

When Are Teens "Adults"?

—By Sara D. 9/85

We've been receiving lots of questions from the field lately regarding our Family teens, & lots of parents & shepherds are asking for specific counsel & guidelines on how to treat & train the teens. Some parents asked if when a child reaches 12 years old does that mean he's allowed to drink wine nightly & coffee daily & see all the adult videos & keep adult hours & have all the same privileges as adults? Apparently their teens had been asking for adult privileges once they turned 12 & couldn't understand why they weren't treated as full-fledged adults since 12 is considered the adult age in our Family.

IT TAKES TIME TO MATURE!

Although the age of 12 is when many girls begin menstruating & boys producing semen, in most other respects they don't have drastic overnight changes. They're just continuing to grow day-by-day. And these years are just the beginning of the period called adulthood. Young people don't suddenly turn into full-fledged adults overnight. They're on their way to being an adult, but they're just starting out. It takes time & training & love & care & experience for them to turn into full-fledged adults to where they can handle both the responsibilities & blessings of adulthood.

Marla said, "A baby is still a baby whether he's one month or even 1-&-1/2 years old, but you don't give babies the same things to play with when they're one month old as you do when they're 1-&-1/2 years old. Just like you can't suddenly lavish all sorts of adult 'extras' on 12-year-old adults, but they need time to grow into them.

"They can't suddenly start having unsupervised & unlimited adult activities at 12 when it's the least adult they're ever going to be. It's not even sensible! They're only really just 'baby adults'. It takes time to mature & grow, it doesn't happen all at once! It's like they've made it to high school, but they're only in the first day of their first year.—Just beginning—and with everything to learn yet ahead of them."

Look at us—many of us parents & adults have been in the Family for 10 or 14 years, & look how many years it's taken us to learn even the very basic lessons & how long it's taken us to learn to even trust ourselves sometimes with certain liberties, like Fing & sex & money & all. Thank God we didn't have it as soon as we turned six months or nine months old in the Family.

No one at any age is considered really

"adult" or a leader or bellwether unless they fulfill that role with the faithfulness & responsibility & maturity in the spirit that it takes to be an adult in our Family! Teens are not leaders yet! You couldn't really trust most young kids 12 or 13 years old to be an adult-companion in a serious security situation, such as banking or mail runs or something. What if there was some kind of raid or trouble? Could that child actually handle the situation on his own & know how to call in & counsel & know how to deal wisely with the authorities & all?

We as parents have to be Spirit-led in what & how much we offer our young people, to know when they're really ready for it & if they really even need it. Of course we want to train all our children to be responsible & Spirit-led & be real labour leaders for the Lord, but it's going to take time.

ADULT PRIVILEGES

We've heard of some teens of about 13 years old habitually drinking coffee & wine & have questioned the advisability of our new, pure, fresh Family generation of teens or older children jumping so eagerly into some of these System hang-ups & worldly bad habits that we've been trying to get away from ever since we joined the Family!

Dad & Marla were even compelled to set a wine & coffee quota, even decreasing it several times. We wondered how much of a "reward" regular wine & coffee are, as well as many adult videos. Sometimes they seem to be things we just have to tolerate for the sake of some of our adults who seem to "have to have" these things.

Dad just said the other day, "Coffee can be the Devil's own channel for some people. Some people just can't handle it", & he's said the very same thing about wine a number of times. Dad has said that perhaps drinking too much coffee might be one reason why the adults get so many afflictions & herpes outbreaks & all, because it lowers your resistance & is just plain bad for you in excess.

Dad has a couple of times offered our children a little bit of wine at special dinners, but he never encourages anyone to drink either wine or coffee on a daily basis. Many of our adults have found that instead of it being an asset & advantage it has been more of a liability, resulting in a lazy, tired spirit & often opening the door for discouragement & depression if taken in excess, in the case of wine; nervousness, jitters, & lack of sleep etc. in the case of coffee. (See FSM 16, pg 21, 220; FSM 17, pg

We certainly don't want to start our teens on habits which they don't need & which could possibly have adverse effects on their health & attitudes, as it has had on a great deal of our adults, who even have difficulty handling these things wisely, actually battling against excesses of both! It takes a lot of wisdom to handle liberties in a mature spirit, wine, sex or FFing, some videos or even heavy meat in the MD Letters & FSMs!

