

Why I Don't Like Adults

Guest post by Ted Olson.

My son Thomas, 9, said “Hey daddy, you know why I don't like adults? Well, some adults anyway?” “No, why?” I asked. “Because they think they're better than me. They think they know everything - that they have all the answers, and that my opinion isn't important,” he replied.

“You're right, Thomas,” I said. And he is.

Too often adults think they know what's best for children. Rather than ask for their input or opinion, we assume a position of superiority. We disregard their needs, wishes, and desires as trivial.

This is not to suggest our kids should run wild, or that we should not keep them safe. It's just that we command instead of guide. We demand instead of suggest. We direct instead of lead. We assume instead of understand. We “parent” instead of listen.

Like most kids, I grew up being told when to get up, when to go to bed, when to eat, what to eat, how much to eat. I was told what to wear, how to wear it, and when to wear it. This may sound normal - it is, in the domination system - the “might-is-right” mentality.

This system is rarely questioned. It's just how things are done. My son was merely pointing it out. Kids are smart - way smarter than they're given credit for. They see the error in our ways, and work very hard to express a better point of view. But we do not listen.

Kids are fantastic teachers. They teach us about life, love, relationships, creativity, passion, community. They scream it all. We don't hear it, despite the frequency. They say: Can we play? Can I sleep in your bed tonight? Can I come with you? Let's build a fort. Let's play a game. Let's play dress up. Let's be silly.

And then, one day, from the lack of response and repeated denial, they stop.

We live in a world where work, money, success, and status outweigh life, love, relationships, creativity, passion, and community. We know this. We see this. We cry about it silently when the full weight of what's been lost hits us.

But then we say, kids can't be right, can they? We assume that they'll grow out of this silly “kid stuff” like we did.

Let's hope not. In fact, let's jump in. Our kids teach us to dream with no limits, to reach our

highest potential, to be free, to be free of inhibition, to relax, to love unconditionally, to smell the roses, to live in the present, to live in a fun-filled-now. This is a child's natural way.

I would argue that God's greatest teacher, Jesus, invites us into something very similar. He called it the "kingdom of heaven." It's a "relationship system" with God, where one's life will overflow with passion, power, creativity, love, and community. It's the Good News that few understand. But kids do.