

help cries

A Work Shop That Builds a Bridge



My silver hair, their orange hair.
My settled attitudes, their unpredictable unexplainable behavior.
My empty days, their daily rush to go somewhere, anywhere.
My cherished quiet moments, their multifocused blur of sights and sounds.

Our Purposes

- **Recognize and understand the cries for help from our teens.**
- **Be fully persuaded Jesus Christ fills their every need (and ours).**
- **Establish scripture as our pinnacle 'how-to' manual.**
- **Accept my generation's responsibility to reach out to them.**
- **See that my silver-haired generation is the best suited to do this job.**
- **Show others we believe that time is running out, by our actions.**

(In this resource, “senior” means “silver-haired adult”.
“Ex-teens” cover the ages 19 – 2 something.)

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Help Cries

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(Our Mission is stated at: helpcries.blogspot.com/p/about-help-cries.html)

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My Value of the Harvest

#1 SOS! ... SOS! ... SOS!

“BUT THAT'S JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG!” We've all heard the phrase that emphasizes a greater portion not easily seen.

For me, one of the first images that come to mind is the sinking of the Titanic Passenger ship and the loss of 1500 passengers, most of which froze to death in the frigid Atlantic waters of 1812. While many factors all worked together to cause the never-forgotten calamity, I read of the arrogance of the ship's owners and builders saying the Titanic (with its latest technology) is indestructable; unsinkable. This incident is a bold clear testimony of the futility of man's inventions and creations.

That iceberg was following one of God's laws that man will never change – ice floats in water and always with a definite fraction of itself submerged. Another law is that man's devices pitted against God's will always loses.

This Help Cries Workshop is a guide to better understand more of the depth of the 'disparity' iceberg in the lives of most of our youth today. Scientists say we see only one-ninth of the iceberg above sea level. Can you imagine what portion of the unseen distress of ex-teens?

To get a clearer perspective of these hidden dangers and hidden distresses amid God's creation (and control) we need only to search the scriptures to see many examples of ships and the perils they faced. The greatest ship that comes to my mind was built by an amateur surrounded not by water, but by a sea of skeptics flooded with their own ego and sinful ways.

I smile thinking of the passenger list of the Ark Noah built according to God's blueprint. There were only 8 humans sharing shipspace with a zoo comprised of animals all enemies of each other. If there was ever a place for animals to pick a fight with no zoo security force to calm things down, it was on that ship.

While it's my own belief, I've convinced myself that God shut the ark's door, as reported in scripture to prevent any of the humans on board from opening the door. They would have opened the door to let in the drowning humans that were crying for help clawing at the sides of the Ark.

God's plan for life on earth, amid all of His laws, physical and spiritual, are flooded with His redemption, mercy, love, and grace..... and.... HIS timetable and justice.

The Titanic's radio operators radioed the Morse Code distress letters SOS... SOS. An additional code radioed to anyone who'd listen was CQD... CQD. One of the CQD's meanings is COME QUICK! DROWNING! COME QUICK! DROWNING! Even though many ships and land-based radio stations heard the Titanic's SOS screams, the closest responders were at least 4 hours away.

Our youth today are signaling us with just as much effort, “WE ARE DROWNING in this deadly sea

of technology. We don't know where our lifeboats are, or even if we are allowed in one.”
The difference here is that God has placed you well within reach of at least one radioing COME
QUICK! I'M DROWNING!

What is your response? It helps to get to the right answer is you imagine someone you love is on that
doomed ship. ..

#2 *Didn't and Couldn't*

Robbed, Beaten and Dying – A story-lesson Jesus told.

Previously we saw two ships surrounded by death. Neither was just a story – but literal history. In each case cries for help were heard by others, but no help was given. Help for the Titanic passengers was just too far away to get there in time. The people outside the the Ark Noah's family was in, had previously chosen to not trust in God's warnings that judgement for man's sin was coming.

Now we'll bring this 'help-cries' lesson closer to home with a very well known Bible lesson Jesus used to teach several principles most everyone can understand and should apply, as Christians.

In the 'help-cries' lesson in Luke 10, Jesus teaches how often our prejudices prevent us from giving lifesaving aid to those we 'rub elbows' with. The lesson is well known to us as The Good Samaritan and answers the question, “Who is my neighbor?” That question was posed to Jesus, trying to trick Him, in explaining the 'royal law' of love stated in Deut. 6:9 and Lev. 19:18.

Our dictionary defines PREJUDICE as “*an unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason.*” Take a few moments and look at each keyword in the definition just stated. In a very real sense, those keywords all become a recipe for disaster. My mind keeps coming back to the bottom line of so many of the Bible references to brotherly love, “*and love thy brother as thyself.*” To me that means to look at that other person as though I see them with my face in place of theirs.

In the Good Samaritan story-lesson, I just can't see the preacher (priest) passing by on the other side, if he'd viewed the dying victim as easily as being him. Nor when the Levite acted with the same indifference as the priest just did. Now we must be careful as we consider the character and actions of the Samaritan who did help the victim... and continued to help him in several ways. The word describing his attitude is very important here, because it gives the motive for the help given. He had COMPASSION, which means, “*a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.*”

So you and I have a spiritual thermometer with the marking “Prejudice” at the low end and “Compassion” at the high end. Your temperature of love (another as thyself) is measured for all of heaven to see. And also that our actions reveal.

#3 You're Not Worth a Hamburger!

“Less than the price of a hamburger.” That's what scientists say each human is worth. These researchers look past the character, personality, talents, and abilities and place a value on our chemical ingredients. Can you imagine looking at a baby taking its first breaths of air and saying, “See that? She's not worth more than \$3.00.” And, “Oh, mister scientist. You cured the dreaded spread of Malaria. But you're still not worth more than \$3.00.” The idea here, is that no matter what language you speak, no matter if you typically wear a suit worth hundreds of dollars or a jungle skirt, WHAT'S INSIDE is still worth less than a hamburger.

Maybe another value comparison would be looking at a human and also looking at a robot that has something of the appearance of a person. The scientist would look at them both and would likely say, “Well sure, that robot has \$84,000. worth of motors, gears, and computers inside it. But the human... he's worth a little less than \$3.00.”

Yes, the comparison is rather unlikely, because the real value of a person is that of his spirit and intellect. A flesh and blood person designed and built the nuts and bolts robot he's standing next to. To consider a robot designing and building a human is unthinkable.

Is it possible that we place a reasonable value on a teen or ex-teen who's appearance, attitudes, and actions are close to what you and I consider normal; that fit closely to our own appearance, attitudes, and actions. But change any one of the three a's and we consider them trash, and maybe even dangerous trash.

