

*What advice would you give to the following people? What can they do to survive better in their families? Specifically, how could today's Scriptures affect their situations?*

1. I can't stand it anymore. I have a sister three years older, who is like the Princess of the Universe. She got straight A-plusses in school and joined every team and club there was. She's pretty, talented, and kind to animals. My parents can't stop talking about her. I can deal with every teacher at school saying, "Why can't you be more like your sister?" But when I get the same thing at home, I go a little crazy, okay?

2. I did something stupid. I snuck out at night to go to a party. My folks had said no, but I really had to go, so I did the whole thing putting the pillows in the bed and climbing out the window. It was like Prison Break. Except I got busted sneaking back in at 3:30 while Mom was raiding the fridge. I apologized for three days straight, I was grounded for three months, and I deserved it. But that was last year, and my parents still don't trust me. If I say I'm just going to the mall with friends, they think I'm lying. I don't know how to win back their trust.

3. We learned two years ago that Mom has cancer. She's been great; she did the treatments and it looks like she might be winning this battle. But it is a battle, for all of us. We've all learned to pay attention to Mom's needs, to be quiet in the afternoon because she needs to sleep, to do extra chores around the house because she can't. And I don't mind that, because I love her. Well, I do mind it, a little. Hey, I'm a teenager. This is my time to have fun. And I just feel it's slipping away, because our whole lives are focused on Mom and this stupid disease. I can't believe I'm saying this.

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4. Forgive me if I'm a bit spacey today. Didn't get much sleep. Mom and Dad were up half the night arguing again. They're good at that. She picks at him, one little thing after another, and then he drops a bombshell, like she's not interesting to him anymore and he might leave, so then she pretends like she doesn't care, so he has to keep threatening things, like he'll take the car and the house and she'll be a bag lady. They've been arguing like this since I was nine, so I don't think they're going to split up, but it's been getting worse lately. I just wish I could get some sleep.

5. No, I can't go out with the group tonight because the Storm Troopers say no. Did I say Storm Troopers? I meant my parents. Mr. and Mrs. Darth Vader. I don't mean to say they're too strict, but my friends have started to ask when I'm up for parole. I have to be home by 8 every night. I still have a bedtime, for goodness' sake. I can't have a computer in my room, or a cell phone of my own. I get to watch no more than ten hours of TV a week. They keep a chart on that. And Mom checks every CD I buy. I see my friends staying out late, texting each other, and just generally having fun. And I wonder when I'll get out of this prison camp I call home.

6. My home is a zoo. I am the oldest of five siblings. Well, half-siblings. My mom had me at a young age and never married my real dad. Then she married my stepdad and had four more kids with him. It's one big happy family, but sometimes I feel that I don't belong. Both my mom and my stepdad seem to love the little ones more than me. I can't blame them. I mean, they had those kids together, while I'm just a product of a relationship that shouldn't have been. Still, it would be nice to feel that I really belonged.