

Something for the Heart: *In the Heat of the Moment.* . .

We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

Ephesians 4:14-15

This past weekend we held our “Values and Choices” retreat with the 7th- and 8th- graders. That’s code for – sex retreat! At one point, a clearly uncomfortable 7th-grade boy, who apparently has no interest in girls at the moment, blurted out, “But we’re 7th- graders.”

That comment gave us the opportunity to talk about why we were doing this retreat now – hopefully before these young people found themselves in situations that they didn’t know how to handle. We stressed the importance of understanding what God wanted for their lives, the importance of thinking about their values before they found themselves in “the heat of the moment,” and the importance of knowing what their boundaries were before they were ever tempted to cross them. This 7th-grader begrudgingly admitted that perhaps this was a good idea.

His unwillingness to want to talk about this issue now, however, is indicative of how many of us respond to the world. Much of what we do is reactionary because we haven’t carefully thought through what God wants for our lives, what our values really are and how we live them out in the midst of a complex world, and what boundaries we are unwilling to cross – no matter what. So often, we find ourselves in “the heat of the moment,” needing to make decisions in “crisis mode,” rather than based on well thought-out values and beliefs. We, too, like children, are “*tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine.*”

This text from Ephesians offers another way -- to speak the truth in love as we grow up in every way into Christ. To grow up in Christ means to be rooted in his grace and love. I like the way *The Message* translate Ephesians 4: *We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very breath and blood flow through us, nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.*

Taking our lead from Christ. Keeping in step with one another. Growing up robust in love. They seem like simple guidelines to follow in the midst of a complex world. So today, may you take a few moments to think about where Christ is leading you and keeping you in step with others as you grow up healthy in God’s robust love.

Quick Quips

It is easier to exemplify values than teach them. ~ Theodore Hesburgh

A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both. ~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are. ~ Roy Disney