besides. Such a man taking up the case of a lost sinner, I believe, would be the means of that sinner's conversion; and the reason why some are never brought to Christ, is, speaking after the manner of men, because we have not got the qualified to deal with them; for 'this kind goeth not out save with prayer and fasting.'"

Ephesians 4:11-16

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. **Note:** Do not try to conquer this situation alone. Do not be embarrassed or humiliated that your child is struggling. We are all part of the body of Christ. Each one has his or her gifts and abilities. Reach out to others who can help with support, encouragement, prayer, mercy, and help for your teen. Start with your local church and community of believers. If you need to reach further, we would love to talk with you. Perhaps the gifts and experience of the staff we have assembled here at Victory Academy may be able to help. We would be happy to talk with you.

1 Timothy 5:8

But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. **Note:** Certainly this means that parents should provide for the needs (not every want) of their children. However, by application we can be sure this implies not only physical needs but spiritual and emotional needs as well. We are to provide adequate time, relationship, support, encouragement and more.

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. **Note:** the word "anger" here can also mean discouragement. True godly discipline and instruction will not lead to anger and discouragement in our children. When anger and discouragement are present, there is a deeper cause in either the parent's life or the child's life that needs to be rooted out.

Romans 13:4

For he (the authority in our life) is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. **Note:** Most of the time we don't even think of the civil authorities as one of God's ways of correcting our children. Embrace the rules and penalties of the civil justice system. There are many great people, some of whom are Christians, who have dedicated their lives to helping teens through some of their stupid choices. Do pray for wisdom and for God to connect you with those who would be favorable and helpful from your Christian perspective. If you fear what the "system" might do, remember that they are all under God's sovereign hand. It may be that your son or daughter needs to have the heavy hand of the law snatch them away from a dangerous trajectory of life.

John 14:15

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **Note:** A result of our children truly knowing the Lord and having a relationship with Him is that our child will have a heart and desire to keep God's commandments. This is more about a "want to" than a "have to." If there is no "want to," or if there is consistently no willingness to invest in obedience to God's commands, perhaps the problem is that your child doesn't really have a relationship with the Lord and needs authentic life-changing salvation. This is a very important distinction to make. An old, crude illustration is that a goat is always a goat. You can spend a lot of time trying to get a goat to act like a sheep; and in the end, you still have a goat. Our whole approach to our children's needs must first focus on their need for salvation, then spiritual growth. As we train our children about character issues, the moral motivation will naturally come up. Their constant failure to live up to the character targets of Scripture also needs to be kept in front of them. They need to see that they just can't make it without Christ. He cleanses us from our guilt, and then the Spirit empowers us to live a life that is pure and pleasing to God. There is no way to successfully tackle all of that on your own. Then we have a great opportunity to show our children that Christ is the answer.

Psalms 27:14 (KJV)

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD. **Note:** Do not lose hope. Be relentless in your pursuit of seeing your teen changed and redeemed. Continue to hope in God. You may have to wait weeks, months, or even years, but do not lose hope in the saving grace of God.

Philippians 4:6-7

The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Note:** "Everything" means **every** thing. Be specific in your prayers for your struggling teen. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide and help you in your prayers to envision the kind of man you want your son to become based on what the Bible says a godly man should be. Use the spaces below to write out some specific requests you believe God has laid on your heart for your teen.

Thank you again for downloading this resource from Victory Academy. We understand the heartache and struggles you face, and we care. If you ever feel we can be of help to you or someone you love, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. You can call us or email us using the contact information below. May God strengthen you and encourage you through His Word and prayer, and may God bless you as you strive to help your teen.

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