

Teen Lesson 1: A Special Relationship

As you read through this lesson, look up as many of the highlighted scripture references as you can. These support the text and studying these scriptures in your own Bible will increase your understanding and enable you to prove this material for yourself.

You've probably heard your parents and other adults in the Church talk about being "called" into the Church. Have you ever wondered exactly what that means?

Well, the Bible tells us that no one can become a Christian unless God calls or draws them (**John 6:44**). This means that we can't understand God's Way of Life or the things of God unless He makes it possible by opening our minds. He does this through His Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 2:7-12**).

However, this isn't something that is just limited to grown-ups. God's "calling" is also extended to you young people and that's what I'd like to cover in this first Teen Lesson. But before we find out HOW God's calling is extended to you, we need to take a look at relationships - because the most important thing God wants is to have a close personal relationship with each of us. And that's why He calls us. He wants to be *our God*.

He told Abraham about this relationship in *Genesis 17:7* -

I will keep my promise to you and to your descendants in future generations as an everlasting covenant. I will be your God and the God of your descendants (*Good News Bible*).

Notice that God didn't say He was only going to be Abraham's God, but that He would also be the God of all of Abraham's descendants. That's a *continuing* relationship.

In *Jeremiah 30:22* God tells us of the future relationship that He will have with the nation of Israel:

So you will be my people, and I will be your God (*The Youth Bible, New Century Version* throughout, unless otherwise stated).

We read in the New Testament that this also applies to those of us God has called at this time (**2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 18:4**). We are God's people. This means that we have a relationship with God. In *2 Corinthians 6:18* God explains that this relationship is actually a family relationship:

I will be your father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

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God makes it very clear throughout the Bible that He wants to have a close family relationship with human beings. He is our *God* and we are His people. He is our Father and we are His children. But God also wants us to be His *friends*. And this is another word that the Bible uses when it talks about the relationship that God has with His people. Notice, for example, that Abraham is called God's friend in **2 Chronicles 20:7** and **Isaiah 41:8** - and that Christ calls His followers "friends" in **John 15:15**.

God wants our friendship with Him to last forever - and it's so important to Him that EVEN before He made the world, He decided to call a special group of people to be His own "chosen" people - people with whom He would have a relationship or friendship. You can read about this in **Ephesians 1:4-5, 11** and **Romans 8:28-29**.

We all know that baptised adults in the Church are part of this special group and have a relationship with God. But God wants to have a relationship or friendship with you as well. In fact, you young people are so important to God that the Holy Spirit, which is given to your parents when they repent and are baptised, is also promised to you one day (**Acts 2:38-39**).

A Special Opportunity

1 Corinthians 7:14 explains that you are holy (sanctified).¹ This means that you are set apart and special to God because one or both of your parents are "believers" and part of the "body of Christ", members of God's Church. And this is how God extends His calling to you.

This doesn't mean that you are "called" in the same sense that adults are called "out of the world". It means that you young people have the opportunity to learn about God's Way of Life because of the spiritual influence of your Christian parents. It means that you can have a relationship or friendship with God *if you want to* and if you choose to make God's Way of Life your own.

Choosing to make God's Way of Life your own is something that God clearly wants you to do. **Deuteronomy 4:9-10** and **Deuteronomy 6:4-7** make it plain that parents have a responsibility to teach their children about God and His ways. But once they have taught you those ways, God tells YOU not to forget them and to keep His commandments *from the heart* (see **Proverbs 3:1**). In other words, God wants you to make His ways, His teachings, His Laws your own - because YOU choose to, not just because your parents want you to. And the Bible is full of instruction that you can read

¹ "Holy" (Greek *Hagios*) and "sanctify" (Latin *sanctus*) have the same meaning of being "separated to God".

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for yourselves now that you're older. Much of the book of Proverbs, for example, was written specifically with young people in mind (see **Proverbs 1:4,8,10,15**; **Proverbs 2:1**; **Proverbs 3:1,11,21**, etc).

Never Too Young

Because one or both of your parents are in the Church, you are part of the special group of people that God wants to work with at this time. But aren't you really still too young to have a relationship with Him? Let's look at some examples in the Bible that give us the answer to this question.

In **2 Chronicles 34:1-3** we learn that Josiah was 16 when he began to seek God. **2 Timothy 3:14-15** reveals that Timothy grew up learning about God's Way of Life and **1 Samuel 2:18,26** shows us that Samuel was only a child when he began to serve God. So these three men were all young when they began to have a relationship with God - and in each case, their relationship or friendship with God involved living God's Way of Life. Their obedience to God was an important part of their relationship.

So even though I said earlier that the most important thing God wants is to have a relationship or friendship with us, the truth is that we can't have a friendship with Him unless we are also obedient to Him - unless we are willing to live His Way of Life.² And as we have seen from the examples of Samuel, Josiah and Timothy, you are *never* too young to decide that you want to do that. In fact, it's something that God wants you to do. This is something that King David understood. Notice:

Children, come and listen to me. I will teach you to worship [or honour] the LORD (Psalms 34:11).

God wants you to learn His ways and live the right way. Furthermore, the Bible tells us that you will be *known* by your deeds - by your behaviour.

Even a child is known by his deeds, by whether what he does is pure and right (Proverbs 20:11, NKJ).

Jesus is a good example of this. He was brought up living God's Way of Life - just as most of you were - and when He was 12 years old He went with His family to keep the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem. When His family, relatives and

² At some point this involves accepting Jesus as our Saviour (and everything involved with that - repentance, baptism, receiving God's Holy Spirit) as the only way we can truly have a relationship with God is through Jesus Christ (John 14:6). This is covered in more detail in future lessons and you can learn more about Jesus' role as our Saviour in "[The Holy Days and God's Plan](#)" and the "[Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread](#)" lessons in the Holy Day series.

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acquaintances began their journey home, Jesus' parents assumed that He was with the group. But after travelling for a whole day, Joseph and Mary discovered that Jesus wasn't with them after all! So they returned to Jerusalem to search for Him (Luke 2:41-45).

Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers (Luke 2:46-47).

Jesus was not even your age yet, but He had such a good understanding of the scriptures that those who heard Him were amazed. Of course, He was an exceptional child because He was the Son of God in the flesh, but Jesus still had to learn about God's Way of Life as He grew up - and He still had to choose to live that way. In that sense, He had to go through the same process that you do in order to build a relationship or friendship with His Father.

Conclusion

God wants to have a relationship with all of His people - and that includes you! Young people are very special to God and, because your parents have been called to have a relationship or friendship with Him, you also have the opportunity to have a special friendship with Him. We'll learn more about this friendship and what you can do to start building it, in the next two lessons.