

Encourage Green Teens in Christian Stewardship 2009 April Issue 19



“Going green” has become the rallying cry for many of today’s young people, as they take the initiative to preserve the planet. Schools, celebrities, and media encourage teenagers to be eco-friendly and reduce their “footprint.”

Living in an environmentally conscious way is healthy and admirable, as long as teenagers have the proper motives and perspective. The reason we all should take good care of the earth is because God made it and put us in charge of its upkeep. Youth minister Josh Tinley writes that going green actually “can enrich our relationship with God and help us grow spiritually” because such practices “honor what God has lovingly and carefully created.”

Environmentalism is a “holiness habit” rooted in Scripture, Tinley says. It ranges from not wasting what God has given us (including our talents) to loving our neighbors, who are fellow creations of God. Most significantly, Tinley proposes that if teenagers can commit to taking shorter showers or joining an environmental club, they also can commit to making time for daily prayer or joining a church youth group.

Researchers say that “green teens” tend to be influential leaders among their peers. They live out their beliefs, and other people tend to follow their actions. When caring and concerned teenagers honor God with their eco-friendly lifestyles, they’ll be spreading the good news that our Creator loves and cares for us.

In *Earth-Wise: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues*, Calvin DeWitt offers these principles for honoring God by taking care of his creation:

1. Protect and nourish everything that God created, just as he daily protects and nourishes each of his children.
2. Honor and worship Jesus, through whom God created all things (see John 1:3).
3. Enjoy and appreciate all natural resources without destroying them.
4. During your earthly life, serve God in everything you do and seek his kingdom above all else (see Matthew 6:33).
5. Be content with what you have and work to preserve resources for other people.
6. Don’t overwork God’s creation, including your bodies. Even God rested on the seventh day.
7. Put your concerns for the environment into practice, and spread the message to other people.

Pulse

Research shows that green living has definitely taken root among today’s teenagers.

- 71% of preteens say “going green” is hot. (Youth Trends)
- 53% of online teenagers say they are “concerned” or “very concerned” about the environment.
- 15% of those kids call themselves “hard-core” environmentalists who are serious about green living. (Jupiter Research)
- In a United Kingdom study, parents say their teenagers influence their green choices as much as the media do.
- 76% of kids in the UK study say they will make a real impact on future social and environmental concerns.



(The Future Foundation)

Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

Use these questions as a springboard for insightful conversations about caring for our planet.

1. Why has the "green" movement become so popular lately? Is it just a fad or here to stay? Explain.

2. Can you be both a Christian and an environmentalist? Explain.

What's the difference between caring for the earth and worshipping it?

3. What motivates you to live "green"? Are you worried about our planet's future? Why or why not?

4. How are you a good steward of God's creation? What areas could you improve on, and why?



Focus on Prayer

PRAY THAT:

1. God will give your teenagers a healthy respect for the earth and a proper perspective about environmentalism.
2. Your teenagers will use available resources wisely and not be wasteful in any areas of their lives.
3. Your teenagers will appreciate being entrusted with all that God created and be passionate about protecting it.
4. God will help your teenagers witness their faith by how they care for the earth, for other people, and for themselves.

Verse of the Month

"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O Lord, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things." (1 Chronicles 29:11)

As we read in the Genesis account, God made everything—including people, the crown of his creation. He also entrusted us with a huge responsibility: caring for the land, the water, and the creatures he provided for us. So recycling and conserving isn't just the right thing to do; it's our job as caretakers of the earth, which belongs to God.

What's Up With Kids "Alarming Trend: Kids literally smoking CANDY"

It's taking place in lunchrooms, playgrounds and classrooms across the tri-state area. It may even be happening in your own home -- kids smoking candy. But doctors and safety experts say this new trend isn't so sweet.

Every so often, 18-year-old Jeremy Froncek says he sneaks a smoke. "Around the house, ya know, outside of work," Froncek said. But he's not puffing on cigarettes. He's "smoking" candy. It sounds bizarre -- even impossible. But kids grind up pieces of candy -- like "Smarties" -- and they actually inhale the fine candy powder then blow it out like cigarette smoke. "Eventually, as I got better at it, you know, it was just a cool thing to do," Froncek said.

And that's what has parents and drug counselors so concerned. A quick search on YouTube shows dozens of how-to videos created by children of all ages. Some clips even show children snorting the sweet stuff.

