

## From Our Pastor

### December 16, 2017

Sabbath greetings to everyone!

Dealing with life's challenges can be tough these days! A dorm for honors students at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst recently put up a display featuring Care Bears characters offering advice for "grumpy or stressed" students.

The Care Bears advise, "It's important to take care of ourselves! Self-care is an active choice and you should treat it as such," one section proclaims, while other suggest that students "surround yourselves with supportive people" and "reminders of what you love." The display also suggests goofing around with friends, making time for fun, eating healthy, and getting enough sleep.

Not all students are supporting the need for Care Bears to help these college students get through the day. After all, this is an Ivy League school with tuition costs in the stratosphere. Most of the students come from upper middle-class wealthy and educated families. According to Bradley Polumbo, a sophomore at UMass-Amherst, the display was posted in Birch Hall, the dorm for students in the Honors College. "Frankly, I just think it's ridiculous," he told Campus Reform. "The people that live in this dorm are either 20 or 21 years old. We could be overseas fighting in wars right now, or working full time with kids at home to feed."

Whatever happened to the concepts of "responsibility" "maturity" "adulthood" and "coping skills?" How is it that a growing percentage of those who are transitioning into adulthood are simply delaying or not making the transition? "Failure to Launch" is not a comedy movie anymore. Instead it is a living reality for far too many families. To be fair there are many young men and women who are becoming responsible adults and coping with life's challenges, but the trend the other direction is alarming.

According to a close friend who is a long-time schoolteacher with several decades of experience, there are two things missing. He told me last summer, "many of these students have never been taught to work, and many have never heard the word "NO" in a meaningful way.

Lamentations 3:27 says, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." In other words, work is good for young people! In agrarian cultures children often work with their parents as they are growing up. Work opportunities abound when children are raised on farms. Often they help with gardening, taking care of animals, and chores around the farm. As society has changed over the past century the environment of most youth has also changed. Labor laws often prevent teens who want to get a part time job from applying for them, so they have to wait. Some college graduates apply for their very first job—ever! Little wonder that some lack basic job skills.

Learning the word “No” may be more important than even work ethic. Giving in to their every demand and need is a formula for disaster. Raising children to be successful adults requires love, attention, hard work, and backbone. Proverbs 29:15 tells us, “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself brings his mother to shame.”

Leaving a child to be raised by electronic devices and peers is a formula for disaster. Proverbs 29:17 goes on to say, “Train your son and he will give you rest, yes he will give delight to your soul. There truly is no greater joy than seeing your children grow into responsible, successful, adults who fear God and are respected by all who know them. Why not get rid of the Care Bears for 20-year olds—and instead teach them hard work, self-control, and to rely on faith in God to sustain them throughout their life?

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