

**PARENTING  
TEENS FOR A  
LIFE OF FAITH**

**HANDBOOK**

## Welcome to the Parenting Teens for a Life of Faith course – leader's handbook

Parenting teens has its challenges. As children grow, they naturally begin to pull away from their parents as they grow in independence and begin to make decisions with bigger consequences. It can be easy for parents to think they are less influential in their teens' lives, particularly when it comes to faith. But that is not true. Parents and carers remain the significant spiritual influencer in a teen's life, and teens need them to help as they navigate the world and faith together.

Based on the book *Parenting Teens for a Life of Faith*, but not limited to it, this course will help all parents, carers, grandparents and others involved in teens' everyday lives to understand the teenage faith journey more and find their place within it.

Over six sessions the course explores:

- Session 1: God's plan for teens. An overview of how teens differ from children, the role of parents and carers and 'creating windows' – a simple tool to help teens see the power of a relationship with God.
- Session 2: Tying together truth and experience. As we frame all sorts of experiences for our teens, we can help them make sense of who God is and answer their questions.
- Session 3: Connecting to God – prayer. Communication is at the heart of every authentic relationship so our teens need to discover their own voice as they communicate with God and learn to catch his communication too.
- Session 4: Unknotting wrong views of God. Teens have multiple voices telling them who God is and, like all of us, from time to time they will have warped views that affect their relationship with him. We can help them to untangle warped views.
- Session 5: Teenagers and church. Getting our teens to engage with church is not just about Sundays. We can show them the fullness of church and help them to engage with it whatever their situation.
- Session 6: A godly core of confidence. Teens often struggle with confidence because they are hearing the wrong messages about where confidence comes from. We can proactively help them grow a godly confidence that will set them up for life.

If you decide to run a course, do let us know. As a team, we are committed to praying for every course that runs. Please tell us the dates when your course is running at [parentingforfaith.org/register-your-course](https://parentingforfaith.org/register-your-course) so we can journey with you in prayer.

If you have any questions or if we can support or encourage you in any way, you can contact us via [parentingforfaith.org/contact-us](https://parentingforfaith.org/contact-us).

## What to expect?

We have designed the course to be as flexible as possible and easy to lead, either in person or online. There are several components which you can mix and match with the core teaching to provide you with a course that works for your participants and context.

You can download each video-based session or view them online.

Each session lasts for approximately 40 minutes, with four sections of core teaching from Rachel Turner together with some short videos of parents, carers and youth workers talking about the topic. These can stand alone, or you can add some or all of the following options:

- Session icebreakers (*15 minutes*) – to introduce the key ideas of that session.
- Reflective question (*10 minutes*) – to help explore and embed the ideas taught in each block.
- Discussion questions (*15–30 minutes*) – to round off the session.
- At the end of this handbook you'll find a one page handout for each session which you might want to give to participants, reminding them of the core ideas they have learned. You have permission to photocopy these, or they are available at [parentingforfaith.org/course-downloads](https://parentingforfaith.org/course-downloads) if you'd like to send them digitally.

## Adapting the course to your context

Here are some things we've found useful to think about when running courses.

- Team: depending on the size of your group and the context you are meeting in, would other team members be helpful?
- People can feel vulnerable when talking about themselves as parents or carers, so it is worth reminding participants about confidentiality right at the beginning. Families come in all shapes and sizes, and it may be worth thinking beforehand about the group you have.
- If this group doesn't know each other already, how can you help them feel welcome and relaxed? Sometimes people can be reluctant to answer questions or are shy of discussions, so do consider ideas like this which may feel easier:
  - Get people to stand in a line marked 0–10, to show how much they agree with a statement
  - Pair talk – ask participants to get into pairs to discuss the question and then the pair feeds back to the whole group.
  - Use a flipchart/post-its on a wall/interactive whiteboard/chat function to collect ideas before reflecting on them as a group
  - Ask people to reflect individually before feeding back to the group
- If you are running the course over several weeks, it can be helpful to have a way of staying in touch between sessions and you can also use this to send out encouragements and reminders.
- If people miss a session, please feel free to send them a link so they can catch up.

While all videos and support documentation are available free at [parentingforfaith.org/parenting-teens-course](https://parentingforfaith.org/parenting-teens-course), we would love for you to make a donation, if you are able, to Parenting for Faith to enable us to continue producing resources such as this, as well to continue supporting church leaders, churches and the families they serve. You can make a donation at [brf.org.uk/donate](https://brf.org.uk/donate). There is more information at the end of this guide about how to support Parenting for Faith financially. If you have any questions or if we can support or encourage you in any way, contact us at [parentingforfaith.org/contact-us](https://parentingforfaith.org/contact-us).

