

# A Mission That Motivates Teens

by Rodney Marshall

*“Three, two, one, we have lift off of teen shuttle.” “Houston, this is teen shuttle. We have a problem.” “Teen shuttle this is mission control, Houston. What seems to be the problem?” “I know I’m in a space craft. In this great adventure, I must be headed somewhere. But where am I going?” “Teen shuttle, we’ve planned this mission for years. We’ve trained and prepared you. You are the best-qualified astronaut we have, but you don’t know where you are going? You don’t know your mission?” “No sir, I don’t. Just where am I going? How do I find my mission in life?”*

This quandary probably fits someone you know. It may even fit one of your own teens. You’ve willingly toiled long to provide quality Christian education. You’ve concerned yourself with character, and academic content. You anticipate completion of graduation expectancies, and yet your teen may not have a sense of calling. Mission control, God, created and designed each teen for a purpose. He has a mission, career, or vocation. Our responsibility as parents and educators includes helping each teen find and fulfill this God given calling.

All over the world I have spoken with parents and educators about the need to instill a sense of calling in youth. While team preaching with my teenage son graduate, at the European Student Leadership convention in England, I found students hungry for meaning and purpose in life. The same need emerges from Manila to Maine. Many of us share a passion to help youths find their true mission in life. God calls some to church ministry as pastors and evangelists. The calling of most will lead them to godly impact in the broader society through education, law, public policy, medicine, technology, management, entrepreneurship, the arts, various trades, and so on. Each calling or career is equally noble when performed before the face of God. How can a youth find his mission in life? How can you help your teen find the career prepared for him? Start by teaching God designed a mission to motivate, master, and move him.

## **God motivates teens with a sense of mission.**

He designed them to accomplish a positive and worthwhile work in His overarching plan. The teen that finds a mission finds an assignment, charge, duty, task, aim, objective, goal, purpose or calling from God. This calling will unfold in a career, occupation, profession, vocation, forte, passion, or specialty, for which the teen develops a strong impulse or inclination. The teen motivated by a sense of his mission in life will embrace the work and overcome the challenges inherent in any significant accomplishment.

## **God wants to master each teen with a godly philosophy of mission.**

Any touch of fatalism will result in a passive acceptance of some undiscoverable plan and a loss of motivation. Many teens wander in lethargic aimlessness, rooted in existentialism. Humanism places the teen at the center of the teen’s life. Most teens struggle daily with this selfishness. Don’t feed it! We need teens mastered by a mission to serve God with the understanding God has printed a calling into the depths of their

beings. This kind of teen will seek to discover and fulfill His will. This teen will do good and transform civilization little by little and day by day. This kind of teen will do God's work and say with Paul at the end of his life, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course?" 2 Timothy 4:7.

**God moves each teen by his mission to love God, love his neighbor, and fulfill his unique calling.**

Jesus quoted the great commandment to describe this first mission in life when he said; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God?" Every teen is called to live hour by hour loving God rather than self or other contemporary false gods. Fulfillment of this mission provides the basis for the next. Each teen moved by God will do as Jesus said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus went about doing good his entire earthly life. He provided the ultimate example by loving his neighbor to the death. Youth who simply do the maximum good their lives can produce will fulfill a major role in transforming this world. God will also move the teen to fulfill his unique calling. The creator designed him for a specific purpose. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10. Each teen has his specific work to accomplish. God designed him to use his God given talents, in God chosen settings, for the purposes God deems most important. As the teen discovers his unique mission he will move into positive, godly Christian action. Much of this action should find effective expression as the teen develops in a God given careerpath.

*"Mission control, I think I'm getting the idea. You designed and prepared me to accomplish a specific purpose with my life. Now, how can I discover and fulfill this mission? What do I do now?" "Next you need to learn biblical principles involved in the idea of finding and fulfilling a calling/career designed by God. Then we will match your God given personality, and vocational interests, skills and priorities with the your calling/career. We will continue our pursuit of a mission that motivates!"*

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