

## **Is a teenager ready to get baptized?**

### **John Brush**

1. How are the basics? Are they having regular quiet times and building a true relationship/friendship with God? Be wary of the phrase “I am DOING my quiet times”. Quiet times should not be a checklist item, but daily, meaningful contact with the Father. Are they committed to the Great Commission? A good idea is to have training times of evangelizing together. For example, study the Bible in a public place (i.e. coffee shop, food court, etc.) and then show them how to meet someone and share the Gospel.
2. Are they grateful and happy? This is true with every person, but we seem to overlook it with teens, especially those raised in the church. There has to be attitudes of giving, friendliness, and a willingness to talk to adults and not only other teens. The friendliness to adults is very important. It reveals what they really think about the kingdom or what is taught and talked about at home. This takes work with the parents and youth workers.
3. What do other spiritual teens say about the person? Teens are very honest when given the chance and not pressured. Some of our best observations come from spiritual teens that are more than willing to inform us about how people are really doing. Many times teens act one way with adults, but are very different with peers. Those peers need to keep us informed as well as confront the person studying. A teen that does not respond well when confronted by peers is not ready.
4. Teens raised in the church need people to help them see where the “little” sins are as bad as the “big” ones. The character studies are very good for this when the “little” things in their character are dealt with. Hitting gratitude, respect, laziness, etc. hard usually reveals the deeper sins and issues that they have learned to cover up. Teens are experts at covering up and not wanting to get into trouble, so this takes perseverance and insight.
5. Get a lot of advice. There is not one formula as kids from the world and kingdom kids face different pressures and expectations. It takes much prayer and wisdom with this.
6. Go with your gut feelings. I believe we can tell deep down inside whether most teens are serious or not. If you feel some qualms, explore them and use the advice and input from all the points above. We can tell when the enthusiasm and genuineness is lacking so do not overlook or ignore that. They do not have to be perfect and do not communicate that. Many kids raised in the church do try to be perfect around the church and us, but in the outside world are very different. They just have to be “real”.
7. Are they truly open about temptations of all kinds? Maybe sexual temptations are not the strongest, but there are plenty of others that they face. Are they honest about sexual sins? Other sins of bitterness, deceit, and gossip? The temptation to compare and put down other people?
8. What is their relationship with their parents like? Open? Loving? Or are they distant and aloof? This is a chance to save a family as well as the teen. Teens reflect their homes and deep attitudes of their family so we can see a family and the relationship with God experienced there.
9. Who are their heroes? Any spiritual ones?