## Session 1 – God’s plan for teens

We all have hopes and dreams for our teens, and for Christian parents and carers, this includes their journeys with God. But as our teens grow and change, parents and carers can worry that they are no longer able to influence them spiritually. In this session, we learn why parents and carers are still highly influential with their teens and how we can use the tool of ‘creating windows’ to show them what a relationship with God is like.

### Session outline

The core teaching is in the four video parts below. We’ve added in the optional extras in italics so you can shape the session for your group.

- **Session icebreaker ideas:**
  1. *Introduce yourself, your kids and what you are hoping to get from this course.*
  2. *Describe yourself as a teen in just three words. What three words would you use for your teen?*
- **Part 1: What’s our role? (9 minutes)** Our teens’ lives may look very different as they leave childhood. Their lives may seem messy and as their brain develops, they are highly experimental, trying things, discarding others, changing their minds. Our role is to journey alongside them.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes)**
    1. *What are your hopes and dreams for your teen or tween? What would you like to see in 10 years time?*
- **Part 2: God-smart and God-connected (9 minutes)** It’s tempting to give teens lots of information about God – make them ‘God-smart’, but what they really need is to be ‘God-connected’, experiencing his love, power and communication in their everyday lives. While church is amazing and supportive, it’s parents and carers whom God has designed to be the primary disciplers of their teens.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes)**
    1. *How do you connect with God? What helps? What difference does being God-connected rather than just God-smart make to you?*
    2. *How do you influence your teen? For example, in day to day life/managing relationships/practical skills/attitudes and passions/school...*
- **Part 3: Creating windows (15 minutes)** If we can ‘create windows’ into our lives with God it gives our teens a close up look at what a real relationship with God looks like – in all its ups and downs. This equips them to know how to have one themselves and cope with the ups and downs of faith. In this part we look at three ways to create windows with our teens.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes)**
    1. *When have you seen glimpses of other people’s lives with God that have influenced you? (For example, someone using a new app/a story someone told/ in a conversation.)*

2. *As a group come up with ideas for how you might you create a window for your teen into:*
    - a) *What happens when you worship.*
    - b) *How God helps you make decisions (you may have a specific example).*
    - c) *How you cope when things go wrong.*
    - d) *Why church is important for you.*
  3. *Share a story of who God was and what he did for you (e.g. when you were frightened of something/when you had a big life choice to make/when you fell in love...)*
- **Part 4: Be encouraged** (3 minutes) Creating windows is a powerful way to disciple your teens. Know though that discipling teens may be a long game. It's essentially continually asking yourself and God: 'What is the next step for my teen, and how can I help them take it?'

## Discussion questions

Use any of the questions or activities from the session or one or more of these:

1. *When you were a teen how did your parents/carers influence you? What do you do now or learn to do then that is because of them?*
2. *Group activity: mark out a line from 0 to 10. Ask people to put themselves on the line – if they think it's true, 10, not true 0. How much do you influence your teen's life? Then: How much do you influence your teens' spiritual life? Then have a chat about what you see.*
3. *How might the following questions help teens glimpse a window into your relationship with God:*
  - a) *I've got £50 to donate to a charity, but I'm not sure which one God would like best.*
  - b) *I am so angry with George at work. I just keep thinking 'what would Jesus do', but I can't work it out.*
  - c) *I've got tickets to the cricket on Sunday, but feel bad about not going to church... what do you think God would say?*
4. *How do you feel about creating windows into things you struggle with or have got wrong? Is this important for your teen?*
5. *What's your big 'take away' from this session?*
6. *What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?*

## Session 2 – Tying together truth and experience

One of the challenges for us all is to understand how God works both in our own day to days, and in the world at large. In the midst of our lives, when we experience things or see events unfolding, it can seem hard to see how God is relevant or make sense of who he is. Framing helps us explain to our teens who God is in every situation and answer the questions they might have.

### Session outline

The core teaching is in the four video parts below. We've added in the optional extras in italics so you can shape the session for your group.

- **Session icebreaker ideas:**
  1. *What big questions do you have about God and the world? What about your teen? How do you know what their questions are?*
  2. *Start with a big list of 'teen' scenarios. Ask people to write questions about God that teens might have. For example:*
    - a) *Death of a grandparent.*
    - b) *A friend cuts them off.*
    - c) *They've begun to watch pornography.*
    - d) *They hear that the Bible has lots of contradictions.*
    - e) *They have to choose their GCSE subjects.*
    - f) *They are old enough to drink alcohol legally.*
    - g) *They don't want to come to church.*
    - h) *They see hypocrisy in the church or in other Christians.*
- **Part 1: Framing (13 minutes)** Using the analogy of getting lost while driving, Rachel explains that we all need truths we can align to when we are unsure about life and God. Teens need a framework to help them understand who God is and to make sense of the world with him in it.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *Thinking about the scenarios in the icebreaker, can you think of biblical truths that would help teens make sense of the questions they might have?*
    2. *Has your teen had any experiences which made them question what they knew about God? Or did you as a teen?*

