

# The Exchange Zone



September 2007

## *“Reaching Your Teen’s Heart”*

One of our most important teen world values is that “the buck” stops with parents in raising our children. That is why, as the ministry director for teen families, one of my privileges is to facilitate parents in discipling their teens. Certainly, the main tool we will utilize toward that end is our Discipleship Teams. A second will be periodic seminars. A third tool will be this brief, practical, biblically-rich monthly newsletter that will discuss ways you can successfully pass the baton to the next generation.

This month’s topic arises from my September 2 Sunday morning message on vision for MPACT. I spoke several times that day about the need to reach our teen’s hearts. One parent agreed with this, but asked, “How do we do it?” Let me offer some direction.

- Be passionate for God and make sure you are growing at a heart level. You are to set the pace for your teens (Deuteronomy 6:6) and most likely their heart’s desire for God will not surpass your own (Luke 6:40).
- Read the Bible together as a family. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4) It is the Word of God which grows our love for Him. (Psalm 18:1-6; John 17:17) If you need help in how to do this, visit [www.theexchangezone.com](http://www.theexchangezone.com) and then go to the Resource page. This page includes a number of tools you can utilize in family devotions and a book I wrote to equip parents in discipling their children (i.e. The Parents’ Game Plan). You can quickly make your way through this book and discover ideas for how to study the Bible together.
- Provide a solid, large vision of who God is—that will connect with their heart. (Psalm 18:1-6; Jeremiah 9:23-24)
- Call and empower them to a large vision which inspires them to get involved in the Great Commission, service, and seeing God make a difference. (Philemon 6)
- As you teach them, make sure that you include the reasons why they are called to or away from certain thoughts or actions. (e.g. the “therefore” in Romans 12:1-2) Similarly, help your children fight alluring powerful temptations to sin with even greater pleasures and rewards found in Christ. (Heb. 11:24-26)
- Finally and most importantly, pray that their hearts would be enthralled with God. (Ephesians 1:15-20)

Though this is merely an introduction, it is enough to whet our appetite and get us started.

Gladly passing the baton with you,  
Tom