

What Would You Say In Sixty Seconds  
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I have a confession to make. I know I've started many a column with those words. But this is a real confession. I am aware that some of you reading this may actually think less of me for revealing this, but here goes. (Please don't judge me!!)

Confession: I'm not really all that fond of children. Oh, I think they're cute, and some say the funniest things. I like to watch children playing with each other, and I like to watch children manipulate their parents. I'm quite fond of the children and grandchildren of some of my friends. I adore more my own grandchildren. However, I don't like to teach children in Sunday School. I don't like to work in the church's nursery. I don't like to sit next to children on airplanes. There, I've said it. Even to my own eyes, I appear to be a jerk-like monster.

BUT, my saving grace is that I love, love, love teenagers. Just when their parents are sick of them, just when they turn into obnoxious, mouthy, smart-alecks, just when they are testing to see how far and how much they can rebel, I fall in love with them. I love to be around teenagers. (Stop judging me!)

Several years ago during my teaching days, I had a writing class full of teenagers who were complaining that no one listened to them and everyone treated them like overgrown children. So, I told them to write down the top ten most important things they wanted to say. They took to writing that list like peanut butter takes to jelly. It was the quietest class time we'd had all semester.

I took gathered all their papers and put them in my desk drawer. They were upset that I didn't want to read the lists of things they thought were important. The next day, I gave them five minutes to write the answer to this question: If you had the attention of the entire world for sixty seconds, what would you say? They wrote furiously. Then, returned their lists from the day before. Surprisingly, for the most part, what they would have said during their sixty seconds when they had the undivided attention of the world was not on their top ten most important things they wanted to say.

What about you? It's Christmas. Sure, we've commercialized it, taken away some of the sacredness of it, and made ourselves so busy trying to create the "perfect" Christmas that we sometimes lose the meaning of it. BUT, it's Christmas, and all over the world, people know that. Even those who have rejected Jesus know it.

So, if you had the attention of the whole world for sixty seconds, what would you say about Christmas? If you get stuck, as a teenager. I know they'll have plenty to say about it!

Don't forget, tomorrow is the second Sunday of those five Sundays I wrote about last week. Why not go to church with a teenager you know?