- **Part 2: Four ways to frame life with God (11 minutes)** Framing is essentially explaining and we learn four ways to frame life with God for our teenagers.
  - Explaining the ‘why’.
  - Tying in their emotions.
  - Sharing the part God played in decision-making.
  - Laying foundations for the future.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *Have a go at explaining one or more of the following:*
      - a) *Why you use the Bible for help, advice or guidance.*
      - b) *Why you vote for the party you support.*
      - c) *Why people at church are saying God’s ideal for sex is that it’s for marriage only.*
      - d) *How you manage when God doesn’t answer prayer.*
    2. *What holes do you think your teen might have in their understanding of church, dating or suffering – or any other topic?*
- **Part 3: Encouraging and exploring (12 minutes)** Teens can have piercing questions and it can feel hard to know how to answer them. But it’s not really about the answer: what’s more valuable is to teach your teen that questions, including questions about God, are welcome and giving them the skills to explore and answer the questions they have.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *As a group, have a go at answering a real question a teen has asked, or try one of these – using the four step question tool:*
      - a) *Why did God bother creating people if he knew it was all going to go horribly wrong?*
      - b) *What’s the harm in vaping?*
      - c) *Will God tell me who to marry?*
      - d) *Why shouldn’t we have the death penalty in the UK?*
    2. *Does your teen ask questions – about God or about life in general? If not, what could you do to create a culture in your family that questions are okay and welcome? Can you see any ‘questions’ they might have from their behaviour or responses?*
    3. *Do you have an example of something about God, Christianity or church that you’ve changed your mind about over time? Can you describe what happened?*
- **Part 4: Be encouraged (2 minutes)** Our teens are on a journey and part of that journey is the inbetween of not knowing. Framing is simply a way to come alongside your teen and help them learn how to make sense of it all, and engage with God about it.



## Discussion questions

Use any of the questions or activities from the session or one or more of these:

1. *When you were a teen, what confused you about God? What helped?*
2. *Has your teen had any experiences which made them question truths they knew about God – or just ask where is God now? Or did you have any as a teen yourself?*
3. *What is coming up for your teen (for example, going into hospital, choosing a college, starting to date, losing a grandparent, leaving home, moving to a different church) and how could you lay a foundation for that now?*
4. *How could you encourage questions and conversations about God in your family?*
5. *What's your big 'take away' from this session?*
6. *What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?*

## Session 3 – Connecting to God – prayer

Communication is an essential component of authentic relationships. If we want our teens to have an authentic relationship with God, they need to discover how they and God communicate. In this session we will be thinking about how to free teens to have their own voice as they communicate with God and learn to recognise his voice too.

### Session outline

The core teaching is in the four video parts below. We've added in the optional extras in italics so you can shape the session for your group.

- **Icebreaker ideas:**
  1. *Using a flipchart, post-it notes or an online whiteboard or chat function, invite people to write down words to describe their prayer life – including what they pray about, where they pray, how they pray, what happens. Then reflect on what you see.*
  2. *Ask people to think of examples of prayer in the Bible, for example David (Psalms 70 or 138), Peter on the roof (Acts 10) or Abraham (Genesis 18). Who prayed? How did they pray? Did God speak back? Did God start the conversation or did the person? How did the person know what God said if he didn't say it with words?*
- **Part 1: A different view of prayer (9 minutes)** Prayer is the outpouring of God-connection, and will be as varied as we are. But teens often don't know that and can be stuck in views of prayer that limit them. We will look at three ways to shift teens' views of prayer.
  - Frame what scripture says.
  - Create windows into your prayer life.
  - Focus on the prayer Jesus valued.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *When you were a teenager, did you pray? If you did, can you remember what that was like?*
    2. *Do you know what your teen's prayer life is like? Do they have any distorted views or limited ideas about prayer?*
    3. *In pairs, think about how you could create a window into your prayer life with God – not just what you say, but where and how.*
- **Part 2: Chat (13 minutes)** We explore ways to free teens into a prayer life where they chat to God with no limits or boundaries, confident that God hears them and cares.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *How do you pray? Are there different ways at different times? Is this idea of 'chatting' to God new to you? How do you feel about it?*
    2. *Do you think your teen knows that God and they can chat in any way that works for them? If not, what difference do you think it would make if they did?*

- **Part 3: Catch** (16 minutes) Scripture promises that God will communicate with us, and our teens need God's communications in their lives. We explore how to introduce teens to the many different ways they might catch his communication, and teach them how to discern if what they catch is from God.
  - **Personal or group reflection** (10 minutes):
    1. *How do you 'catch' God's voice? How do you know? What happened?*
    2. *Looking at the list of ways God communicates with us that Rachel gave, are there any you disagree with? Are there any you would add? Which are ones that you've experienced?*
- **Part 4: Be encouraged** (3 minutes) Wherever we are on our journey of chatting and catching with God, you can help your teen by creating windows into and framing your prayer life and learn and experiment together.