God's Word, our bible, is (and must remain) our ultimate guide for placing value on all things, in and around us. God gave the prophet Samuel in old testament times, one of many fantastic directives that must be part of our own criteria also. In 1st Samuel 16:7, God's directive was, “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”

In today's speaking we'd say, “Don't judge a book by it's cover.” That's the OUTWARD part of a person that we should NOT be focused on. The other part of the verse says we should strive to look on (and be a blessing to) one's heart... his/her soul and spirit.

This and the first two segments of Help Cries have taken extra time to help us dig deep into our own hearts and make sure we have the God-driven attitudes and value for His harvest field. That's the harvest field of ex-teens and those youth that society has shoved into shadows and out of our sight and focus.

Our focus and ultimate goal appears in the 15th chapter of the Gospel of John. What we are to measure is our own love against the pinnacle stated here and demonstrated on Calvary's Cross where Jesus Christ showed His love for us and those with orange hair and all their trimmings. The 13th verse boldly says, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” So... What is my value of the soul of an ex-teen? Do my attitudes and actions show it... do they show them?

The Field of Harvest

#4 A Rudder Their Size

All throughout our HELP CRIES journey we emphasize our need to create and deepen our sensitivity to the HELP CRIES of our youth; whether we see odd appearances, sense strange attitudes, or not.

I shall never forget that incredible day I had just met a 20 year old boy with crippling Multiple Sclerosis wheeling himself along our trailer park road on that very hot July afternoon. There was no one else there to push his chair or be his buddy for the moment.

Maybe not so much for Good Samaritan purposes, but just wanting to learn more about ex-teens and their attitudes about life, I stopped and found him a friendly respectful person willing to talk a bit.

My heart begged God to guide my lips and not foul this up. I was the 71 year old grandfather and with 40 plus years experience as Sunday School teacher, but little did I realize the blockbuster lesson God had for me from this wheelchair friend. I had explained the new things I've been learning about teens that outwardly show they aren't comfortable with the inside obstacles that life has dealt them.

I mentioned to my new friend about the "Preppies" that dress very stylish with a mindset they want to make decisions and manage their corner of the world for the better. The second prominent group is the "Goths". Their fashion includes an abundance of facial jewelry, chains, black clothing, that often includes black makeup. It seems the word 'control' often plays a part in their attitudes.

But I was blown away ... I mean really ... by my young teacher with MS as he corrected my thinking about the third group - "Emos". Until that hot afternoon, I thought the emos cut themselves because there was some kind of satisfaction in seeing their own blood. BOY WAS I WRONG!

I learned that afternoon, in no uncertain terms, that emos inflict pain on themselves (blood or otherwise) "Because that is the only pain in their life THEY CAN CONTROL." My new friend said that cutting pain was something they could control the beginning and somewhat the end. That's the only one they knew they could control.

When I heard that, I dropped my cane and almost fell off the tailgate of my pickup truck.

As I spent the rest of the day and many that followed, I thought about how "CONTROL" played a part in each of the three ex-teen attitudes.

It would be good to review each of the three with the 'control' facet in them.

Before I left my new wheelchair buddy that afternoon, I asked him what phrase he had tattooed along the bottom of his left forearm. He said, "Oh. That. It says NEW ENLIGHTENED AGE. I read about it each day. I figure this is better than settling for this screwed up world and all its dead ends." As I began telling him about my Savior, Jesus Christ, he said he had no faith in himself right now but he's looking.

Each moment I think about my new friend with "no faith in me yet" I think about a ship in a storm. I think about that ship's anchor and its rudder.

Can you imagine the despair and maybe even horror you'd experience in the middle of an angry storm, not far from a rocky shoreline, and your ship has no rudder. With no rudder you have no control; no way to direct your ship to safety; away from certain destruction.

But a ship must also have an anchor; a way to settle in, a place of calm and safety; a home port, to aim for.

We'll see in a later segment that our silver-haired generation is perfect for reaching out to the preppies, goths, and emos with the promises of God to be that rudder in a life adrift and no lighthouses to be seen. Our generation has a crucial responsibility to reach out to those drowning in the flood of technology with its empty promises and dead-end directions.

We must prepare ourselves simply with Bible verses we can present as anchors; as home ports of peace, purpose, love for each ex-teen. We must clearly simply show that God wired us for wanting control in our lives. And His word continually proclaims Him and His power to exactly fit that need and those to come.

We must show Heaven's greatest sacrifice of innocent shed blood on Calvary as the supreme example of control; God's control in a world adrift in the destructive seas of sin. Calvary wasn't God's 'Plan B' or a fix for His plan derailed by Satan. It was the willful act of God's own Son; the fulfillment of a prophecy stated in the Garden of Eden. God is in control and always has been. Each page of His inspired word is written proof. Read it. Rest on it. Reach out to others with it.

#5 The Volcano in Shoes

I'm not a psychologist, geologist, vulcanologist, or any other kind of 'ist'. But I'm sure all of us are acquainted with pressure that builds up to a 'breaking point' and what happens next, even if it's just blowing up a balloon larger than it was designed for.

Our school books and newspapers have spent years teaching us what happens to a volcano when the pressure builds up to its breaking point; its erupting point. And the results are most always catastrophic in unthinkable proportions.

I'm going to blow my top soon!

Volcanoes and earthquakes can occur most anywhere, even on the ocean floor. What's fascinating is that God has fashioned this earth in such a way that volcanoes give us some warning signs that it's going to blow its top. According to scientific studies, earthquakes always occur before every eruption. Other ways vulcanologists begin approximate predictions of an eruption is by measuring gas fumes leaking out of vent holes to the surface. They also use satellites and other surveying equipment to discover the slight swelling of the surface around the area.

It's like God is using volcanoes and earthquakes to remind us of His power that reaches beyond our means to control, or even accurately predict. God tells us there are powerful things happening that are not easily detectable, if at all, by our futile technology.

God also gives us subtle warning signs when someone around us is about to blow his/her top. In a volcano the pool of super hot melted rock can no longer be held back and the Earth pushes that rock, called magma to the surface where it sometimes creates new land, but often becomes a blanket of death over towns, people, and animals. This may sound like catastrophe destruction by a God we say is loving.

In many ways God does show His love and provision for us through volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. But to understand, we must be 'on His wavelength'. We must be trusting Him and all He does, to bring man closer to Him and His provision. After all, isn't that a basic purpose of our life on this earth? We're in a school full of lessons that prepare us to learn and know all that we can about God, His power, purpose, judgment, and love. This prepares us for fuller fellowship with Him in Glory, where we'll be spending eternity with Him.

