A PARENT GUIDE
FROM FORGE TEENS

RAISING WISE DIGITAL DISCIPLES

Protecting, teaching, and discipling your teenager in a world that is always on.



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CHAPTER ONE

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED

Technology is no longer a tool in the family room. It is an environment in your teenager's pocket.



THE TRUTH

TECHNOLOGY IS NOT THE ENEMY

Phones help us communicate, the internet holds tremendous resources, and AI can be useful. But Scripture reminds us that something can be lawful without being profitable. It can be entertaining without being beneficial, and popular without being wise. So the question for a Christian family is not simply "Is technology good or bad?"

> **IS THE WAY WE ARE USING TECHNOLOGY WISE, PROFITABLE, AND HONORING TO CHRIST?**

Apps, devices, and algorithms will keep changing. God's Word does not. **We parent by principles, not platforms.**

THE PRACTICE

KNOW THE WORLD THEY LIVE IN

Our teenagers don't simply *use* the internet. They live in a digital world that competes for their attention and shapes their thinking. You don't need to be an expert in every app. You need to know your child and the world they are entering.

- Short-form video that never ends
- Social media and influencers
- AI companions and roleplay
- Private messages and group chats
- Online gaming communities
- Algorithms choosing what they see next

THE WORD

"

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

1 COR 10:23

ASK YOURSELF

- ? Should my teenager have this?
- ? Are they ready for it?
- ? What does it expose them to?
- ? Is it helping them become more like Christ, or making that harder?

ACTION STEPS

TAKE 30 MINUTES TO MAP YOUR FAMILY'S TECHNOLOGY

- ☐ List every device and app your teenager uses.
- ☐ Look at which parental controls are on today.
- ☐ Check who can message them privately.
- ☐ Write down one thing that surprised you.

CHAPTER TWO

PARENTS MUST BE ON THE OFFENSE

Don't wait for the fire. Prepare before the fire.



THE TRUTH

PREPARATION, NOT PANIC

Too often the conversation starts after the problem: after a child sees pornography, after a stranger sends a message, after social media takes over. That is parenting on the defense. The wise, Scripture says, see the danger ahead and prepare. Parenting on the offense is not paranoia. It is thinking ahead: **"What is my child likely to encounter, and how can I prepare them first?"**

THE PRACTICE

BEFORE THE FIRST PHONE

A device should come with responsibilities, boundaries, and accountability, not merely a charger.

- ☐ Which apps are permitted?
- ☐ What parental controls are on?
- ☐ What happens if rules are broken?
- ☐ Who can contact my child?
- ☐ Where will it charge at night?
- ☐ When will we review these rules?

TALK ABOUT THE HARD THINGS FIRST

PORNOGRAPHY	What it is, why it destroys, and what God says about purity.
PRESSURE	No one has the right to pressure them for pictures. Ever.
PREDATORS	Someone online may not be who they claim to be.
WORTH	Likes and followers do not determine who they are.

THE WORD

"

A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

PROV 22:3

WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG

1. **STOP**
   Don't keep watching or responding.
2. **DON'T SHARE IT**
   Don't send, forward, or save it.
3. **TELL A PARENT**
   Coming to us beats hiding it.
4. **DON'T PANIC**
   A mistake doesn't need to be a secret.
5. **ASK FOR HELP**
   We are the people you come to.

ACTION STEPS

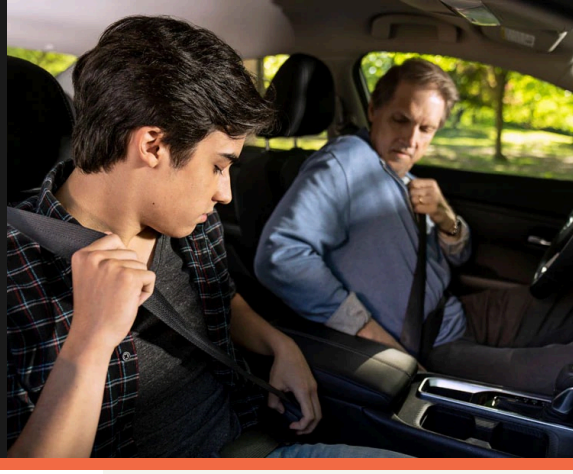
START THE CONVERSATION BEFORE IT'S NEEDED

- ☐ Ask: "What apps do you think parents don't understand?" Then listen.
- ☐ Walk through "When something goes wrong" together.
- ☐ Pick one hard topic above and talk about it.
- ☐ Put those five steps on the fridge.

CHAPTER THREE

PROTECTION IS NOT DISTRUST

We don't monitor because we don't trust our children. We monitor because we don't trust the world.



THE TRUTH

TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY WORK TOGETHER

A teenager can love the Lord and still face temptation. The question is not only whether your teenager is trustworthy. It is whether the environment around them is. And it isn't. God did not ask parents to hand discipleship to software. He told us to **teach our children diligently** (Deuteronomy 6:7), at home and along the way. A filter cannot teach wisdom. The strongest safety system in your home is an involved parent.

THE PRACTICE

THE SEATBELT PRINCIPLE

You trust your teenager with the car keys, and you still expect a seatbelt. That doesn't say "I think you're a bad driver." It says "This is powerful, and I want you prepared." Make accountability **expected, not punitive**, part of having a device from day one. Freedom grows as responsibility is shown.