## Discussion questions

Use any of the questions or activities from the session or one or more of these:

1. *What are all the different ways you communicate with your teen? What sort of things do you talk about? Do you always use words?*
2. *How many ways can you think of in scripture that God uses to communicate with people?*
3. *When you're not sure if you've 'heard' God correctly, what do you do? Can you remember a time this happened? What or who helped you?*
4. *How could you create opportunities for your teen to chat and catch at home?*
5. *What's your big 'take away' from this session?*
6. *What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?*

## Session 4 – Unknotting wrong views of God

Each one of us is in a life-long process of forming and reforming our view of who God is – and that view will never be perfect while we are still on earth. It's easy to pick up ideas and opinions and weave them together into a view of God that's not quite right. One of the things we can do for our teens is to help them spot and unknot any wrong views of God they have so they can relate to him well.

### Session outline

The core teaching is in the four video parts below. We've added in the optional extras in italics so you can shape the session for your group.

- *Session icebreaker ideas:*

1. *Reproduce this diagram on a whiteboard or flipchart. Ask people to put one or two words to describe what these experiences might tell you about God. For example, 'not interested' next to the 'world' box if you can't see God responding to a disaster, or 'comforting' next to 'my experiences'. Use this to start a conversation about what you see.*



2. *Have a bunch of tangled cables for people to untangle (or wool/string).*
3. *Ask everyone to think of their top five names or descriptions for God and write them on a flipchart. What do you notice? Does this give you a full view of God?*

- **Part 1: Spotting a knot (7 minutes)** Teens have many voices in their lives telling them who God is. In this part we consider how we can spot a knotted view of God. There are three things that can help us:
  - Their comments or views.
  - Answers to open-ended questions.
  - Clues in their behaviour.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *What is my teen's view of God? How do I know or how could I find out?*
    2. *How has your view of God changed over time? How did it change – was it a gradual shaping or were there particular experiences that changed it?*
- **Part 2: Common views of God (10 minutes)** There are many tangled views of God. We explore eight that you might spot in your teen.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *Do any of these views of God feel familiar to you? What views of God might you see in your teen or teens you know?*
    2. *Look at each of the views of God we've just considered. How would it affect the way you related to God if you held one or more of these views?*
- **Part 3: Unknotting wrong views of God (14 minutes)** The first step in untangling any skewed view of God is to broaden your teen's understanding of God. We then think about some practical steps to help your teen untangle their knots. *Please note the first of the videos following Rachel's teaching references suicide.*
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *How could I create windows into my views of God or start conversations about God that will help teens see that it's normal to be working out who God is?*
    2. *What would help your teens build a broad and balanced view of God?*
- **Part 4: Be encouraged (3 minutes)** Teens need to know that we're all on a journey of understanding God better and better. The gift we want to give our teens isn't a perfect view of God but the skills to look at an idea about God and process it well, and know where to go when they need help.

## Discussion questions

Use any of the questions or activities from the session or one or more of these:

1. *On a flipchart or interactive whiteboard, list lots of names/attributes of God – make sure you include a broad range, so jealous, judge, shepherd, healer, most high, creator, redeemer, healer, will provide, abba, ancient of days, love, deliverer, gentle, God who sees me, Father of the fatherless, rock, helper, refuge, I am, Lord of the angel armies, etc. Ask everyone to mark three to five of their favourites. What do you notice? Are there any patterns?*
2. *Have you ever had a tangled view of God? What helped untangle it?*
3. *What or who influences your teens' views of who God is?*
4. *Have a go at answering open-ended questions, for example:*
  - *What do you think God feels when we make mistakes?*
  - *If God lived in our town, where do you think he would live?*
  - *Does God care about what grades we get – why or why not?*
5. *What's your big 'take away' from this session?*
6. *What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?*

## Session 5 – Teenagers and church

We want our teens to come to church and be part of the wonderful community we know and love, but it doesn't always feel easy. In this session, we explore the fullness of church, consider how to help our teens see that and hear some ways to help them engage well with it, as well as tackling the top four questions many parents and carers have about teens and church.

### Session outline

The core teaching is in the four video parts below. We've added in the optional extras in italics so you can shape the session for your group.

