

# Parenting Point by Heather Melcher, DCE

## Confirmation is Not a Declaration of Independence

Each year, at the beginning of July, people in the United States and Canada think a lot about independence and celebrate their freedom of self-government.

While adults focus on independence once a year, teens are aware of independence, or their lack of it, all year round and look forward to the independence of adulthood.

Some kinds of independence are a good thing. But, God does not want any of us to be spiritually or socially independent.

Sadly, a lot of people mistakenly believe that confirmation is a time when children declare their spiritual independence from their parents and graduate from Christian education.

**But, confirmation is not a declaration of independence.**

In reality, the rite of confirmation is a time when young Christians declare their dependence on God for salvation and commit to a life-long journey of faith development and involvement with other Christians in a congregation.

### **Dependence on God:**

Every Christian depends on God for the free gift of forgiveness He offers everyone who believes in Jesus.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:23-24)

### **Interdependence with Other Christians**

Throughout the Bible, God tells us to work together to serve and encourage each other. When teens stop being involved in a community of faith after they are confirmed, they abandon part of what it means to be a Christian. They miss out on being cared for and they neglect to care for others.

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24-25)

As fellow believers in Jesus, it will always be our responsibility to encourage our children in their faith, to remind them to be involved in a church regularly, and to continue to explain how important Jesus' free gift of forgiveness and salvation is.

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