It's not that drinking only one or two cups of coffee per day is so bad, or having only one 4-ounce glass of wine per week should be considered sin or weakness; In fact, it can be considered great progress for many of our adults who have overindulged for years to be able to limit themselves to that quantity, GBT! Neither is it a big sin for our teens to have a cup of coffee once in awhile, or even a glass of wine every so often; we're just saying that it doesn't seem necessary to encourage them to develop a habit for these things.

Why would a 12, 13, 14, or even 15 year old need wine? What are the advantages of drinking coffee even on an irregular basis?—Especially for youngsters who are already energetic & full of life & don't need artificial "highs" to keep them pepped up? In some ways, making a serious habit of coffee & wine is akin to eating refined junk foods & shaving our legs or cutting our hair & curling it (like some do!), wearing bras & heavy make-up & eye liner. It's that Worldly life that we forsook & dropped out of readily & willingly!

Now, however, sad to say, many adults have become entangled again in the bondage that they were once delivered from & have gotten hung up with a number of bad habits, especially once they got too much off on their own & started "following afar off" in the FFing days in Europe & under the Chain, for example! That was the old Chain's bad influence of extravagance & worldliness & a lot of bondage that we've all been trying to get delivered from ever since the RNR!

With teens now in our Home & with our older & even younger children, we're trying our best daily to "train them in the way they should go, so that when they are old they will not depart from it!". (Pro.22:6) We don't want them to have the problems & battles & the sin that has resulted from our excessiveness, from too much of this type of thing like Worldly music & language, & too many System videos etc. If those kids are attracted to all that & want to "copycat" it, it seems there's something really wrong with us, & that we haven't set the sample of

modelling ourselves after Dad & Maria & the Letters, that's for sure!

But if we adults can't overcome these things, at least we should try to let our children know that they shouldn't do it & that they shouldn't be that way. Sure, they may think we're being hypocritical, but at least you are trying to teach them to do right even if you don't.

My mother was a horrible chain smoker & she would tell me almost every day of my life, "Don't you ever smoke when you grow up, it's a terrible bad habit & I hate it but I can't stop it! Just remember to do as I say & not as I do." At first, I couldn't understand why she was such a hypocrite & couldn't have any more self-control. But as I grew older I could see from her bad sample that I didn't want to be like her & I chose not to smoke cigarettes even though almost all my friends did, because I saw what it led to, with her lazy spirit & her defeated attitude & inability to really attack, but at least she warned me about it & I knew it was wrong.

There's nothing wrong with wine & coffee occasionally if it helps the teens to feel grown up & included as adults, but as a dally or nightly practice we don't think it's the wisest course of action for anyone because of its potential dangers. Plus think of the unnecessary expense & the bad sample to others we try to win to the Family! What difference would Worldly people see in us?

DAD'S TEEN RULES!

Dad has been very protective of the teens in our Home, making sure that the girls don't do anything "serious" once they have their periods! What would happen if a very young girl that age got pregnant, how would you explain that to the authorities? How would you get a passport & papers & what would it do for your security? It's not necessary that they have full-fledged adult sex till they're old enough & "adult" enough to actually bear babies & get married & handle it wisely. (Amen!—Grandpa)

Dad had a meeting with our entire Home to lay down the law for our teen girls! He made sure that everyone knew that the boys should treat the girls carefully & prayerfully & he laid down the strict rule that there would be no serious business whatsoever until they were at least fifteen. They sometimes have their "dates" with boys & can have lots of fun without the real thing, "But don't even get it close, boys—we don't wanna chance it! And keep clean!"—Although it is fine with younger boys their own age who don't have semen.

Just like we adults had to learn to

God expects each of His children, those who really know Him, to touch Him personally & make direct contact with Him through prayer.