- Session icebreaker ideas:
  1. *On a flipchart, interactive whiteboard or chat, ask everyone to list all the reasons they love or value church or reasons why they think church is important. When everyone has done that, reflect on it. Do you think the teens you know at church/your teens would recognise those things or agree with them?*
  2. *What do your teens think about church? How do you know? Or for parents/carers of younger teens: when you look to the next few years, how do you feel about your teen and church?*
- **Part 1: A great conversation (7 minutes)** We really want our teens to come to church and if they don't we can become fearful and unsure of how to respond. But these situations can be the start of a great conversation about the importance and value of church.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *When your teen leaves home, what would you like them to feel about church?*
    2. *If you went to church as a child, what was your journey with church as a teenager? Did you attend? If you did, how did you feel about it? If you stopped going, why was that and when? What brought you back?*
- **Part 2: The beauty of church (13 minutes)** It's easy to take our kids to church without helping them see its breadth and beauty. Rachel identifies five values of church that reveal the church's importance and power, and which can transform our view of church.
  - Draw near to God.
  - Love others and be loved.
  - Spur each other on.
  - Be part of the body of Christ.
  - Be transformed by the Spirit.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *Why do you go to church? Why do your kids think you go to church?*
    2. *Do you agree with Rachel's five values? Are there any you'd like to add or change?*
    3. *What are the most beautiful parts of church for you?*

- **Part 3: Helping teens engage with church (18 minutes)** We look at a range of ways to help teens engage with church whatever they think about it at the moment. As we broaden their view we can proactively disciple them to see church with fresh eyes. Rachel also offers answers to four common questions.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *Which of the ideas Rachel suggests (take them to other churches/evaluating your own church/creating windows into what you value about church) might you try?*
    2. *Where does your teen struggle with church? What might you do to try to help them?*
    3. *Does the six-stage circle give you ideas for how you might help your teen engage better with church?*
- **Part 4: Be encouraged (3 minutes)** It's okay to say to a teen that you can love God and be on a journey with him and be unsure about how you feel about church. Our job is to help them navigate their feelings about church and help them problem solve when it's not going well so they can get the best out of what God's designed church to be.

## Discussion questions

Use any of the questions or activities from the session or one or more of these:

1. *How could you create opportunities for your teen to experience aspects of church they might have missed so far?*
2. *Have you had conversations about church with your teen?*
3. *What concerns you most about your teen and church?*
4. *How could you broaden your teen's view of church? What or whom could help?*
5. *What's your big 'take away' from this session?*
6. *What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?*



## Session 6 – A godly core of confidence

Confidence can be a massive issue for our teens and we want them to be confident. But the world's view of confidence doesn't work. What we see in scripture is that true confidence is rooted in God. In this session we explore how to proactively grow a godly confidence in our teens that will mean they can be truly confident in whatever situation they find themselves.

### Session outline

The core teaching is in the four video parts below. We've added in the optional extras in italics so you can shape the session for your group.

- **Session icebreaker ideas:**
  1. *What makes your teen confident? What causes them to lack confidence?*
  2. *What messages do you think your teens are hearing about how to be confident from, for example, advertising, their peers, social media or school?*
- **Part 1: The source of our confidence (7 minutes)** The world and even sometimes the church promote a view of confidence that is rooted in ourselves. In practice we see that this doesn't really work. Scripture reveals that the confidence that is anchored in God enables people to face any situation well.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *What does confidence look like in your teen's life? What gives them confidence?*
    2. *Does the world's recipe for confidence work?*
    3. *Share a story of a time when you felt confident because of who God is rather than because of who you were.*
- **Part 2: Three beliefs that grow confidence (13 minutes)** Rachel explores three biblical beliefs our teens (and we) need to know.
  - God is awesome and holy, and he loves me totally.
  - I am daily being transformed to be more like Jesus, and I'm not finished yet.
  - I am a small part of God's great plans on this earth.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *Do you find the three beliefs Rachel talks about helpful?*
    2. *Do you feel the pressure of needing to be perfect or seeming to have it all together? What about your teen?*
    3. *Think about an area of your life where you are different to how you were five years ago – a changed attitude, a new or improved skill or just something you deal differently with. How did the transformation happen? What was the journey like? How has God used you during the transformation?*

- **Part 3: Growing confidence in our teens (11 minutes)** Finally we discover some practical ways to help our teens discover that godly core of confidence.
  - Affirm through relationship, not labels.
  - Praise what you value.
  - Value imperfect progress.
  - **Personal or group reflection (10 minutes):**
    1. *What messages does your teen need to hear about progress and perfection?*
    2. *How could you change these phrases so you are affirming your teen by showing the impact they have rather than giving them a label:*
      - a) *You're a great footballer.*
      - b) *You are so creative!*
      - c) *You are such a hard worker.*
    3. *What biblical traits do you see in your teen that you want to grow in them – for example, patience, generosity or boldness. How can you draw their attention to them?*
- **Part 4: Be encouraged (4 minutes)** Rachel shares some final thoughts on confidence and for your journey forwards with your teen.

