

# FROM THE EDITOR

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Allow me a brief moment to discuss 'youth': this could be young people, anything from 0-18 years old, but perhaps common assumption would focus on the 13-18 age bracket. Research has shown that the 0-3 age group is critical in terms of brain development. So, for any child to have a fighting chance as an adult it must be ensured that the proper nutrition is given to the developing brain; brain functions can be severely hampered in cases of malnutrition or physical trauma to the head. When we see the many relief organisations out there attempting to feed the hungry children in the world we realise that the seriousness of this situation is indeed real. However, the dangers of malnutrition don't stop at age 3 but is still a major concern worldwide.

Other research has shown that a child's adult identity (including their sexual identity) is completely formed at the age of 6, and is just waiting for the commencement of the hormonally charged teenage years to kick into action. When we consider the onslaught on the sexuality of our youth today we should sit up and take note! The homosexual agenda has become a real voice in international politics even though it still is a minority group; other voices clamouring for attention are the so-called metrosexuals, feminists and other minority groups. The sexuality issues the youth are facing today are serious since it leads to new definitions regarding issues of marriage, divorce and abortion.

There is a host of books and guides out there that tell parents to make sure enough time is spent with children from 0-12 years old to effectively help them with the transition period from 13-18. Many believe if parents spend



time developing a strong relationship with their children prior to the tumult of teenage years, many issues will be easier to overcome. The problem seems that too many parents are too busy with their own lives to really spend enough time with their children in the formative years, and then stand with their hands in their hair when the paw-paw hit the fan. There is a great responsibility that rests on the shoulders of all parents, guardians and teachers; in fact, on the shoulders of any person that stands in a position of mentoring.

Children are gifts from God and should be treated as such. There is sound advice to be found not only in the writings of researchers but also in the Bible. What if we were to rear children strictly according to the principles in the Word? What kind of difference would it make and what kind of world could we expect?

Let's quickly consider the aspect of worship in the development of our youth. If we believe and agree that all human beings were created to worship, the question that begs to be asked is, 'What then do we worship'? The context is varied, from home to church, from individual to corporate, from theory to practice and from religion to relationship. I believe as parents we worship God by allowing our children the opportunity to explore a relationship with Him. I see worship in simple things like feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and supporting the widows. There is also the congregational aspect of worship where music, dance, art and other creative forms of expression have a role to play; without labouring around issues of style, there are essences of worship found in the Word that guide us into the type and form of worship that is acceptable. Great debates have raged, are still raging and will continue to rage on about this topic, so please add your opinion on our blog!