It's my firm opinion that humans are somewhat like volcanoes. That is, continual fear of life's obstacles build up and up. Soon the human mind can take no more and explodes like an angry volcano on anyone nearby. I believe the troubled mind of most ex-teens build up fearful stresses and pressures inside with no knowledge how to controllably vent those ongoing fears that erupts as fits and actions of anger.

In my heart, I sincerely believe that ex-teens don't want this to ever happen, but are powerless to know how to deal with the stresses and fears inside. Their self esteem takes a nosedive and they see the fear and distrust in the eyes of adults around them, which snowballs into an ongoing cycle of deeper depression.

We silver-haired folks must see and trust God's power and protection as we reach out to youth that may very well be under pressures we don't see, but yet need God's leading by still waters.

For the ex-teen Psalm 23 promises God's power to, "...maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

For the silver-haired generation reaching out to others, Psalm 23 promises, "...Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

Timing becomes the uncertain unpredictable facet of volcano eruption and youthful outbursts. So the logical and loving thing to do is to be prepared and be diligent in watching and partnering with those ex-teens God has placed near you.

We humans can easily experience our own pressure that builds up to our breaking point that can produce horrible results, like prison sentences, and even murder.

As the purpose of this HELP CRIES WORKSHIP we must learn about those human volcanoes and what causes them and even

We silver-haired seniors must 'listen' to the teen help cries of orange hair, chains, tattoos, black facial paint, sudden fits of anger for no apparent reason, hidden cuts and piercings of torment.

So many years ago, I remember my mom putting meat and vegetables in this big heavy pot with a lid made about like an army tank. She called it a pressure cooker. I guess it was supposed to cook things more tender and faster.

But the little thing that she put over a spout on the top of the lid was NEVER to be touched by me and to stay away from. Some years later, I learned our hot water heater used one of those little things too. And even the propane gas tank outside had one too.

#6 - Worse than Crying for Help

During World War II an American Bomber got lost, and its crew parachuted out. The aircraft crashed about 16 miles from the crew, who all perished, 400 miles inland in the Libyan Desert of Central North-Africa. The diary belonging to one of the crew told of gruesome efforts for survival in trying reach help.

More horrible than the accident of the “Lady Be Good” B-24 Liberator in 1943, was that none of the crew knew where they were at, nor did they know how or where to find help. The crash site wasn't even discovered until 15 long years later.

Nothing about needing help can deepen the spirit than not knowing how or where to find help; especially when navigation technology had failed to lead you to your goal.

At present there are over 30 Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites with 6 to 9 of them being accessed simultaneously by our GPS receivers in our airplane, farm tractors, automobile, or even most smart telephones. With GPS farmers can plant rows of crops over hilly fields with an accuracy of plus or minus four inches for that and other non-military purposes.

TIME is a 3rd crucial factor in needing to get help. Like the bomber crew... their time ran out in the hot arid desert conditions far more dangerous than the skies of Naples, Italy where they dropped their bombs to end the war between nations.

The time regarding the downed fliers had right hand – left hand aspects to it. On the one hand the stranded crew knew they had one canteen of water to share among them all. If only they had known there was a desert oasis just a few miles away, the history book accounts would have read quite differently. On the other hand was the time and resources the searchers were limited to, in the middle of this gigantic war. Time was running out in the minds of the family members back home who knew nothing of all this that God had full knowledge of.

Isn't it ironic that on every hand, man is restricted in some way by time. Yet the hands of the Creator of time, with those nail prints are never, in any way, restricted by time. Those are the very same open hands stretched out to us with the help cries of stranded lost souls, very near to us looking for the way 'home' to the salvation, purpose, and love of the One that rescued you and I on the far away hill called, “Golgotha”.

The manger of Bethlehem, we sing about each Christmas, is a testimony of God reaching out to all of mankind that was lost and not knowing which direction to call for help. God's own Son left Heaven and stepped into this sin-cursed defiled world to show and provide for a way home for you and I.

Now, the name Christian, means “Christ-like”. So if we are Christians deep on the inside as well as the outside, doesn't that define our task to reach out to those who have no spiritual home or how to get there? Many examples in scripture teach us to first be a friend to the lost. Next be a mentor to them, not out of pity, but of passion. Then we must show them the true direction finder, Jesus Christ and His mission to offer His love and righteousness as a free gift to all those ex-teens not knowing which way their eternal home is.

Training for Harvest

#7 *You're Off Your Rocker!*

I've been told many times I was "off my rocker". This long-ago accusation that seems to tell someone their idea or action is strange; it's out of place; it'll never work. My imagination tells me of some obscure Israelite man in a seven day parade around this humongous walled city, called Jericho. He elbows the one next to him and whispers, "This'll never work – it's absurd – whoever dreamed up this parade around these walls taller than I've ever seen... well that person had to be off his rocker. This time would be better spent if we were home sitting in our rocking chair and listening to the sheep in the fields."

"After all", this fictitious person goes on to say, "If God wants this city to be broken down, why, He could just snap His fingers in heaven and it'd instantly happen. Our God made the dirt that Jericho sits on. He can just as easily level the walls and town, in the blink of an eye."

This person doesn't realize that God includes people in His tasks so we can learn deeper meanings and value of His power and purpose. But you and I consider those around us, today. You might shout, "But my silver hair and their teen-aged orange hair just won't blend - not in a million years!" Maybe a quick question might open some doors here ... When Jesus hung on that bloody cross looking down through time; at your sins and mine, do you think His eyes, filled with agape love tears, also saw orange or blue hair?

God has prepared us seniors to be the best flesh 'n blood friend to today's ex-teen. ESPECIALLY better than most of their peers! (And CRITICALLY better than ANY of their on-line 'friends'.)

I've begun a list of reasons why our silver-haired generation is best suited for reaching out to those youth around us. Maybe a first step would be to prioritize and comment on these before adding your own.

___ Mentoring teens helps us to recall our 'long ago teen years' and the growing God brought us through then.

___ We're mature, experienced and settled ... in a word - anchors.

___ We have more time to listen

___ We can get teens to help us - begin the silver/orange connection.

___ We're not saturated with technology torment

___ Our knowledge of related scripture

___ Scripture authorizes us to mentor teens, and even their parents

___ Our daily testimony should already be speaking to them

_____ Our days are often too empty and fruitless

_____ Our daily health reminds US to redeem the time

_____ We can spend more time in fervent personal prayer for them

#8 *Strangely Sweeter Than Honey*

It's sweeter than honey! That's the truth! The king said so! More than that, God agrees! What the king was talking about, certainly was no cooking ingredient for cakes or cookies. HELP CRIES has a powerfully important mission of showing our silver-haired generation how to recognize the distress signals from ex-teens; those young adults from 20 to about 23 or so.