## Discussion questions

Use any of the questions or activities from the session or one or more of these:

1. *How has your child changed over the last few years? What great things do you see in your child that they might not see in themselves? How could you help them see that?*
2. *Which character from the Bible inspires you? Where do you see their confidence coming from?*
3. *Can you see any area of their life where your teen struggles with confidence? How might you help them?*
4. *Do you tend to affirm your teen through labels or by showing them their impact on you and others?*
5. *What's your big 'take away' from this session?*
6. *What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?*

## What next?

We do hope that you have enjoyed running this course and that you are already seeing the fruits of what you have shared with the people who came along.

## Tell us how it went

We'd love to hear how you got on. One easy way to let us know how the course went is through our online survey at [parentingforfaith.brf.org.uk/parenting-teens-course](https://parentingforfaith.brf.org.uk/parenting-teens-course). If there's more you want to tell us, do get in touch with us via [parentingforfaith.org](https://parentingforfaith.org).

## The website

The Parenting for Faith website is packed with stories and resources for parents and churches to read, listen to and watch, covering a host of different topics – [parentingforfaith.org/parents](https://parentingforfaith.org/parents) is a good place to start. We have a topic for parents and carers of teens ([parentingforfaith.org/topics/teeangers](https://parentingforfaith.org/topics/teeangers)), one for people working with teens in church ([parentingforfaith.org/topics/youth-work](https://parentingforfaith.org/topics/youth-work)) and one for church leaders who are also parents ([parentingforfaith.org/topics/parenting-church-leader](https://parentingforfaith.org/topics/parenting-church-leader)). We're regularly adding new content, and we're working to develop what we offer. Do keep in touch with us and help us shape what we offer.

## Books and resources

There are seven books in the Parenting for Faith series, available in print and on Kindle:

- *Parenting Children for a Life of Faith – Omnibus Edition*, also available as an audiobook, which contains the three original Parenting for Faith books plus some additional material.
- *It Takes a Church to Raise a Parent* explores how churches can intentionally create a culture where parenting for faith can flourish.
- *Parenting as a Church Leader* explores the unique challenges of parenting while also leading a church, and builds a set of simple tools and approaches to help leaders and their families flourish.
- *Babies and Toddlers: Nurturing your child's spiritual life* is for parents and carers of 0–3-year-olds, wherever they are on their faith journey, to help them help their babies and toddlers connect with God. On the website you will find video-based resources for churches to use to accompany the book.
- *Parenting Teens for a Life of Faith* – even when it doesn't feel like it, parents and carers remain the most significant influence in a teen's life. This will equip everyone involved in teens' faith journeys to understand the teenage faith journey and find their place in it.
- *Being God's Child* explores ten different ways in which parents can learn or re-learn to connect with God as his child.
- *Grandparenting for Faith* – grandparents play a significant role in the lives of their grandchildren. This book considers how Christian grandparents can nurture faith in the next generation, in whatever situation they find themselves.

Rachel Turner has also written two books, published by BRF Ministries, designed for parents and carers to use to help their children draw near to God:

- *Comfort in the Darkness* – a collection of retellings of Bible stories exploring God’s character and promises that helps parents grow peace, confidence and an understanding of who God is in their children.
- *Comfort in Uncertain Times* – helps children draw close to God and stay connected to him through biblical stories of anxiety, loss and transition.

You can find these and other useful books and resources at [parentingforfaith.org/topics/shop](https://parentingforfaith.org/topics/shop).

## Keep in touch

There are several ways you can keep in touch with Parenting for Faith:

- **Join our email newsletter to keep up to date** – sign up at [parentingforfaith.org/email](https://parentingforfaith.org/email)
- **Follow us on Facebook** – [facebook.com/parentingforfaithBRF](https://facebook.com/parentingforfaithBRF)
- **Follow us on X** – [twitter.com/godconnected](https://twitter.com/godconnected)
- **Follow us on Instagram** – [@parentingforfaithbrf](https://instagram.com/parentingforfaithbrf)
- **Follow our podcasts** – [parentingforfaith.org/podcast](https://parentingforfaith.org/podcast)
- **Check out our events and training** – [parentingforfaith.org/events-and-training](https://parentingforfaith.org/events-and-training)

## And finally...

If you’d like to help support the work of Parenting for Faith, you or your church can make a donation or become a Friend of Parenting For Faith by giving as little as £2 a month. To make a one-off donation or set up a monthly gift, visit [brf.org.uk/donate](https://brf.org.uk/donate), or contact our fundraising team via [giving@brf.org.uk](mailto:giving@brf.org.uk) or call **01235 462 305** for more information.

