

# SEPTEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9am S.S. 10am Church	<b>Labor Day</b>		6:30 Shakarooth			Iron Sharpens Iron Men's Conference
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9am S.S. 10am Church			6:30 Shakarooth			Youth Fellow- ship @ Cooper's 5-9 pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9am S.S. 10am Church Growth Essen- tials begin			6:30 Shakarooth			
25	26	27	28	29	30	
9am S.S. 10am Church			6:30 Shakarooth		<b>Courageous Movie Release</b>	

# SHAKAROOOTH

STUDENT MINISTRIES

## September 2011

Congratulations! You survived the summer. I hope it was a great time of serving the Lord and getting to spend some time with your family. Now the kids are back in school (or for you home school families, I guess they are back at home?) I am praying for your student in a number of ways: First, that they will be making good grades and trying their hardest to learn for the Lord. Second, that they are a 'City on a Hill' at their school, showing everyone what a lover of Jesus looks like. Third, that this year will be a high point in your student's spiritual walk.



In order to help with these things, we are 'super charging' our Sunday School program. Our teachers are ready to take our classes to the next level. You should have received a letter from your youth about a devotional guide that will go along with their SS series as well as an option to receive family devotionals through your email. If you did not get that note, contact me or your youth's SS teacher. We believe these tools will increase their devotion and education in their SS class. I also want to encourage you to get to know your youth SS teacher. We will be having fellowships and activities through these classes.



Rebba and I would like to invite the entire youth group to our house on September 17<sup>th</sup> from 5-9 pm. They can bring a side dish and a drink if you would like.

We will be grilling burgers and hotdogs. It has always been our practice to open up our home to the families in the youth group, but we are just now getting unpacked and settled from the move! Our goal is to live our lives as a church family with those we minister to. On that day we are setting a goal of having the entire New Testament read in our home by splitting the youth into groups and dividing up the NT. I also want to use this as a Bible emphasis for Shakarooth.

As a part of living our lives with the students, we would like to get a schedule of any games, recitals, or performances that our students may be having. Although we can't make every event, we enjoy attending when possible.

I have discovered that our youth aren't personally in God's word as often as I would like. Please set the example of Bible study for your students as well as lovingly encouraging their passion for God's word! We are praying for you and your family!



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## NUDGE YOUR TEENAGERS AWAY FROM NARCISSISM

Many social researchers say the push toward boosting young people's self-esteem has worked a bit too well. Constant praise—even when undeserved—has contributed to a generation that's all about “me, me, me.” Kids internalize the belief that the world revolves around them, and social media encourage self-promotion and attention-seeking. Confidence can easily cross the line into overconfidence, with pride and selfishness taking over.

“We've been on this self-admiration cultural kick for a long time,” says researcher Jean Twenge, author of *The Narcissism Epidemic* and *Generation Me*. Her studies show that vanity, materialism, and a sense of entitlement lead to anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Twenge says religion has even entered the realm of narcissism, with the popularity of so-called prosperity preachers and “involuntary volunteering.”

God wants us to love and value ourselves as his precious children, but Scripture also helps us keep a proper perspective on our worth. God extended his mercy and grace to us by sending Jesus because we don't deserve his perfect love, forgiveness, or salvation. Through his death for us, Jesus taught—and modeled—that his followers must be servants who put other people ahead of themselves (see Luke 22:24-27). Read on for more insights about how you can loosen narcissism's grip on your teenagers.

## TIPS >>>

Here are some ways to shift your teenagers' focus away from themselves :

- **Re-evaluate your schedule.** Scrutinize your family's routines and see what can go so you can make room to help other people.
- **Walk the walk.** Model how to live out your faith by doing more than just attending worship together. Find simple ways to serve other people and meet their basic needs, such as collecting baby supplies for a crisis-pregnancy center.
- **Offer customized encouragement.** Avoid false praise; kids can see right through it. Instead, providespecific feedback about your teenagers' efforts to use their talents to serve God and others.

- **Practice giving without strings attached.** Let kids see you give merely for the joy of giving—not for seeing what you can get in return.
- **Avoid comparisons and excessive competition.** Instead, focus on commonalities and cooperation.
- **Teach kids to have compassion for themselves.** Instead of self-admiration, young people need to learn to cut themselves some slack and to trust God to care for and forgive them when they mess up.

## THE VIEW

According to research by professor Jean Twenge:

- Compared to their peers from the 1970s, today's teenagers have a stronger belief that they'll be great spouses, parents, and employees.
- Among college students (and especially females), narcissistic personality traits are rising just as fast as obesity.
- Kids today more often describe themselves as straight-A students, even if they're not. They also rate themselves as “completely satisfied” with who they are.

## PONDER THIS

- In a typical day, how much time do you spend focusing on yourself vs. on other people?
- What does selflessness look like? When and where do you see it?
- What have you done to instill self-esteem in your kids, and what were the results? Have any of your efforts backfired?



# GOING DEEPER

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Walt Mueller

At SimplyYouthMinistry.com, youth-culture expert Walt Mueller discusses selfish vs. selfless living:

Sadly, we followers of Jesus who should be leading the cultural charge against self-centeredness are prone to follow the lead of the culture rather than Christ on this matter. The sad result of our prosperity and desire for even more is that we've become even more prosperous and desiring of even more.

Perhaps The Prayer of Jabez phenomenon is the greatest indicator of how self-centered and materialistic we've become. An obscure Old Testament passage (1 Chronicles

4:9-10) has been marketed effectively to a 21st-century American church that's eager to find biblical justification to have more. It plays well in our consumer-oriented, narcissistic North American Christian culture.

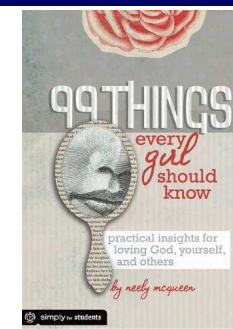
Recently, I stumbled upon another Old Testament prayer that seems timely and worth embracing. Try as hard as I can, I can't get it out of my head, most likely because it needs to be the prayer of my heart. In Proverbs 30:7-9, Agur simply begged to speak the truth and to have just what was necessary for him to remain committed and obedient to his God. Jesus taught his

disciples to pray for the same thing. Agur understood human nature, and he knew his weakness. In wisdom, he prayed to be rich in faithfulness.

I'm not sure Agur's prayer would sell (as books, trinkets, kitsch, etc.) in today's Christian market. That's too bad. It's a challenging prayer that shakes up our prevailing attitudes and reflects God's will, way, and kingdom priorities. It's a God-centered prayer that focuses on his will and not my will, as we ask God to bless by giving and withholding as he pleases.

Watch what you pray for!

## RESOURCE



In *99 Things Every Girl Should Know* (Simply Youth Ministry), veteran youth worker Neely McQueen helps teenage girls explore their true beauty and God-given worth.

## BIBLE FOCUS

“Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.”

Philippians 2:3-5