Because God has charged you and I with reaching out to these souls that God loves, we should be following a 'how-to' manual that shows us the way, gives case histories, and especially a guarantee if available. Well, God's precious written word does exactly that and a whole lot more. Even Satan demonstrates his great respect for the Bible by how hard he has tried for centuries to stamp it out; to corrupt it and undermine its perceived value in this day of computers and technology.

God has made His word available in so many ways and so many languages, you can't hardly list them all. Though a bookstore will sell you a Bible for \$3.00 on up, I praise the Lord that He provides us His word for 'less than nothing'. I mean, you and I can download God's word to our computers for free. But more than that, you also get programs that help you search for words and phrases. There are connected dictionaries and concordances too. If that wasn't enough, these programs even let you make notes and build lessons, to share with others. See? It truly is God's word for less than free.

There are libraries upon libraries of resources that help us discover the diamonds of truth and peace in its pages. But I take great joy in knowing that God provided a heart-to-heart Teacher to us for scripture. He's called The Holy Spirit. In these days of technology and texting, God's word even provides us a whole storehouse of tweets we can (and should) share with others. Never let anyone think God's word is out of date. The storehouse of tweets are all grouped in the book of the Bible called PROVERBS. Let's step back and get a short big picture of our unbeatable 'how-to' manual that comes with its own Teacher (Holy Spirit).

All the PRINCIPLES and TRUTHS of scripture fall into four simple purposes, listed in 2nd Timothy 3: 16.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”

The four groups are: doctrine (rules), reproof (testing), correction (penalties), and instruction (learning).

The largest chapter in our Bible is Psalms 119. Does it surprise you that the total of it, talks about God's law, precepts, and testimony? That's what became our Bible. While we're there, notice what King David tells us about scripture in verse 103. Now you know where we got our 'sweeter than honey' title.

So if we skip down just two verses we can see the four groups of PERSONAL APPLICATIONS of scripture.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Ps 119:105. This simple verse about lamps and lights actually gives us a quartet of groups of APPLICATIONS.

A 'lamp unto my feet' is going to show me the conditions of myself (my shoes) and if my feet are on the

path. The 'light unto my path' will show me the direction of the path and any dangers along the way. Do you see the four groups of applications? Think about how these applications might apply to that ex-teen that God has placed in your harvest field. Discuss this with a Christian friend. Maybe make a diagram that would show the application of these four groups.

Talking about groups, how about getting together with some of your silver-haired friends and see how you can develop this diagram even further. It'll be a blessing you won't forget. Be sure to ask your personal Bible teacher (Holy Spirit) to help out. That's just what He's really good at. He has a strangely wonderful way of taking a principle and showing you how apply it, in a different way than He did for another challenge you had at another time.

Note: in a later HELP CRIES segment, we'll develop these applications even further.

#9 Learning How to Love-Listen

"Now listen up!" It's a strong statement we hear a lot, but many of us don't really know how. We find ourselves 'half listening' all the while digging into our mental toolbox for our advice ready to enlighten the one we're hearing. Maybe a tool we need most is the ability to really REALLY listen. For now let's just call it Love-Listening. Picture this kind of listening (hearing) as adding color and shadow to a black and white picture of what someone is saying to us. Love-Listening would be the total focus on what our ears are picking up, as though we were sure to soon hear something that would really become a spark in our own world. The trick though, in Love-Listening is to use it among our ex-teen generation. The frosting of Love-Listening is the anticipation of blessing to us, no matter who is doing the speaking.

Love-Listening actually begins in our mother's arms, even before we learned our ABCs or could dress ourselves. Earlier generations would have a family member read portions of God's precious scriptures to them. Almost like a flesh and blood Holy Spirit, that parent would open those scripture truths to our young lives in ways we could picture ourselves standing beside David with the giant before us. Our young hearts drank in visions of God removing our enemies before us, sending Satan packing.

To be truly effective in reaching out to our teens and young adults, we need to relearn how to Love-Listen. We need to step out of our typical Fixit-Listening mode that greatly hinders our getting the frosting of what our ears and heart are wanting to savor.

Love-Listening might be compared to the soft clay on the potter's wheel. It must be soft and fully ready to receive the directions of the potter's hands.

So ...

1. We've learned how to Love-Listen and savor it before we could walk and talk.
2. A special kind of Love-Listening is cherished as we listen to God's word shared with us.
3. In that scriptures we first heard long ago, we saw evidence of terrible results of people who were stiff-necked and unwilling to yield to their Creator's hands.

It's ironic that high on an ex-teen's want list is for someone to listen; to really listen; to Love-Listen to them and their struggles that they feel have no remedy. We silver-haired seniors must 'listen' to the stressed confused youth help cries of youth with orange hair, chains, tattoos, black facial paint, sudden fits of anger for no apparent reason, hidden cuts and piercings of torment.

Even if you have a tear-filled burden for ex-teens, you must first and fully, place yourself on the Creator's pottery wheel. You must begin reading scripture with anticipation; with expectation, that develops your "Love-Listening" skills as the Holy Spirit envelopes your soul and spirit with truth and love.

You can tell if this process is working in you, because the flames will grow; those flames of compassion brighten and spread in your burden for teens all around you.

Love-Listening to scripture colors and sweetens our 'Victory-in-Jesus' attitudes to see this is only half the truth. Whether it's fighting giants before us, reaching out to teens, or savoring the 'More-

than-conquerors' principle of Romans 8:37, Love-Listening to scripture is where it all starts - and continues each day.

Love-Listening in Prayer

In our hurried daily agendas, our prayers are bursting with our talking. Yes we praise our Savior for His abilities, His goodness to us, and telling Him our needs that increasingly crowds out the first two. It's like we're sending Him an audible telegram, sandwiched between other daily events we often put higher priority on than talking (and listening) to the One giving us the very best Heaven had to offer.

But anticipating exciting things from scripture, I can still remember the library chair I was sitting in, many years ago. The Holy Spirit drew my attention to an unusual phrase in the inspired letter Paul sent to the church in Thessalonica as recorded in 1st Thess. 4:11. We expect libraries to admonish, "Please be quiet. People are studying."

But now notice how Paul turns that around. He doesn't say to be quiet to study, he says to study to be quiet. I always relish applying that concept in my intimate communication with God. It's like Paul is telling us we need to be quiet in a way we can show respect, we can devote our full attention to what we're hearing or reading - it's worth it - it's frosting to our faith.

Love-Listening in prayer is really tapping into God's direction for our lives each day. Make the MAJOR portion of your prayer LISTENING; Love-Listening to your Potter as He molds you into beauty; maybe even a lighthouse in the life of an ex-teen headed for a rocky future in torment.