You can also give via text message. Text PARENTING followed by your donation amount to 70450 (e.g. Text PARENTING 3 to 70450 to donate £3). Texts cost your chosen donation amount plus one standard rate message.

*Not all phone networks support text giving. If yours doesn’t, your message won’t be delivered, and you won’t be charged. Our privacy policy is available at [brf.org.uk/privacy](https://brf.org.uk/privacy)*

# SESSION 1: GOD'S PLAN FOR TEENS

- **What's our role?** Teens' lives may feel messy and changeable, but parents and carers remain the primary disciplers of their teens – our role is to journey alongside them.
- **God-smart and God-connected.** We can help them be 'God-connected' not just 'God-smart'. This means helping them experience God's love, power and communication in their everyday life, not just knowing information about him.
- **Creating windows.** 'Windows' give teens a close-up look at what a real relationship with God looks like to give them ideas for their own relationship with God.

## THINGS TO THINK OR CHAT ABOUT

- What are your hopes and dreams for your teen or tween? What would you like to see in ten years?
- Is it important to create windows into things you struggle with or have got wrong?
- How do you connect with God? What difference does being God-connected, not just God-smart, make to you?
- When have you seen glimpses of other people's lives with God that have influenced you?
- What's your big 'take away' from this session?
- What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?

## IDEAS TO TRY

- Create a window into something for your teen this week, e.g. reading your Bible when they are there, asking their opinion or sharing a story.
- What stories about you and God do you think your teen would love to hear?
- What would you like them to know about God? How could you create a window into that?
- Chat to God about your teen. What is their next step and how can you help them take it?

## FIND OUT MORE



See chapters 1 and 2 of the book.

Articles to search for on [parentingforfaith.org](https://parentingforfaith.org):

- [Creating windows](#)
- [Creating windows and additional needs FAQs](#)
- [Disengaged or disinterested](#)
- [Creating windows into every aspect of our lives](#)

## SESSION 2: TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE

- **A framework for life.** Teens need a framework to help them understand who God is when they are unsure, and make sense of the world with him in it.
- **Four ways to frame life with God.** Explain the ‘why’, tie in their emotions, share the part God plays in decision-making and lay foundations for future seasons.
- **Encouraging and exploring questions.** We can help our teenagers to unpack and answer questions that they have about life, faith and God.

### THINGS TO THINK OR CHAT ABOUT

- When you were a teenager, what confused you about God? What helped?
- Has your teenager had any experiences that made them question truths about God – or just ask where is God now? Or did you have any at their age?
- What holes might teens have in their ideas about dating, church or suffering – or something else?
- What questions about God do your teens want answers to?
- What’s your big ‘take away’ from this session?
- What’s the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?

### IDEAS TO TRY

- Next time your teenager has a question, try exploring it using the four steps.
- What’s coming up in your teen’s life? How could you lay a foundation for who God is in that?
- Consider some ways you could encourage questions about God in your family.
- Chat to God about your teen. What is their next step and how can you help them take it?

### FIND OUT MORE



See chapter 3 of the book.

Articles to search for on [parentingforfaith.org](https://parentingforfaith.org):

- [Framing](#)
- [Four simple steps for questions](#)
- [Equipping intellectual wrestlers](#)
- [Framing and additional needs: FAQs](#)
- [Creating a spiritual framework with teens or adult children](#)

## SESSION 3: PRAYER

- **A different view of prayer.** Teens may have views or experiences of prayer that limit what they understand about prayer. We can help shift their views.
- **Chat.** We explore ways to free teens into a prayer life where they chat to God with no limits or boundaries, confident that God hears them and cares.
- **Catch.** God communicates in many ways and we can introduce these to our teens and teach them how to discern if what they catch is from God.

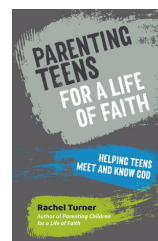
### THINGS TO THINK OR CHAT ABOUT

- Do you think your teen knows they can chat with God in any way that works for them? What difference would it make if they did?
- What is your teen's prayer life like? Do they have any distorted or limited views of prayer?
- Thinking about the list of ways God communicates, would you change, omit or add any?
- How do you pray? Are there different ways at different times?
- What's your big 'take away' from this session?
- What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?

### IDEAS TO TRY

- Share a story about you, God and prayer with your teen.
- Think of ways you could create an opportunity for your teen to chat and catch at home.
- How could you broaden your teen's views about prayer? What or who could help?
- Chat to God about your teen. What is their next step and how can you help them take it?

### FIND OUT MORE



See chapter 3 of the book.

