

“Age of Opportunity – A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens”

Author: Paul David Tripp

Publisher: P&R

Whether you are a parent who is struggling and overwhelmed by teenage rebellion, or a parent standing at the edge of the teenage years with nervous anticipation, this book is for you! Tripp challenges us to reject the world’s “if only I can survive til they reach 18” mentality and recognise that God has uniquely called and equipped us as Christian parents to model Christ and reach out in grace and mercy addressing what is really happening at a heart level. He encourages parents to accept this stage of parenting as a God-given opportunity instead of a stage to be dreaded or avoided.

In the first part of the book, Tripp challenges parents about what the really important issues are. He examines what we often treasure in our own hearts and causes us to reflect on the “idols of the heart” that so easily ensnare us. The main emphasis is that raising children is not primarily about how they look, how well they achieve at school, how intelligent they are, but ultimately if they have a heart for God. In part two Tripp helps us to think biblically about the affects of the culture in which we live and how to interact with our teenagers on “being in the world, but not of it.” In part three, Tripp suggests three practical strategies for parenting teens with a particular emphasis on conversation with your teen – parents making an effort to really listen and talk with their teen in order to understand what is going on in their hearts.

I believe this is one of the most encouraging and challenging books that I have read on the subject of teenagers. Tripp shares honestly and humorously about his own struggles with teenagers, but with godly wisdom and humility. Essential reading for anyone parenting teenagers and one that will cause you to examine your own heart before the Lord.

Reviewed by Anne Camp