#10 The Golden Classroom

Your Compassion Gauge

The back-bone purpose of HELP CRIES is to learn about ex-teens. This is a good first step in preparing for reaching out to youth... actually for any age that God has placed on your heart. It's much like the 12 spies checking out their new promised land, in Joshua chapter 1. It took courage, and faith in God's plan and promises. Other precious moments in scripture come to mind, like Nehemiah spying out the destruction of Jerusalem in Nehemiah chapter 2.

These actions become a thermometer; a fuel gauge, that helps us get a good idea of our passion for ex-teens and their need of our Savior. Though God promised victory and ownership of the land flowing with milk and honey, ten of the twelve spies, rejected God's directives. All of the people, themselves, chose to believe the ten dissidents. In doing so, they signed their own death warrant that would be carried out over the next 38 years in the wilderness, and causing their children to suffer also.

Mind Your Focus

I would hasten to point out, that God's gift of a promised land to His people included giants. But another aspect of this 'passion thermometer' is seen in whether the people focused on the giant people or the giant fruits; the giant provisions from God (giant clusters of grapes, etc.). In the golden classroom, and elsewhere, it's crucial we maintain our focus on God's fruits in His/our harvest field before us.

In our neighborhood, and maybe yours too, ex-teens gather at fast-food restaurants, often just to hang out. They gather in small groups of 3 to 6 and swap the latest news. You can think of these gatherings as Golden Classrooms. We call them 'Golden' classrooms because they offer many golden lessons that typically only cost the price of a burger, fries, coke, or coffee.

Previous short visits to your classroom will tell you when your 'ex-teen teachers' are most likely there. Plan on eating slow and staying a while. These classes are none of the grab 'n run ten-minute events.

Before you enter your 'golden classroom' make sure you've prepared your heart, spirit, and mind for the lessons you'll learn. Be very clear. YOU are the student. THEY are the teachers. Yes, your teachers have orange hair, facial jewelry, and dress with no concern for their appearance (or maybe they really do.)

Love-listening Works Here

Sit in a booth close enough to theirs that will allow you to be able to overhear their conversations. Your golden classroom lessons will teach you what's on their hearts and minds. Begin to learn the many ways that Satan has twisted the ex-teen's version of truth. This is where the powerful skill of Love-listening comes in. (Love-listening is covered elsewhere in this workshop.)

These golden classroom lessons will also teach you that often, 'normal' appearing ex-teens are as

troubled inside, as those with strange dress codes.

Remind yourself moment by moment, you are in the classroom not for gathering gossip or garbage data, but learning how and where to reach out to INDIVIDUALS that Jesus gave His life for. If you don't have this compassionate attitude, leave.

More than once, I've felt led and acted by handing my cellphone to one of the youth and began with, "Hey. Can you show me how to...?"

What are some other places God might place your golden classroom? Sports events, on-line chat rooms, fairs, Twitter, Facebook, Google Plus etc. Use your imagination; use your heart. Ask your friends of other places you can hang out that might become your golden classroom in your golden years of service to our Lord before His soon sure return.

#11 *The Time Tunnel*

“As silver-haired parents, listening to me now, you remember those long-ago trips as youngsters to the amusement park, the penny arcade, hall of mirrors, and reading comics about Dick Tracy's futuristic wrist radio. And then a few years later the boat trip with our sweetheart through the tunnel of love. As the youth pastor of our church, and not yet in my thirties, I can't consider any of these as memories, as all of you can,” added Pastor Tim.

“But it's crucial that I take just a few more precious minutes of your time to tell you of another tunnel you've been going through, or at least the parents of highschoolers have . Most every day I see these parents with a strong saddening look of bewilderment supported by their almost fearful questions of what they've done wrong, or what had made their teens and preteens so indescribable.”

“Actually, there is a term for their attitudes and actions and I believe we can even draw a circle around their manner of living here this evening, again thanks to your Quilters for Christ event today.” Tim turned to face the marker board behind him. He wrote plainly, the two words, 'Digital Native'. He again faced his silver-haired listeners and began with, “the term probably looks strange, and I'll begin to explain this way. I need a show of hands. How many of you would likely get a correct answer if you asked a teen or preteen what a chalk and slate are used for?” Only one or two hands went up. “OK. Now how many of you in this room know what an iPad is, and a little how it's used?” Again, only three of the many present, raised their hands.”

The reason I ask these two questions is because these two items are largely at the entrance and exit of that tunnel I want to show that you have come through. You've probably used a chalk and slate, along with McGuffey Readers, listening to the wind-up pendulum clock on the wall tic-toc through the long day, learning your multiplication tables. Your attention in later years was intently focused on growing and guarding a family as you began through that tunnel of focused attention.”

“Progressing through that tunnel you struggled with the expanding attitudes of your children toward profanity, promiscuity, meeting the bills and supervising dating events. That tunnel of attention didn't let you see much of the changes from the chalk and slate, to the blackboard and colored chalk. And then the Greenboard, and of all things, the white marker board – but it doesn't stop there. Still in the tunnel, God's gift of technology gave our white marker board a brain. It's called an Interactive Marker Board. It remembers what you wrote on it; both words and pictures. It's computerized.”

“Well coming out of that tunnel vision of the challenged parent, we are startled by all the gadgetry that sort-of snuck up on us while our children were in class, and we were at work, in the home or business place. The first thing Satan does is to lie to us just as he did in God's garden. We hear these strange words like Twitter, tweets, iPods, and there's that iPad thing again. 'Well, what is it?' You ask.

Very simply, an iPad is a chalk and slate that grew up while you were in that tunnel. An iPad is about the same size as a slate, but has batteries, lights, and a computer inside. It has the ability to communicate somewhat like a telephone can, and even talk to other computers. Is it more dangerous than that chalk and slate? Probably about the same difference as your car in the driveway and your

Model T at the other end of the tunnel.”

Stop for a moment and really let sink in, the ex-teens and younger have never been in a school classroom where there hasn't been a computer in the corner. Their library is very likely somewhere in their house with a keyboard and mouse hooked to it. There are many more differences between our 'long-ago' end of that time tunnel and it's opening in today's hectic school schedule.

“Now here's 'where-the-tires-meet-the-road', so to speak. You have to answer the following questions in your own heart, without reservation. Number 1; is Satan more powerful now than the power God gave him on the other end of the tunnel? I'll repeat my question. is Satan more powerful now than the power God gave him on the other end of the tunnel? Number 2; Does the events of God stopping the sun in Joshua 10 and the backing up of time in 2nd Kings 20, prove He still has control of all that He creates? My third and last question. Does God love your children and mine any less than He did the little boy in a basket in the Egyptian bulrushes? Let's not limit our thinking of what God is able to do.”