"ban the bomb" in the Family, our kids at that certain adolescent age have to be carefully protected & envisioned that they shouldn't go too far too soon & blow the whole works & bring on a possible serious security problem that could affect virtually the whole work in a city or country!

WHAT'S THE STANDARD?

Our teens have a world of potential & a tremendous future ahead & Dad has a very special wonderful vision & burden for the teens, not only for the future, but even now. We expect a lot out of our teens even now. We're trying to grow them up to live an "adult" standard & behaviour & spiritual maturity! We need to give them our very best training & our very best attention, making sure to make up for any lacks they've had in the past & give it to them quick & now, because time is so very short!

Some of our young people, once they've turned 12 & 13, have mistakenly thought they could now be their own boss & backslide from their good childhood training, they feel that they've attained & don't have to listen to or obey anybody, & can drink coffee in the afternoon & have their own personal schedule & carry on without any oversight, but we're sure that if the need for discipline in their affairs is lovingly explained to them, they'll want to cooperate & obey & even be a great improvement on us, their parents.

If we really want our Family teens to be solid, dedicated 100% new bottle, new generation, revolutionary adults in our Family, & not independent & undisciplined & unsupervised, then we must be what we want them to be. Have we really learned to press in & be diligent & faithful to redeem the time to the utmost? Do we know how to feed ourselves spiritually & hunger for the Word & look up areas that we need to work on in the Pubdex & read up on it on our own & express in writing or verbally some really Spirit-led, positive reactions to the Word that we have been reading? Are we still memorising & reviewing daily? Are we examples of the Word?—As we want them to be?

Are we witnessing & winning souls? Are we obedient & respectful & submitted to all adults & leadership, & are we the type of examples we should be? Then we can expect them to be.—A wonderful new generation of good-example teens that we can be proud of in our Family.—Or are they smart-aleck Teen Terrors that think they can lounge around & do their own thing & that we "owe" them special treatment & privileges? Maybe they've gotten their bad habits from us. If so, may God help us to get back in line.

We read in the FSM all the time about adult parents who are still tempted to smoke & drink in excess & curse & have all sorts of terrible sexual perversions that we're praying over daily for deliverance all over the World. Is it our sample that makes our kids think that there's something good & desirable about those kind of worldly habits? May God forbid that our kids get the slightest desire for that kind of Egypt in their hearts & that we stop manifesting that kind of desire & vision & habits to them. The Devil would just love to tear down any of the good training we've put into them all these years.

Our teens by now should even be a shining example to the adults of a new generation, of David's Mighty Men, with a whole new vision & a new spirit of David & a Heaven's Girl anointing to be busy for the Lord even now & fulfilling it all the way through the Endtime, possibly beginning next year with the Antichrist rising to power!

Our teenagers should know how to make & eat good healthfoods & drinks & be turning everyone on to the right way to do things like they've read in the MO Letters & Grandpa Stories, & take a stand of conviction against some of these bad habits & problems the adults have in the Family!

Just like anything else in the Family, you have to judge it by: What are its advantages? Is it fruitful? Is it good for the Work of God? Why should we do it? What are the benefits?

Are you training up the children in the ways they should go, so when they are old or even becoming young adults at 12 & 13 & 14, that they will not depart from it? What kind of new generation are you raising in your children? Is it according to the MO Letters? Is it the true spirit of David? God bless & keep our teens & children, they're our heritage from the Lord & our reward & they deserve the best, don't you think?

Dad recently said, "Our teens right now are our immediate future, & if we don't hang on to them we've got no future, because all of our children are going to be teens before long, & right at the most crucial time in this World's history. They've got to hang on & fight the battle, because there are going to be some tough battles that are almost too hard for their parents.

"The Lord's got great vision for our teens! We really need to invest our time & effort in every way we can to hang on to these teens! Our teens right now are almost our most important age, the most important to serve the Lord. There are certainly some beautiful samples of our teens in some of the testimonies I've been reading!"