

# Oasis

Hope Church Youth Ministry Leadership

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland" Isaiah 43:18-19

## I. "The Seven Checkpoints" by Andy Stanley

What we want our kids to know after spending 7 years in the youth program

Key Questions to Consider:

- If we could permanently imprint anything we want upon our students' minds, what would it be?
- What do they need to know? What is the irreducible minimum?
- When everybody else is "doing it," what's going to keep them from joining in?
- When they are sitting in a dorm room during their freshman year contemplating their options for the evening, what principles or truths should drift through their minds in that potentially defining moment?

Checkpoint #1: Authentic Faith

This is the focus on a correct understanding of faith. Confusion in this one area is the primary reason so many students abandon Christianity. True faith is confidence that God is who He says He is-and confidence that He will do everything He has promised to do.

Principle: God can be trusted; He will do all He has promised to do.

Critical Question: Do our students trust God with the critical areas of their lives?

Key Passage: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

## Checkpoint #2: Spiritual Disciplines

This is the focus of your students' devotional life. The Apostle Paul says that true spiritual transformation begins with a renewed mind. Only as teenagers begin to renew their minds according to the truths of Scripture will their attitudes and behavior begin to change.

Principle: When you see as God sees, you will do as God says.

Critical Question: Are our students developing a consistent devotional and prayer life?

Key Passage: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:2

## Checkpoint #3: Moral Boundaries

One of the most important things we can teach our teenagers to do is to establish clear moral limits. They need to learn how to protect their bodies and emotions by honoring God's plan for sex and morality. The depth of their intimacy with God and others is dependent upon it.

Principle: Purity paves the way to intimacy.

Critical Question: Are our students establishing and maintaining godly moral boundaries?

Key Passage: "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit." 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

## Checkpoint #4: Healthy Friendships

The people our students associate with the most will have a direct impact on the decisions they make and the standards they choose. Healthy friendships build them up and draw them closer to God; unhealthy friendships bring them down and cause them to compromise what they know is right.

Principle: Your friends will determine the direction and quality of your life.

Critical Question: Are our students establishing healthy friendships and avoiding unhealthy ones?

Key Passage: "He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm." Proverbs 13:20

## Checkpoint #5 Wise Choices

Good decision making is more than simply choosing between right and wrong. Teenagers need to learn to ask, "In light of my past experience and my future dreams, what is the wise thing for me to do in this situation?"

Principle: Walk wisely.

Critical Question: are our students making wise choices in every area of their lives?

Key Passage: "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is." Ephesians 5:15-17

## Checkpoint #6: Ultimate Authority

Teenagers often view freedom and authority as opposing concepts. But the Bible teaches that true freedom is found under authority. This principle focuses on the students' need to recognize God's ultimate authority and to respect the earthly authorities he has placed over them.

Principle: Maximum freedom is found under God's authority.

Critical Question: Are our students submitting to the authorities God has placed over them?

Key Passage: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." Romans 13:1-2

## Check Point #7: Others First

Selfishness comes naturally to teenagers (not to mention the rest of us!) Selflessness, however, must be learned. The Bible says that Jesus "made Himself nothing" in order to serve the people he loved. He put the needs of others ahead of His own. Here our focuses is on the true nature of humility and service.

Principle: Consider others before yourself

Critical Question: Are our students putting the needs of others ahead of their own?

Key Passage: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:3-11