“Whether God is using bulrushes, blackboards, batteries, or broken hearts, let's stand ready to love and lead His living breathing gifts to us. There's no going back to the leeks, onions, and non-electronic days and ways. We have the unique responsibility of using our experience and storm-tested scriptures to teach God's unfathomable love by our love and understanding. John 3:16 on a hand-held slate, still begins on every iPad the world over, 'For God so loved the world, he gave...!' ”

#12 *Beyond Ex-Teenage Dreams*

While I can't remember where I parked the truck coming out of the store, only a few minutes ago, I can, however still remember my teenage dreams of standing in the shoes of David, defending God's honor and army. No giant was so big to make me shake and skedaddle to safety. We all need a hero male or female, no matter our age.

I rather doubt today's teens have any God-honoring hero; or even any to choose from. It's like society is saying it's not possible to be a courageous bold leader in today's world. Courageous leaders ... and calling down fire from heaven to consume evil, well, those days are gone.

More than that; how about having a balanced life of peace, purpose, joy, and love. Teens see that life maybe available on another planet, or, only in heaven.

The key verse of a youth evangelism I was once employed by, was the anchor to their Balanced Life program. It was called balanced life because it quartered the life of a teenager in a way attention could be given to each part. The balanced life quarters were Mental, Physical, Spiritual, and Social. The program gave the teen and his/her mentor a starting point to see God has provision for every area of those stressful teen growing years.

The next level broke each quarter into 4 more quarters, as follows:

Mental: Thoughts, Attitudes/Motives, Meditation, and Studies

Physical: Cleanliness/Appearance, Control of Sex, Health, and Discipline.

Spiritual: Faith, Love, Obedience, and Prayer.

Social: Associations and Witness, Activities, Abilities

Whether you think of the subdivisions listed above as 'intermediate goals' or a 'divide and conquer' process, it is a powerful way to guide a teen into looking at ALL areas of his/her life. Now before we dig deeper, I want you to look at the key verse the youth evangelism anchored all this to. Bible scholars consider this scripture to refer to the teen years and above, of our Savior Jesus Christ, since it follows a historical account of Jesus as a 12 year old.

Look at Luke 2:52. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Consider carefully the four areas of Jesus' life. I'll add links in brackets: And Jesus increased in wisdom (mental) and stature (physical), and in favour with God (spiritual) and man (social).

As an exercise, think of some hurdles in a teen life and discuss which of the 16 areas would help a teen to zero in on making it a stronger part of a teen balanced life. Maybe even some hurdles from your own teen years ...

Hopefully, God will give us the right words to magnify the Lord Jesus as a worthy Hero for

every teen to look up to and strive to emulate. After all, isn't that what the word CHRISTIAN means?

More than win (against giants of every kind).

I've loved to sing the song VICTORY IN JESUS for more than 6 decades. But the song only carries half the promise. The other half you seldom hear about, and never teach a teen (but should) uses the word MORE. Teens and most all youth, especially boys, are competitive and certainly want to win - that's the VICTORY IN JESUS. But a strange promise in scripture tells us there is another step above the Olympic's Bronze, Silver, and Gold. This strange concept taught nowhere else on earth, is that a teen can MORE THAN conquer that giant in their life. Romans 8:37 says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Now the 'through him that loved us', that's Jesus. You know, the one with the balanced life. As you mentor a teen, begin by dividing up the teen's challenges into pieces. Maybe do it as you and a teen boy take a screwdriver to a junk computer, or layout all the ingredients to making a cake, with a teen girl. Who knows, maybe the process will help conquer some giant fears or unknowns in both your lives. The key is the 'through Him that loved us.'

Can you ever imagine what can be accomplished with love, sacrifice, and God's precious word?

#13 - God's Little By Little

Reaching out to ex-teens has a whole lot to do with timing; acting when God gives you the green light, pausing when you see the caution signal and having a 'time-out' when you only see God's stop light or an 'opportunity door' God has marked 'not now'.

Besides killing a bear, a lion, and a giant, David was also a musician who played well enough to soothe King Saul. In the Bible, the Book of Psalms is a book of songs. In his songs, quite often David included small “hold-its” or pauses. You see them each time you read the word “Selah”. Bible scholars all agree that Selah also means to pause or wait just a bit. It is used as something like a musical pause.

Many believe Selah also means to “pause and reflect” or “pause and retaste”; what came before. This would be like smacking your lips after having eaten a tasty morsel. I believe it is fitting and consistent with scripture to assume God wants us to “taste again” His printed words of truth. We should ask ourselves, “What have I just read? What is the deeper meaning of the words I’ve just heard preached?”

This fundamental truth, to be learned early on, is that waiting long or short periods has very profound purposes. Waiting on God is far from just sitting on one’s hands and shifting the brain out of gear. David gives us the simple process in Psalms 37:7:

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

To rest, wait patiently, and fret not requires that we acknowledge that someone has the power and authority to control our circumstances. Further, that we acknowledge that someone knows and cares about our needs. Well, there is, and He does. Have you remembered the previous topic teaching us that God cares and controls?

Oh how we need to simply convey the peace, purpose, and rest in God's control, to those ex-teens we want to reach out to. Read that ‘Rest in the Lord...’ verse again and “Selah” on the words “Rest”, “wait patiently”, and “fret not.” That verse is a perfect one for placing over the kitchen sink, on the refrigerator, above your desk, inside your toolbox, or near your speedometer.

Little by Little.

Here we are still working on timing i.e. God’s timing.

There is a sweet wonderful truth about waiting on God that surrounds three little words. The words are “little and little”. These are the equivalent of our “little by little.”

By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.
Exodus 23:30

And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. Deuteronomy 7:22

These verses are used to describe the slow, orderly timetable God uses. This was just the right timing for the Israelites to capture their idolatrous enemies and to seize the land that God had promised them. God could have snapped his fingers and all of the enemy nations would have instantly been dead. Some of the reasons why He did not are ones we need to internalize, and maybe even apply to our own lives.

1. One reason why He did not is in the word Selah, which we have just learned about. After each and every battle God wanted the people to stop and reflect (Selah) on how God had delivered the enemy into their hands in times past. He also wanted Israel to reflect on what happens to people who worship idols.
2. The verses refer to the wild beasts that would flourish uncontrollably upon the countless corpses that Israel could not have buried fast enough.
3. Because God purposely did not destroy all the enemy nations all at once, fields would still be planted and tilled. The cattle would also be maintained also. Can you see the result is that God is blessing us mightily by having others begin the work we are to continue?

He shows us step-by-step, little and little, that He hears and wants to answer our every prayer to be victorious in His name. And He wants us to savor and share every morsel of His blessings with those ex-teens He has placed in our harvest field. Treat those "waiting on God's timing" moments, with the same precious times as those we call 'mountain top moments'.

