

# CPYU PARENT PAGE

# APR 22

HELPING PARENTS  
UNDERSTAND TEENAGERS  
AND THEIR WORLD



## TEACHING EASTER

The fallout from our culture's growing reality of biblical illiteracy hit me hard a couple of years ago when the day after Easter my daughter-in-law, an athletic trainer at a large suburban high school, shared with me a conversation she witnessed between a group of a dozen student athletes who were in the training room. Everyone was chatting about their Spring Break when one of the students asked, "What the heck is Easter about?? I know nothing." Multiple kids agreed that they didn't know the story, and some jokingly said, "I think it's something about Jesus. . . maybe his birthday."

Let me suggest that during this month of celebrating Easter, you share four important words and their meaning with your children and teens. Each of these theological words is packed full of practical meaning that not only helps us understand the cross, but will fuel gratitude to God for the grace He has shown us through the events of that first Good Friday. Each of these words reveals an aspect of God's answer for a particular human problem related to the fact that we are all sinners estranged from God because of our rebellion against Him. The Good News is this: because of the cross, we don't get what we deserve!

**Propitiation** provides an answer to our problem of deserving God's wrath for our sin and rebellion. The Bible tells us that God hates sin and evil, and that our sin arouses God's wrath. Try as hard as we might, there is nothing we can do to appease and pacify God's wrath. The just and proper punishment for our sin is death. But because God is a loving God, He has chosen to offer Himself up as the sacrifice for sin, unleashing all of His stored up wrath against sin on none other than Himself on the cross. Who does that?!? He substituted Himself for us! *Propitiation* is a word the Bible uses to capture the reality of appeasing one's anger through a sacrifice. In I John 2:1-2 we read, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins."

**Redemption** provides the answer to our problem of finding ourselves in bondage to sin and under the constant influence of the enemy of God, the devil. Try as hard as we might to get out from under it, we are captive to sin. What we need is a divine Rescuer. Because we can't extricate ourselves from our sin, we need someone to redeem us, that is, to pay a

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## YOUTH CULTURE

## HOT QUOTE

Shawn Mendes, talking about the high bar he has set for himself in terms of his music and impact on the world.

Billboard  
March 14, 2022

*"For me, it's not to be like, 'I have to change the world.' I'm just saying, that's where my ambition goes - to influence culture. I want to honor the opportunity that I've been given as an artist, to make something very true."*



“THE GOOD NEWS IS THIS: BECAUSE OF THE CROSS, WE DON’T GET WHAT WE DESERVE!”



WALT MUELLER  
CPYU President



ransom price and buy us back from our captivity. The ransom price is paid on our behalf by God Himself through His Son Jesus Christ, who lived a sinless life and gave Himself up for us through His death on the Cross. Jesus Christ, God Himself, is our Redeemer! In the Gospel of Mark we read this: “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (10:45).

**Justification** is a legal term that takes us into the courtroom. Have you ever witnessed a court proceeding? The accused appears before a judge and a jury as they determine whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty. Our problem is that we stand condemned for our sin and we enter into the courtroom with our verdict already set: we are guilty. Romans 3:23 tells us that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” But by God’s grace in the cross (Romans 5:18), God takes sinners who are guilty and worthy only of condemnation, and makes them acceptable in His own eyes. He acquits us of our guilt, pardons us, and no longer counts our sin against us (Psalm 32:2). He forgives our sin on account of Christ’s righteousness and declares us righteous as well! Again, who does that?!? We are *justified*, a legal term meaning “acquitted.” Consider these beautiful words of

Romans 3:24 that follow the verse already mentioned: we are “justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

**Reconciliation** offers an answer to our problem of being separated from God by our sin. This has been the case since our first parents rebelled against God way back in Genesis 3. Our relationship with God is broken and we have no ability on our own to gain access into God’s presence and see that relationship restored. But God, through the sacrifice of Himself on the cross, has changed our relationship from one of enmity to one of peace. In Christ’s taking upon Himself the cost of our hostility, enmity, and sin, we have been set free to once again come into union with God (Romans 5:1-11). We are adopted into God’s family through the reconciling work of Jesus Christ.

Ask your kids what they know about Easter. Let them know that without the Cross, there would be no resurrection, nor would there be any hope at all for humanity. Help them see that “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (I Peter 2:24). Thanks be to God for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ!

## FROM THE NEWS

### FENTANYL

Fentanyl is a pharmaceutical synthetic opioid drug that is approved as a pain killer.

The drug, which is 50 times more potent than morphine, is typically prescribed in the form of transdermal patches or lozenges. Not surprisingly, Fentanyl is also manufactured illegally and sold illicitly, and is 100 times more potent than heroin. It is often times mixed with heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana, usually without the user’s knowledge, in a combination that can be deadly. It is also being pressed into millions of counterfeit pills that look just like pharmaceutical fentanyl. The potency in these counterfeits varies, and it’s estimated that two out of five counterfeit pills contains enough fentanyl to kill. Parents, you need to be aware that drug dealing has moved off the streets and onto social media platforms, enabling easy access for our kids. Don’t ignore this very real threat. Warn your kids about the moral, physical, and spiritual reasons to avoid drugs.

## TRENDS:

## Is Religion a Bad Thing?

One of the growing trends in the church has been an aversion to describing Christianity as a religion. Today, many Christians see the word religion as something harmful. The word is frowned upon as it's believed it represents rituals, dogmas, and structures. In a recent article, Kevin DeYoung makes a case for keeping the word religion in our vocabulary and actually seeing it as something good. He reminds us that historically, looking down on the word is only a recent development. The word religion is used five times in the Bible. The Bible tells us that self-made religion that doesn't yield life-change is bad. But religion is good when it cares for widows and orphans. The Bible never uniformly refers to religion as only negative. Finally, if you hear your kids say that they want to be spiritual but not religious, DeYoung says that they risk getting the wrong impression about Jesus, while adopting an approach to faith rooted in their own feelings, rather than in the truths of the Gospel.