"Before I was sent the YouTube videos, I had never heard of smoking and snorting Smarties," drug safety expert Peggy Sapp said. Sapp was alarmed that kids are mimicking such dangerous and illegal habits, but said kids often do what's "in" to fit in.

"Who doesn't want to be cool? To get on YouTube and they have become instant celebrities with their peer groups," Sapp said.

But doctors warn this is dangerous. Mark Shikowitz, a Long Island ear nose and throat specialist, treated a 9-year-old who had pieces of candy lodged in his nose. "He told his parents that he felt his nose was burning," Dr. Shikowitz said. The candy eventually dissolved, but Shikowitz said kids could also accidentally inhale the fine powder down the wrong pipe. "That irritation can cause you to cough, can cause you to laryngospasm, which is your voice box spasming and closing," Shikowitz said. If the sugar sits in the lungs or in the nasal cavity for a prolonged period of time it could cause an infection.

"Any time you have a substance such as sugar in these areas, which are moist, it creates a terrific growth medium for bacteria," Shikowitz said.

Experts also worry that this trend could spark interest in real cigarettes or illegal drugs.

The company that manufactures Smarties said it "regrets that a negative message of this type has been sent to young people."



MUSICSPOTLIGHT



Mainstream Artist

Background: This Grammy-nominated band formed in Virginia in 1990 as Burn the Priest. They changed their name but continue playing a combination of heavy metal, death metal, and progressive metal—keyword metal. *Wrath*, their new album, hit number two on the Billboard chart. Lamb of God has headlined the popular OzzFest tour.

Albums: *Wrath* (2009), *Sacrament* (2006), *New American Gospel* (2000)

What Parents Should Know: Despite the band's name and album titles, don't mistake it for a Christian band. Dark lyrics and imagery often mock the church and authority figures.

What Lamb of God Says: Drummer Chris Adler says the band's name "was never a religious thing.... What we're really trying to get across is: Don't always take things at surface level." Guitarist Willie Adler says kids can relate to their music, especially with "the whole feeling of angst and rebellion."

"Choke Sermon" Songs Lyrics

Choke on your own words
Lies are venom in your veins
Burn from the inside
And never speak my name
Jesus complex, gag reflex
Trigger happy redundancy
No thrill, no chase, no saving grace
Hypnotic in monotony

Christian Artist

Background: This nu-metal band formed in Tennessee in 2004, and, after only two albums, has become one of the biggest players in Christian rock. Red's music has been nominated for a Grammy and has won a Dove award. *Innocence & Instinct* reached number one on Billboard's indie chart.

Albums: *Innocence & Instinct* (2009), *The End of Silence* (2006)

What Parents Should Know: Red isn't just a "safe" alternative band; these guys are genuinely talented and have had mainstream success as a result. Many of their lyrics deal with overcoming baser instincts and turning toward God.

What Red Says: Singer Michael Barnes calls the song "Never Be the Same" an anthem of redemption. Although we've all gone through difficult situations, he says, "when we look to God and see how he's put us back together again and made us whole, we realize we'll never be the same."

Discussion Questions: Read Psalm 51:1-10. Have you ever cried out to God in a similar way? If so, explain. Why do we continue making mistakes that make such confessions necessary? What does it mean to have a "clean heart"? Does it mean we're perfect? Explain.

FILMWATCH

Movie: *Watchmen*







Genre: Action, Drama

Rating: R (for strong graphic violence, sexuality, nudity, and language)

Synopsis: This is a faithful adaptation of an influential graphic novel. The characters are deeply flawed people who don costumes and try to make the world a better place (at least, as they see it). But this isn't just another superhero movie—or even another "dark" one, such as the recent *Batman* films. There's *nothing* heroic about these superheroes. Because of this film's content, parents should take its R rating *very* seriously.



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(n)Fusion- Friday Nights 7-11pm

Small Group Bible Studies:

Wednesday nights: **cRackEd** (Middle School small group Bible study) 7-8pm

Sunday nights High School small group Bible study **“the Grind” 5pm at Spelunkers**
(series “whatz on ur IPOD”)

Mark your Calendar!

April

18- Apologetix Concert 7pm (NHBC teen’s group discount \$8)

May

3rd-8th – 24/7 Prayer

8th-9th - Acquire the Fire Event

For more information check out our website:

www.nfusionyouth.com

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Copies of this newsletter are available at the information desk located at the rear of the Fellowship Hall.