



NJC FAMILY MONTHLY

NewsLetter



LOVING + LOVABLE
PEOPLE

Jean-Michel Etienne, Ph.D.

November 2025



Parenting Your Teenager with Confidence: A Biblical and Ellen G. White Perspective

Parenting a teenager can feel like navigating unpredictable waters — moments of joy, frustration, pride, and confusion often blend. Yet, amid the challenges, God calls parents to guide their children with faith, love, and steadfast confidence. Scripture and the inspired counsel of Ellen G. White offer timeless wisdom to help parents raise confident, respectful, and spiritually grounded young people.

1. Trust God as the Supreme Parent

Confident parenting begins with trusting in God's guidance. Proverbs 22:6 advises, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it," highlighting the importance of faith—trusting that God is working within your teen, even during resistance or struggles. Ellen G. White adds, "Our work as parents is to train, not to compel, to educate, not to force the will" (*Child Guidance*, p. 210). Genuine confidence in parenting comes from releasing control and trusting the Holy Spirit to guide your child's growth.

2. Build Relationships Grounded in Love and Respect

Teens seek connection more than correction. A parent-teen relationship should mirror Christ's love — steady, caring, and consistent. Ephesians 6:4 states, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." Ellen G. White emphasizes that "love should be the law of the home" (*The Adventist Home*, p. 35).

Parents who listen with empathy and communicate patiently build bridges of trust that encourage teens to share their hearts rather than hide their struggles.

3. Model the Faith You Want to See

Teens are quick to notice inconsistency between words and actions. The strongest sermon they will ever hear is the life you live. Ellen G. White counseled, "Example is more powerful than precept" (*Education*, p. 17). When parents pray openly, handle conflicts with grace, and admit mistakes, they teach humility and integrity. Living your faith authentically encourages your teen to pursue their own relationship with God — not out of obligation, but from genuine conviction.

4. Guide, Don't Control

Confidence in parenting does not mean being authoritarian. It means setting clear, godly boundaries while respecting your teen's growing independence. In *Child Guidance*, Ellen G. White warns against harshness and fear-based discipline: "Arbitrary rule should be avoided. Children should not be brought up to fear their parents." Instead, parents are called to reason with love, allowing consequences to teach lessons and prayer to guide the heart. Teens who are guided rather than controlled learn responsibility and self-discipline rooted in wisdom, not rebellion.

5. Keep Hope Alive Through Prayer

Every parent faces seasons when a teen pulls away, questions faith, or makes poor choices. In those moments, prayer becomes your greatest weapon and comfort. Philippians 4:6 encourages, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." Ellen G. White echoes this power of intercession: "The silent, loving influence of a godly life will often soften the heart when argument fails" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 403). Prayer is not just asking God to change your child — it's inviting Him to strengthen your own heart to love them as He does.

Conclusion: Confidence Rooted in Christ

Parenting with confidence doesn't mean having all the answers — it means trusting in the One who does. By grounding your parenting in Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, you can face the teenage years with courage, grace, and peace. With Christ as your guide and love as your foundation, your home can become a place where both parent and teen grow together in faith, trust, and confidence.