## LATEST RESEARCH:

## The Decline in Reading

Do you remember going to elementary school and having a regularly scheduled weekly library day? Several generations of kids looked forward to that trip in a line down the school hallway to return and then take out a book or two. We have to wonder if today's kids feel the same excitement for library day. It sure looks like they don't. The U.S. Department of Education is reporting that among our nine-year-olds, the percentage who say they never or hardly ever read has risen since 1984 from 9% to 16%. Among 13-year-olds, that number has increased from 8% to 29%. And among 17-year-olds, the number has risen from 9% to 27%. Fewer and fewer kids are reading. Others are reading less. Reading is a good exercise for the mind. The good news is that if a non-reader starts to read, it can become a habit again. Encourage your kids to read. Why not start with the *Chronicles of Narnia*?

## QUICKSTATS

In February and March 2021, emergency department visits for suspected suicide attempts were 51% higher among girls ages 12-17 than during the same period in 2019.

*(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

68% of parents think it's inevitable that their child will see something inappropriate on the internet when they're not able to monitor them and 71% think this will happen while they're at school or doing homework online. The average parent surveyed let their child browse the internet independently at 11-years-old.

*(OnePoll/Lightspeed Systems)*

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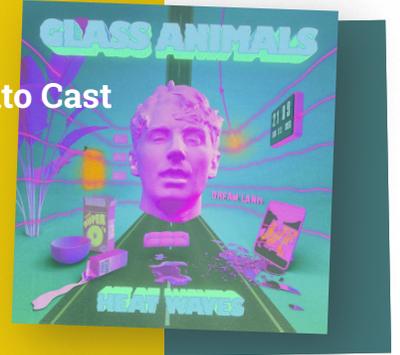
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## SONGS ON THE HOT 100

1. "Heat Waves" by Glass Animals
2. "Stay" by The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber
3. "Super Gremlin" by Kodak Black
4. "abcdefu" by GAYLE
5. "Ghost" by Justin Bieber
6. "We Don't Talk About Bruno" by Encanto Cast
7. "Enemy" by Imagine Dragons X JID
8. "That's What I Want" by Lil Nas X
9. "Woman" by Doja Cat
10. "Easy On Me" by Adele

*Week of April 2, 2022*  
*Source: Billboard Hot 100*  
(The week's most popular songs, ranked by audio and video streaming activity on leading digital music services, radio airplay audience impressions based on monitored airplay and sales data.)



## KNOWING YOUR TEEN'S FRIENDS

by WALT MUELLER

Parents, today I want to encourage you to conduct a two-pronged relationship check. First, take time to take stock of your family relationships and closeness. Kids who are engaged with their families and who know they are loved are less prone to try to find a secondary family in a unique peer group subculture. Of course, our teens value their social connections, and they will always gravitate toward a friend group of some sort as they walk the path to adult independence.

And this is where you need to continually engage in a secondary relationship check by getting to know who your teenager's friends

are, getting to know those friends, and coming to an understanding of how those friends are influencing your teen's beliefs and behaviors.

You must realize that the formative power of adolescent friendships will be greater if you are not taking the time to continually build a loving, caring, and God-honoring relationship with your kids.

# FROM THE WORD



his month we celebrate several days that changed history. Known in most Christian circles as Holy Week, this is the time when we remember the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Passing the message of the centrality of the Cross on to our children and teens is – as the Apostle Paul has written – “of first importance” (1 Cor. 15:3).

Sadly, too many of us and too many of our kids grow up believing that somehow, some way, we must earn our salvation by winning God’s approval. We seek to earn forgiveness from God and acceptance by God through our actions, achievements, and obedience to God’s commands. This is legalism - and it is not at all biblical or true.

The fact of the matter – that we must embrace and pass on to our kids – is that we are reconciled to God *not* by our own actions or efforts, but through Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross. It *is* through His grace that we are forgiven and made new.

As your family gathers to celebrate Easter, be sure to focus on the cross. Talk about the events of the weekend, the meaning of the cross, the necessity of living every minute, nook, and cranny of our lives in thankful obedience to the God who became one of us so that we might once again be His.

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day.”

**1 Corinthians 15:3&4**

## PODCAST



### Youth Culture Matters

A CPYU PODCAST

*Youth Culture Matters*

*is a long-format podcast from CPYU hosted by Walt Mueller.*

**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT EPISODE 147:**

**“WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA DOING TO US AND OUR KIDS?” WITH CHRIS MARTIN**

**LISTEN AT [WWW.CPYU.ORG/PODCAST](http://WWW.CPYU.ORG/PODCAST)**

# HIE IS RISEN

We can help our kids understand what God accomplished through His self-sacrifice on the cross, and the salvation it makes possible for those who come by faith to God through His Son Jesus Christ.

Walt Mueller

## HELPFUL RESOURCES



HYMN/  
VIDEO

Here is a resource you can use as a family in preparation for Easter. Go to YouTube and pull up a video of the modern hymn, "The Power of the Cross," by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend.

As you listen, ponder the words from the lead article, *propitiation, redemption, justification, and reconciliation*. The message of the hymn will drive home for your family everything these four words capture about God's amazing grace!

You can scan the QR code below to view the official lyric video of the hymn.