Read more about God's timing in the songs He inspired David to include in the Bible's book of Psalms.

#14 - Wiring The Minds of Ex-Teens

The wiring of the minds of teens and ex-teens (used-to-be-teens) is different in each gender. We do need to review those important differences as we learn about them, to reach out to them with greater compassion and understanding. In two words the differences revolve around COMMUNICATION in girls and COMPETITION or CONSTRUCTION in boys.

Learning Gender Gaps

God wired each one of us with a brain in two main parts or lobes. The left portion is more adept at dealing logically; comparing numbers, facts, procedures etc. Our right lobe deals more with relationships, personalities, feelings, sympathy, compassion etc.

Scientists are quick to say that boys and men are 'left lobe dominate', while girls and women are right lobe dominate. Just as in a symphony all are equally important in their own way, whether we are right or left lobe dominate doesn't make one better than the other. Consider the words 'help meet' in Genesis 2:18. I've come to believe the life partner God gave to Adam was not just another copy of himself (Adam) but one with abilities and temperament that complimented Adam.

This 'filling in the gaps' of Adam's abilities by Eve goes far beyond the 'be fruitful and multiply' task for the duo; this living breathing symphony; this crowning creation by our all-powerful God. In just a few words, the 'left lobe dominate' boys and men don't thrive in the 'calm and comfort zone' of ladies. Men eat up action that includes competition, risky, loud, big, messy, fast, and 'think on your feet' flashy stuff. If you're reaching out to girls - think communication; particularly digital; and certainly frequent. If you reach out to boys - think competition and construction.

In a previous HELP CRIES segment we talked about the Golden Classroom as a powerful way to begin understanding your harvest field of ex-teen souls. Another powerful classroom we'll call the SILVER TOP classroom. Simply it's a gathering, small or large, of our silver-haired generation, snacks, marker board and earnest prayer. It works something like this.

1. Certainly begin with earnest unhurried prayer for hearts to become even more deeply burdened for the 'thrown-away' generation so many are actually afraid of – the ex-teens – ages 20 to 23 something.
2. Spend a first meeting considering the boys. Maybe show some pictures of boys with 'odd' appearances and actions. Show some pictures of some 'normal' boys, realizing that inside attitudes and stresses may be the very same, regardless of outward appearances.
3. Have some presentations that depict a Garage Mission Station. Our favorite website shows how it's done, in story form. The Garage Mission Station can be up-scaled a little for the older ex-teens.

Gramps And The Nano Web Laboratory
ChurchKids.org/0nwl/ (that's a zero)
We'll take a look at the girls side next time.

#15 - How to Build a Bridge

How to build a bridge is what HELP CRIES is all about. But this bridge is not made of screws, steel, and paint. The bridge we're building is much larger than those we drive cars over. Our bridge is designed to carry heavier loads and help with saving and building strong lives. Ironically, our bridge is built not over some river but at a kitchen table.

The bridge links the heart of a lady with silver hair, not so much aching from stiff and sore joints, but a heart crying out to God for His design this day to connect to the heart of girls – teens and ex-teens. This bridge built at a kitchen table (maybe yours) will get lots of 2-way traffic. Each listens deeply to the other. (Elsewhere we've called this Love-listening) The bridge becomes a partnership; a journey to bring both closer to understanding what real love actually is, and what it wants to do.

Now the tools for this bridge construction are simple and readily available. A couple cookies, a cup of soothing drink, some cellphones (turned off and laying next to...) and God's precious 'How-To' manual, opened and ready to be used; as every Bible should be.

The real joy of this bridge building is seeing the anticipation and expectation the girls paint each day's experience with. If done properly, you can easily run out of cookies and kitchen chairs. Girls, teens and ex-teens are so confused, distressed, and disillusioned with all of technology's communication dead ends, they don't have anywhere to turn, except your kitchen table mission station (I mean bridge building moments).

Our favorite on-line free library has several stories about kitchen table (and picnic table) ministries you'll want to savor as you begin to reach out to those ex-teen girls, God has placed in your harvest field. Our favorite, with a non-technical technology flavor, is TEXTING WITH HOPE. This resource is broken up into short story segments just perfect for having a silver-top classroom gathering with your friends and discuss each segment and how it can apply to your harvest field.

ChurchKids.org/twh/

You can also become a Cookie Mountain Missionary (curling iron, optional)
ChurchKids.org/PDFs/s_cookiemountainmis.pdf

#16 - Calm Waters for Ex-Teens

“SLOW DOWN!” my silver-haired wife would say loudly to me, more than once, in my quick pace to find a familiar road sign and determine where we were in a tossing sea of signs and sounds. Without any on-hand help from technology to get a hold on where we were, a desperate turn into a small fast-food restaurant to put a hold on our confusing fast journey farther into our unknown.

In an earlier HELP CRIES #13 – God's Little by Little segment, we touched on some of God's schedule of His blessings for us, and why. He further emphasizes our need to SELAH 'pause and retaste' his blessings to us in even longer periods. He gives us one day of the week to pause and think about our actions, events, plans of the past and coming week. He wants us to not just have fun or survive each day and week; He has His agenda for us that involves real life-saving opportunities for those around us.

If that isn't enough, God also has given a YEAR of rest for the land. He calls it a Sabbath Year, whereby several rules of rest are to be observed.

Now have you noticed? God gives us all these different 'pause periods' not to put our minds and spiritual growth on a shelf. He knows we humans need to take a special breather in thought and praise.

Ex-Teens Breather in Thought & Praise

During one of the days in the life of one of my children, when they thought their world was crumbling on top of them, we took a ride. Not far from our home, back then, was a river with a man-made waterfall. The view was a great place for a picnic. But today was definitely not a time for a picnic. After we got out of the car, but leaned against it, I said, “Let's just take a few quiet moments, take a couple long deep breaths, and learn from what we are looking at right now.”

My teen's first response evidenced an inner earthquake caused by a broken love relationship. I asked, “Which direction is the river flowing?” I got an appraising look that maybe I was off my rocker. “No. Listen. This is very important. Which way is the river flowing?” Hand gestures to me said the river was flowing from our left to our right. I looked my teen right in the eye and asked, “Will it ever go the other way?”

With a bit more inner calm, my teen said, “Never.” “OK. I agree. Now just suppose there was a super bad earthquake where some buildings came tumbling down and that dam over there got all broken up and some of it sank to the bottom of the river. Which way would the river then be flowing?” With another long deep breath, my teen said, “It wouldn't change. The river will still be flowing in the same direction it does now.”

