

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

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help CRIES

A Guide 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 – 20 something.)

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by
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ReachingYouth.net ChurchKids.org

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Its author, websites, and publishers shall be held blameless for any harm – physical or intellectual, real or imaginary by the reading or construction mentioned on these pages.

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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/

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#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

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.

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#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

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(This is a continuation from book 1 #233)

#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

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 finetuning 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

agenda every day, can we then decide how and where we'll proceed; obeying His laws; His laws of love.
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#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 exteen 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.

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

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

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

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-

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
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#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

#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

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...!'"

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#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 association, 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 -

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.

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moments'.

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

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#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;

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?

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#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 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