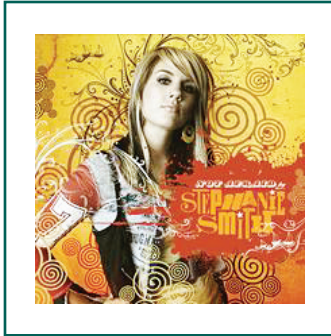


music

## stephanie smith



**SONG:** “What If I Made a Mistake?” (from *Not Afraid*)

**TOPIC:** Second chances

**THEME:** The singer wonders how many chances she’ll get from God.

**BACKGROUND:** Stephanie Smith’s debut CD joins the chorus of strong young females with legitimate musical chops and a great love of Jesus. She delivers solid pop-rock with soaring vocals. While a few songs fall under the heading “We’ve heard this 1,000 times before (‘Beauty’),” others are original and interesting. Fans of BarlowGirl and SuperChick will love this release.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Do you ever dwell on mistakes? Why or why not? Does God keep track of them? Why or why not? Is it hard to give others a second chance? Why or why not? Read aloud John 21:12-17. What mistake did Peter make? Why doesn’t God relieve us of the consequences of our mistakes, even when we ask for forgiveness? Explain. What purpose do consequences serve? Are you more likely to repeat a mistake if there were no consequences? Explain. What mistakes do you need to seek forgiveness for?

music

## taylor swift



**SONG:** “Fifteen” (from *Fearless*)

**TOPIC:** Advice

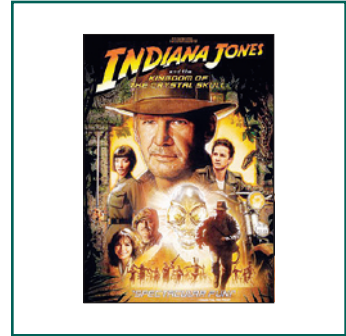
**THEME:** The singer remembers the naïve beliefs she had at 15.

**BACKGROUND:** The sophomore release from 18-year-old Taylor Swift is “country,” but it’s only in the loosest sense of the word. It *is*, however, like reading the diary of every girl in your youth group—the clean one she leaves where her mother will find it. Every song is about boys, boys, and more boys. Swift wrote every song on the disc—and that makes them all sound nearly identical. But girls will eat it up.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Are you different from the person you were three years ago? Explain. If you could go back and give yourself advice, what would it be? Would you listen? Why or why not? Why is it so hard to take advice? Are you more likely to listen to advice from an adult or from a peer? Explain. Read aloud Proverbs 12:15. Why is it wise to seek advice? How do you know what advice to embrace or ignore? What advice have you learned from the Bible? Explain.

video

## indiana jones and the kingdom of the crystal skull [pg-13]



**TOPIC:** Knowledge

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 7:24-27

**CLIP LOCATION:** 01:50:10 through 01:53:20 (DVD Chapter: 14)

**SYNOPSIS:** The gang has just escaped the temple. Mutt wonders where the city of gold is, and Indy tells him that the treasure wasn’t gold—it was knowledge.

**GOSPEL FILTER:** Outside of academia, knowledge isn’t often seen as a “treasure.” But taking knowledge and using it wisely is worth more than all the gold in the world. Encourage teenagers to seek knowledge, which ultimately comes from God, and apply it wisely.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** How would you react if you found out a great “treasure” was really just knowledge? Why isn’t knowledge valued as much as money in our society? Explain. Read aloud Matthew 7:24-27. What’s the relationship between knowledge and wisdom? Can you have a lot of knowledge and still be foolish? Explain. What are some ways you’ve seen yourself or others grow in wisdom? How can we help each other grow in wisdom?



Get more biblical discussion starters for pop culture at [ministryandmedia.com](http://ministryandmedia.com). Go there. Take the tour. Sign up.



BY SCOTT FIRESTONE IV

**scott**, associate editor for **group**, writes our Ministry and Media discussion starters.



**favorites**

- BOOK**—*The Land of Laughs*, Jonathan Carroll; *Winter's Tale*, Mark Helprin
- BOARD GAMES**—Brass, Twilight Struggle, Dominion
- DVDS**—*Mongol*, *WALL-E*

**video**

**get smart**

[pg-13]



**TOPIC:** Appearances  
**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Samuel 17:40-50  
**CLIP LOCATION:** 01:02:41 through 01:16:30 (DVD Chapter:17)  
**SYNOPSIS:** Max and Agent 99 are chased by a giant Bad Guy. Rather than lose the fight Max tries to get beneath the surface, uncovering pain and hurt. **(Note: After getting clobbered, Max lands on Agent 99 with his hand briefly on her [fully clothed] breast.)**  
**GOSPEL FILTER:** When people act like total jerks, it's hard to see them as fellow humans—broken, hurting, and in need of love. Teach your kids to look under the surface—just as Jesus does with us.  
**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Why is it easy to judge people by their appearance? Have you been judged by your appearance? Explain. How have you and your friends treated bullies? Explain. What insights do you have into the reasons that person became a bully? Read aloud 1 Samuel 17:40-50. How was David's appearance different from his inner reality? Have you judged someone based on outward appearances? What could you do to discover who that person really is?

**video**

**the incredible hulk**

[pg-13]



**TOPIC:** Anger  
**SCRIPTURE:** Ephesians 4:31-32  
**CLIP LOCATION:** 00:03:03 through 00:05:47 (DVD Chapter: 1)  
**SYNOPSIS:** Bruce (Edward Norton) wants to learn to control his anger, so he visits a monk who tells him, "The best way to control your anger is to control your body."  
**GOSPEL FILTER:** Anger is a heart issue, and learning to control your body won't change what's in your heart. Teach your teenagers that until our hearts begin to change, extreme and hurtful emotions will continue to plague us.  
**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Do you think you have a temper? What have you tried in your efforts to control your anger? Did it work? Do you think "the best way to control your anger is to control your body"? Why or why not? Is anger always a bad thing? Explain. Read aloud Ephesians 4:31-32. How do you think we can "get rid" of those bad habits? Why is it important for Christians to avoid these habits? What are some ways we can avoid anger in tough situations?

**youtube**



**home improvement**



[youtube.com/watch?v=Thzi7O-WzAI](http://youtube.com/watch?v=Thzi7O-WzAI)

**TOPIC:** Generosity  
**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** What is your reaction to the video? Would you have bought the house for a stranger? Why or why not? Was it the right thing to do? Explain. Would it still be the right thing if she's never paid back? Explain. Read aloud 1 John 3:16-18. What does it mean to "lay down our lives" for others? Explain. What are some ways our youth group can love others in action and truth?