PRIVACY SAYS	SECRECY SAYS
"I have appropriate personal space."	**"I am hiding something my parents have a right to know."**

CORRECT WITHOUT CREATING SECRECY

When your teenager comes to you after a mistake, your first words matter. Aim for restoration, not just punishment, so they learn that honesty brings help and secrecy makes problems worse.

THE WORD

"

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

PROV 4:23

SAY IT LIKE THIS

> **I do trust you. But trust doesn't mean you'll never face temptation or make a mistake. My job is to protect you, teach you, and prepare you.**

> **I'm glad you told me.**

ACTION STEPS

EXPLAIN THE WHY BEHIND YOUR BOUNDARIES

- [ ] Ask: "Do our tech rules make you feel like we don't trust you?" Listen first.
- [ ] Agree on when and how phones will be checked.
- [ ] Explain the seatbelt principle in your own words.
- [ ] Decide your first words after a confession: "I'm glad you told me."

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRACTICES OF A WISE DIGITAL FAMILY

Technology goes to bed before you do.



THE TRUTH

WISDOM LIVES IN HABITS

Good digital parenting is not one app, one filter, or one talk. It is built on **consistent habits** that still work when the next new app arrives. Sometimes wisdom means changing the environment instead of telling a teenager to resist everything.

THE PRACTICE

PRACTICES WORTH KEEPING

COMMON PLACES	Devices stay in shared spaces, not behind a closed door late at night.
PROTECT THE NIGHT	Phones charge outside the bedroom overnight.
SCREEN-FREE TIMES	Meals, homework, church, and family time come first.
KNOW THEIR WORLD	Their apps, accounts, group chats, and who can reach them.
NOT "EVERYONE HAS IT"	Ask what is wise for your teen, not what others allow.
TEACH THE PAUSE	Stop. Think. Then act. Is this true, wise, and honoring to Christ?
NOTHING IS PRIVATE	If you'd be ashamed for others to see it, don't send it.
USE GUARDRAILS	Filters help, but guardrails don't drive the car. You do.
REVISIT THE RULES	What fits a 12-year-old may not fit a 16-year-old.
MODEL IT	Our children need a digital example, not just digital rules.

THE WORD

"

I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

PS 101:3

MAKE IT A FAMILY RULE

> **If someone sends you something inappropriate, come tell us.**

> **If you make a mistake online, come tell us.**

> **If you think you'll be in trouble, come tell us anyway.**

ACTION STEPS

CHOOSE THREE PRACTICES YOUR FAMILY WILL KEEP

- [ ] Pick three from the list above.
- [ ] Explain the reason, not just the rule: "We want technology to serve our family, not control it."
- [ ] Write them down where everyone can see them.

CHAPTER FIVE

RAISING WISE DIGITAL DISCIPLES

We are raising more than safe teenagers.



THE TRUTH

CONVICTION, NOT JUST COMPLIANCE

One day your teenager will leave home with their own phone and no one watching. The goal is not a teen who says, "I shouldn't, because my parents might find out." It is one who says, **"I shouldn't, because I love Jesus Christ and this would not please Him."**

1 PROTECTION
We set the boundaries they can't yet set.

2 INSTRUCTION
They learn why the boundaries exist.

3 ACCOUNTABILITY
Access comes with accountability.

4 WISDOM
They ask "Is this wise?" not just "Am I allowed?"

5 SELF-CONTROL
They say no when no one is enforcing it.

6 CONVICTION
They obey because Christ is worth obeying.

THE PRACTICE

FIVE BETTER QUESTIONS

1	IS THIS WISE?	1 Cor 6:12
2	WILL THIS HELP ME GROW?	1 Cor 10:23
3	WILL THIS PULL ME TOWARD CHRIST OR AWAY FROM HIM?	1 Cor 15:33
4	DOES THIS CONTROL ME?	1 Cor 6:12
5	CAN I THANK GOD FOR THIS?	1 Cor 10:31

THE WORD

"

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

PROV 9:10

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

MATT 6:21

THE MESSAGE UNDER EVERY BOUNDARY

> **You are loved. You can tell us the truth. We will help you.**

ACTION STEPS

IF MY TEENAGER HAD COMPLETE FREEDOM TOMORROW, WOULD I HAVE PREPARED THEM?

- ☐ Teach the Five Better Questions and use one on a real decision.
- ☐ Pray for your teenager by name for wisdom, patience, and grace.
- ☐ Change one of your own phone habits your teenager will notice.

A CLOSING WORD

YOU ARE NOT DOING THIS ALONE

A closing word for parents.



If this guide raised more questions than it answered, that's okay. No parent gets this perfect. The goal is not a flawless plan. It is a faithful one: staying involved, keeping the conversation open, and pointing your teenager to Christ one day at a time.

God has given you the primary role in your teenager's life. Forge Teens exists to stand beside you in that work, not to replace you. Every week we want to point your teenager to the same truth you are teaching at home: that Jesus Christ is Lord, that His Word is enough, and that real wisdom begins with Him.

When you need help, a resource, or just someone to think it through with, reach out. We would be glad to walk with you.

> NOT PERFECT CHILDREN. NOT PERFECTLY CONTROLLED DEVICES. CHILDREN WHO WALK IN TRUTH.

THE WORD

"

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

PROV 22:6

WHERE TO START

Turn back to Chapter One and do the first Action Step: take 30 minutes to map your family's technology.

PRAY WITH US

Lord, give us wisdom to protect them, patience to teach them, and grace to disciple them.

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WE WOULD LOVE TO HELP

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A PLACE FOR TEENS TO FIND TRUTH