Facing my teen and with good eye contact, I summarized by asking, “Now let me get this straight. You've just told me that no matter what happens to stuff that we humans build, like that dam over there, God's laws are still going to be obeyed; that water is still going to keep on going down hill. Is that what you've just told me?” My teen, now with head bowed, and moving a pebble with a shoe, took another long deep breath, and softly answered, “Yes. God is still in control.”

I put my arm around my teen and said, “You know, God can do so much with water. I mean He can walk on it, He can call it out of a solid rock, He can make it stand still and let those He loves walk through to places He has given them. And then God can use water to swallow up evil people. God does many mighty things with water, back in Bible times, but also today too.”

With an extra hug, I said, “Just like God uses water to do mighty things for Him, He wants me and He wants you to do mighty things for Him. And it's just like God to wrap all His actions for us in love. God does so many things with water – as powerful as it is, but love is even more powerful. God has given us a heart for love; to accept love and to give love.”

“The problem is that you and I act too much like that river over there. We don't seem to find the time to stop. We don't look for a calm quiet pool we can take a big breather and see what God has put around us.” To my teen, I said, there's a really famous Bible verse that a giant-killer shepherd boy talks about being 'lead by still waters'.”

Whether we're an ex-teen on a frantic out-of-control journey downhill, or a silver-haired person with great compassion for youth, we must often, drop anchor, find calm waters, and see where God has brought us; we need to get our bearings. Only when we find where we're at, and clearly see that our Loving God, 'that first loved us', wants to be at the very top on our list of loves. That established at the top of our agenda every day, can we then decide how and where we'll proceed; obeying His laws; His laws of love.

#17 – Digging for Diamonds

Our previous HELP CRIES segment led us to see that ex-teens must be very earnest in taking a time-out period, maybe for a couple days, in calm quiet surroundings. It's a chance for our senses to really grab reality – I mean real reality. We see all of Heaven's creation around us and how beautifully God still has control of it.

Now some of God's beauty is just below the surface, sort-of like digging for diamonds or gold. In our golden years of silver hair, God blesses us with truths and experiences we didn't expect or imagine. God's like that. Even when we don't deserve it (or think we don't) He opens His gift-giving toward us. That gift we're given can wonderfully be an ex-teen acquaintance that thinks his/her life should be on a trash heap.

As you mentor your ex-teen, teach them how to begin mining for diamonds – the kind that doesn't require special tools or skills. About all that's needed is some of that calm quiet surroundings and the friendship of a compassionate senior, like you. God has blessed your ex-teen with many diamonds as skills and attitudes that need to be brought to the surface. This is a casual listing of those diamonds to start building youthful self-esteem.

Note: in mentoring, you'll give Satan a lot less ammunition if men mentor boys and ladies mentor girls. Be very careful NOT to gather personal information that may create a problem later. I'm super cautious to share my contact information for them and sometimes vice versa.

Assembling the Diamond Puzzle

As a starting point in helping your ex-teen to drop anchor, and get his/her bearings - begin a super simple resume. (pronounced “ri-zoo-may”) I'm a big fan of simple resumes. They help me understand who and where I am, with regard to my experience, knowledge, shortcomings and goals. But far more than that, is the resume's power to factor in God's blessings in what He has already done in my life.

Your ex-teen will gain bits of self-esteem as you help him/her include notes of hobbies, dreams, and important friendships. This also a good place to begin practicing penmanship writing skills and begin building typing skills that are so necessary in everyone's future.

What Would I Like to Do?

Even if this took some thought to be filled in later.

What Skills and Talents Has God Given Me?

Link what you have and are should be linked to God's Goodness

Your Ship's Log

shows prospective employers you are a self starter, begin by volunteering.

diary accountability have them work for you. teach them how to use tools etc.

There are many scriptural references about time-wasters, idleness, and being a sluggard. Proverbs 6:6 is an enjoyable one to admonish ourselves and make a solid step toward fine-tuning the powerhouse in my shoes:

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

Ex-teens at home spend many hours each day playing addictive games that neither challenge, teach life skills, nor honor God. Instead, we need computer activities that get us to think and create. These activities also need to help us to continually examine ourselves, our spirituality, and our people skills based on scriptural directives.

There are valuable directives to young ladies in 1st Timothy 5. But look especially at verse 13:
And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

Not only is social networking a terrible waste of time but it also provides easy access to unsupervised anonymous communication with anyone anywhere in the world. Of the many valuable guidelines concerning our communication – digital or otherwise, Matthew 12:36, 37 says,

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

It should be strongly emphasized here, that developing the above character changes take much time and prayer for our youth. It's not workable to just teach them guidelines, but to join in and partner with them in maturing in ways that trust and honor God.

#18 – Making the Connection

There are many simple straight-forward projects that have a bit of technology connection to them; required for reaching the attention of that ex-teen in your God-given harvest field. You will be quite surprised to see how helpful and cooperative that youth is, when he/she sees you honestly and compassionately reaching out to them. In a sense, let them be your teacher. Make this your own Golden Classroom loaded with prayerful preparation. I like guarantees and I know you do also.

Savor this one:

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” Psalm 126:6

MAKING THE CONNECTION projects are at: ChurchKids.org/connection/



#19 - Are We There Yet?

“Are we there yet?” What a simple question that always accompanies actions that involve most travel or progress; whether it be reading a story, working a problem, or going down some road. Often the question is asked by the person not knowing just what the destination or goal actually is.

Even with mankind's GPS positioning technology matched up with road maps and a human synthesized voice speaking, “turn right at this intersection”, man still has no deep satisfaction he is where he is supposed to be. Maybe we often arrive at a dead end that is decorated to look like our goal. Shortly we get an uneasy feeling we are somehow at a spot that God is not, nor has been.

This is likely the most lonely place on our planet; having trusted in man's guidance devices, being 'dumped' at a dead end we thought was a worthy goal, and now not knowing who or what to trust in. Welcome to the lost world of most teens and ex-teens.

With a heart and typing fingers full of compassion for all those in this lost world, the HELP CRIES has been published, with God's leading. My heart asks, “Are we there yet? Have we done all that God wants in this resource?” The answer comes back, “There is the frosting, you know.”

The Apostle Paul taught the young pastor Timothy all about frosting; the frosting on the cake; the finishing touch to all teaching. The clear principle is stated in 2nd Timothy 2:2:

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Paul says the job is not done until your student becomes a teacher to others; and actually even beyond that. In a light-hearted semi-serious sort of way, I think of this as “be fruitful and multiply” (intellectually).

So how do we know when HELP CRIES has done its job? The answer is when the ex-teen that once was in that lost world of technology dead ends, is now reaching out in compassion to those ex-teens who are sending out tearful SOS!... SOS!... SOS!

The 'Grandfather Psalm' says,

“Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.” Psalm 71:18