Articles to search for on [parentingforfaith.org](https://parentingforfaith.org):

- [Chat and catch](#)
- [101 ways to start a conversation with God](#)
- [Chat and catch and additional needs: FAQs](#)
- [When catch is hard](#)

## SESSION 4: WRONG VIEWS OF GOD

- **Spotting a knot.** Teens have many voices telling them who God is. Three ways to spot a knot.
- **Common views of God.** We are all forming views of God, and we look at eight common knotted views teens may hold.
- **Unknotting wrong views.** We can broaden our teens' understanding of God as well as take some practical steps to help teens unknot any wrong views they have.

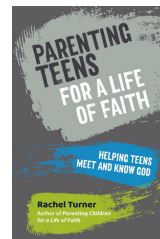
### THINGS TO THINK OR CHAT ABOUT

- What is your teen's view of God? How could you find out?
- Do you recognise any of the views of God? How might they affect your relationship with God?
- Do you have any stories about you and God that might help to broaden your teen's view of God? E.g. a time you felt let down and what God did, or how you learned something new about him?
- Make a list or brainstorm all the places and people where teens get their ideas of God from. What do you think they are hearing? Which of these might be affecting your teen?
- What's your big 'take away' from this session?
- What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?

### IDEAS TO TRY

- If you're watching a movie together or spot something on social media that nudges you about God, share that with your teen.
- Try asking your teen some open-ended questions about God.
- Spend some time reflecting on how you see God. Do you have any biases?
- Chat to God about your teen. What is their next step? How can you help them take it?

### FIND OUT MORE



See chapter 6 of the book.

Articles to search for on [parentingforfaith.org](https://parentingforfaith.org):

- [Unwinding](#)
- [Spark a conversation: talking with teens about God](#)
- [When 'God the Father' isn't helpful](#)
- [Unwinding and additional needs: FAQs](#)
- [Questions about God and suffering](#)



## SESSION 5: TEENAGERS AND CHURCH

- **A great conversation.** If teens are reluctant to come to church, we can feel unsure or fearful. But this can be the start of a great conversation.
- **The beauty of church.** Teens don't always see the breadth and beauty of church. We look at five values which can transform teens' view of church.
- **Helping teens engage with church.** Some ideas for helping your teen engage with church – whatever they feel – and answers to some common questions.

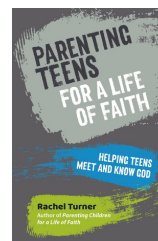
### THINGS TO THINK OR CHAT ABOUT

- When your teen leaves home, what would you like them to feel about church?
- Why do you go to church? Why do your teens think you go to church?
- Do you agree with Rachel's five values of church? Would you add, throw out or change any?
- If your teen struggles with church, what do they struggle with? What might help them?
- What's your big 'take away' from this session?
- What's the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?

### IDEAS TO TRY

- Chat to your teen about how they really feel about church.
- What do you value about church? Create a window into or frame that for your teen.
- How could you broaden your teen's views about church? What or whom could help?
- Chat to God about your teen. What is their next step and how can you help them take it?

### FIND OUT MORE



See chapter 10 of the book.

Articles to search for on [parentingforfaith.org](https://parentingforfaith.org):

- [Debriefing a church service](#)
- The [six-stage circle](#)
- [Jesus' heart for the church](#)
- [Church and additional needs: FAQs.](#)
- [When your child feels let down by the church](#)

## SESSION 6: CONFIDENCE

- **The source of our confidence.** The world and even the church can teach us to root our confidence in ourselves – but the Bible says true confidence is rooted in God.
- **Three beliefs that grow confidence.** God is awesome and holy, and loves me totally; I am daily being transformed to be more like Jesus; I am a small part of God’s plans.
- **Growing confidence in our teens.** Affirming through relationships rather than labels, praising what we value and valuing imperfect progress grow teens’ confidence.

### THINGS TO THINK OR CHAT ABOUT

- What messages are your teens hearing about how to be confident from, for example, advertising, their peers, social media or school?
- Do you find the three beliefs Rachel talks about in part two useful?
- What messages do your teens need to hear about progress and perfection?
- What characters from the Bible inspire you? Where does their confidence come from?
- What’s your big ‘take away’ from this session?
- What’s the next step for your teen? How can you help them take it?

### IDEAS TO TRY

- Share a story with your teen about you, God and confidence. What happened?
- Can you see where your teen struggles with confidence? What could help them?
- How could you affirm the impact your teen has rather than give them labels?
- Chat to God about your teen. What is their next step? How can you help them take it?

### FIND OUT MORE



See chapter 9 of the book.

Read more about parenting for confidence and purpose in the *Parenting Children for a Life of Faith* (omnibus).

Articles to search for on **parentingforfaith.org**:

- [A different perspective on exams.](#)
- [Encouraging without labels.](#)
- [How to help them fail well](#)
- [What we can learn from Love Island](#)