



A parent newsletter designed to help you better understand and relate to today's youth culture and your church's teenagers—including your own.



Culture Watch

How do you *feel* about it? What makes you *feel* good? What do you *feel* is your truth? These are examples of questions that have become the catalyst to the moral fiber of our current culture. Our students are encouraged to navigate through life using their own personal, subjective *feelings* as the most valued tool to make major life decisions.

There is a high premium on the feelings of the individual. In fact, there is such a high premium on feelings that many people are willing to disregard factual truths in order to appease the emotions and feelings of the individual. Everything is customizable to the individual, so why can't truth be customizable too? It may seem absurd, but this is the state of our culture, and if we are not intentional and careful, it might invade the culture of our churches.

The youth culture is encouraged everyday to speak *their* truth; or follow *their* truth; or discover *their* truth. The problem? Well, what happens when absolute, factual truth conflicts with the subjective

"truth" of the individual? What is happening all around the country is that we are allowing our emotions and our feelings to dictate our choices, which will lead to major flaws in our worldviews. Our feelings and our emotions are always circumstantial—bad circumstances, negative emotions; good circumstances, positive emotions.

The reality is that life is great, and life is hard. There will be positive experiences, and there will be negative experiences. We *must* help our students understand where truth comes from (Who it comes from), and that truth doesn't change, even when our emotions and feelings do. **Turn to The Flip Side for more. >**

#HumbleBrag

Teens doing awesome things!

Teens really stepped up during the recent coronavirus pandemic.

- In Maryland and across the country, teens volunteered to do grocery-store runs for older adults who were sheltering in place. They used "no contact" delivery methods to be sure at-risk people had the food and supplies they needed.
- In Virginia, 13-year-old Charles Randolph used his 3D printer to print face-masks for protecting the public from the COVID-19 virus. Each mask took about 90 minutes and \$1 to make. Though they were not hospital quality, they were helpful for high-risk people venturing to the grocery or pharmacy.
- Shaivi Shah, age 15, collected supplies like hand sanitizer, antibacterial soap, and reusable face masks. She packaged them into kits and distributed more than 150 bags to three different homeless shelters in the Los Angeles area.

Celebrate the creativity and thoughtfulness of your teens too!





> The Flip Side

We believe that God *is* truth—not that He simply is truthful, but that He *is* Truth. All truth flows from the Creator of Truth. Therefore, if Truth has spoken, then His ways and promises are eternal and unchanging. How can we instill this into young people who are taught to discover their own truth? We must focus on the consistency of God’s Word. Here are a few things to teach our children / students:


1. Remind them of the eternal hope of God’s Word. There are many passages of Scripture that emphasize this point. Psalm 119:114 says, *You are my refuge and my shield, I will put my hope in your word.* In God’s promises we can find safety and protection. God’s Word is our shield too. A shield never removes the soldier from battle. Instead, the shield protects in battle. Reading Scripture does not remove us from the challenges of life, but it does equip us to stand firm under the protection of Truth. Our hope is in His Word, not in the ebb and flow of our emotions.

2. Show them how God’s truth (His Word) defends, even when our feelings deceive us. Many people may *feel* depressed, lonely, ugly, unworthy, or unlovable. But, God’s Word will defend us with Truth, even when we feel at our worst. The Bible reminds us of many truths: we are a child of the King (John 1:12); we are His treasured possession (Deuteronomy 7:6); we can be strong and courageous (Joshua 1:9); He knows us personally and very well (Luke 12:7); His thoughts about us outnumber the sand on the seashore (Psalm 139:17-18); we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). See how powerful Truth is, especially when our feelings try to tell us something different!

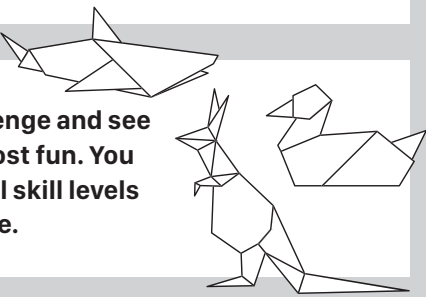
3. Help them filter their feelings with Truth. In a world that places the highest value on feeling, help your students process those things through Scripture. If the Scripture says differently than the world says, help them see that God’s wisdom matters more than our own. Why? Because He truly cares about human flourishing and eternal souls.

on the calendar

- Sep 13** Grandparents Day
- Sep 18** Cheeseburger Day
- Oct 2** Name Your Car Day
- Oct 20** Suspenders Day
- Nov 11** Origami Day
- Nov 17** Take a Hike Day



Does your car already have a name? If not, have a family contest to see who can come up with the best one!



Take the origami challenge and see who can fold up the most fun. You can find tutorials for all skill levels on Pinterest or YouTube.

The articles in *Forward* and *Velocity* magazines provide great discussion starters for you and your teen. Also, devotions for teens cover the same Scripture as the adult devotions in *Fusion Family* and *Fusion Next*, creating opportunities for family Bible study. Read them, discuss them, and use them as a tool for discipleship in the home.