

Parenting an Angry Teen Who Won't Communicate

Rick Horne

Psalm 57

A Miktam of David

When he fled from Saul in
the cave.

Psalm 57

v.1 “My soul takes refuge.”

...refuge till the storms of destruction
pass by

v.2 “I cry out”

v.3 “...him who tramples on me”

v.4 “My soul is in the midst of lions...fiery beasts...teeth are spears...arrows...tongues are sharp swords.”

v.5 “Be exalted, O God...let your glory be over all the earth!”

v.6 “...set a net....dug a pit...”

v.7 “My heart is steadfast...my heart is steadfast! I will sing...”

v.8 “Awake my glory!”

v. 9 “I will give thanks...sing praises”

v.10 “...steadfast love...faithfulness”

v.11 “Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!”

My hopes for this seminar:

- 1. To show you God's joy is for you in the midst of storms of destruction, so that you can "sing."**

2. To give you a biblically principled strategy to parent an angry teen in the midst of the storm

I. God's joy for you in the storms of destruction

“For you make him most blessed forever; you make him glad with the joy of your presence.” (Psalm 21:6)

A. Contentment with God's presence and glory counters the undertow

1. Make me stable
2. Enable me to persevere

A. Contentment with God's presence and glory counters the undertow

3. Guide me to wise responses by
God's Word

4. Empower your actions by prayer

5. Open you up for help from Christ's
church

I. God's joy for you in the "storms of destruction"

**"For you make him most
blessed forever; you make
him glad with the joy of your
presence." Psalm 21:6**

II. The strategy to face the waves from the “storms of destruction”

A. Use the riptide of your parental identity

1. Humble yourself
2. Ask for forgiveness
3. Affirm your commitment to and love for God

II. The strategy to face the waves from the “storms of destruction”

B. Use the riptide of your teen’s identity

- Young adult (na’ar)
- Can make real choices (which have consequences)

II. The strategy to calm the waves from the “storms of destruction”

C. Riptide of respect (accountability)

–Biblical discipline is

- Positive
- A process
- Painful

III. The wisdom to face the waves and allow your teen to sink

A. Making the water deep

**–Clarify the distinction
between privileges and rights**

III. The wisdom to face the waves and allow your teen to sink

B. Making the water deeper

–**Connect** privileges to respectful choices

- “I’m not taking it away from you. You are choosing to give the privilege up.”

The power approach

*“I’m taking something from you!” Or,
“I’m going to do something to you!”*

**“If you don’t clean up your room by
dinner time, you will miss it for the
night.”**

The respectful approach

You are choosing to give up...

“Tom we want you to eat with us tonight, but you know that getting dinner depends on whether you’ve fulfilled your responsibility to have your room cleaned by 6:00 p.m. If it’s not, you know what decision you’ve made, right?”

The respectful approach

“Tom, you have some great plans for the weekend. We want you to be able to enjoy them, but you know you need to be sure we have email confirmation from your teachers that you’ve turned in all your work for you to enjoy that privilege. What choice do you want to make?”

The respectful approach

“Tom, you are welcome to use your phone with your friends if you choose to use language that is respectful and honoring toward us throughout the week. The choice to use it or not is in your control.”

Some teen excuses

“Yes, the teacher might be unfair. Is your response to talk back to the teacher likely to allow you to enjoy privileges at school and here at home?”

Some teen excuses

“Yes, it’s possible for mom or me to be impatient or badgering. Nothing excuses our wrongdoing. But you can’t use our wrongdoing as an excuse for yours. Is a disrespectful response likely to allow you to enjoy the freedom you like?”

Some teen excuses

“Our rules may be too strict. We’ll consider that when we talk about it. We do need to respect your young adult ability to evaluate decisions. But your rage and defiance are wrong regardless of whether we end up agreeing with you.”

“Is this response likely to allow you the freedom to enjoy the privileges that come with showing respect?”

Some teen excuses

“It’s true. We don’t totally trust you. We trust your sincerity, but we don’t trust your maturity. Honestly, I don’t even totally trust my maturity. I need accountability, too.”

“You haven’t shown us that you have the maturity to make the right decisions with your language or not act out in anger. As you show self-control, you will teach us that you can be trusted and are ready to have more of the privileges that go with trust.”

III. The wisdom to face the waves and allow your teen to sink

C. Making the water deepest

–Connect privileges to respectful attitudes

- Communication is not just with words (Prov 30:17)
- Scoffers don't respond to "mere words" (Prov 29:19)
- Murder (Matt 5:21-22; James 4:2)

- Attitudes are chosen (this does not minimize trauma)
- Attitudes are detectable (focus on what you see and what is communicated to you)
- Attitudes are serious and to be disciplined firmly (“eye...scorns...”)

Notice the **parent actions (bold)** and **scoffer reactions (*red bold italics*)**.

Proverbs 9:7,8

–Whoever **corrects** a scoffer gets himself *abuse*, and he who **reproves** a wicked man incurs *injury*. Do not **reprove** a scoffer or he will *hate* you.

Notice the **parent actions (bold)** and **scoffer reactions (*red bold italics*)**.

Proverbs 13:1

—A wise son hears his father's **instruction**, but a scoffer ***does not listen to rebuke.***

Proverbs 15:12

—A scoffer ***does not like to be reproved***; he will ***not go to the wise.***

Notice the **parent actions (bold)** and **scoffer reactions (*red bold italics*)**.

Proverbs 19:25

–**Strike** a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence.

Proverbs 21:11

–When a scoffer is **punished**, the simple become wise.

Notice the **parent actions (bold)** and **scoffer reactions (*red bold italics*)**.

Proverbs 22:10

–**Drive out** the scoffer, and ***strife*** will go out, and ***quarreling and abuse*** will cease.

Proverbs 29:8

–Scoffers set a city ***aflame***...

IV. Develop a plan to communicate to your angry teen

A. Pray

**B. Review your motive, God's glory,
and your and her identities**

**C. Summarize concepts of privileges
and rights and your decision to
"respect" her choices and connect
privileges to her choices**

IV. Develop a plan to communicate to your angry teen

D. Keep it **simple**. Connect a few significant behaviors/attitudes to privileges

E. **Review** the plan in two weeks

V. From our experience:

- A. Pray and weep!
- B. Be loving and affirming
- C. Be open to help from others
- D. Be faithful in other relationships
- E. Ask for forgiveness

V. From our experience:

- F. Don't be double-minded. Persevere in hope. (God uses the tough stuff too.)
- G. Be “glad with the joy of his presence” (Ps 21:6). “No one has taught me more about the love of Jesus than you!”