

RAISING IGNORANT KIDS

In hindsight, I have to confess that I was an incredibly ignorant teenager. I remember lamenting my parents' lack of knowledge on just about everything. As the years passed, my own experience echoed that of Mark Twain, who once wrote, "When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."

The dictionary defines ignorance as a "lack of knowledge or information." It is being unaware, uneducated, or unknowledgeable. Our children and teens are especially susceptible to making the kinds of life-altering mistakes rooted in ignorance. One reason for this is their young age. With youthfulness comes a lack of the kind of experience and learning that lead to wisdom and knowledge. In addition,

their developing God-given cognitive abilities lead them, like they did the teenage version of me, to believe that they are wiser and more knowledgeable than anyone else.

Way back in 1652, a wise man by the name of Thomas Brooks wrote a classic book – *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices* - about the strategies the enemy of God uses in an effort to undermine our faith and ultimately undo us. Brook's tells us that one of Satan's strategies is to destroy us by leading us into ignorance through the neglect of reading God's Word. What results? Brooks writes, "Ignorance is the mother of mistake, the cause of trouble, error, and of terror; it is the highway to hell, and it makes man both a prisoner and a slave to the devil at once. . . A man without knowledge is as a workman

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YOUTH CULTURE

HOT QUOTE

Summer Maxwell, a master's student at UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism and Editorial Intern for SFGATE, writing about Gen Z's embrace of location sharing apps, [sfgate.com](https://www.sfgate.com), July 16, 2025.

"Constant knowledge of your friends' whereabouts creates ample opportunities for tense social politics. If you stop sharing your location with someone on Find My, the app will notify that person in iMessage. Location sharing also makes it much easier to see when you're missing out. In short, location sharing doesn't make the social minefield that is adolescence and young adulthood any easier to navigate."



"I HAVE COME TO REALIZE THAT THERE IS NO MORE IMPORTANT TASK TO BE PURSUED ON A DAILY BASIS THAN TO SEEK TO KNOW THE MIND AND HEART OF GOD."



without his hands, as a painter without his eyes, as a traveler without his legs, or as a ship without sails, or a bird without wings, or like a body without a soul."

Frightening words, for sure. That's not at all who I want to be. Neither is it what I want for my kids. What then, are some simple antidotal steps we can take with our kids to prevent this kind of ignorance while facilitating the kind of knowledge that will lead to their flourishing?

First, we must eliminate our own ignorance. I have come to realize that there is no more important task to be pursued on a daily basis than to seek to know the mind and heart of God. And the path to that end begins and ends with endeavoring to know and grow in a knowledge of His Word. And may I be bold enough to challenge the "I don't have time" excuse that we all, myself included, use? What if we began by sacrificing 15 to 30 minutes of our daily screen-time to immerse ourselves without distraction into God's Word?

Second, we must speak what we are learning. In Deuteronomy 6 we learn that we are to diligently teach the Word of the Lord to our children. Our teaching must be a 24/7 endeavor as we speak and live God's will and way before our children's eyes and ears. You see, just as their age makes them susceptible to ignorance, they are even more susceptible to knowledge. Their hearts have been made for it. They are hungry for it. And we are the ones called to spread a buffet of knowledge on their plates.

Finally, we must train them to read, study, and learn on their own. By reading the Scriptures together as a family, we are instilling habits and knowledge, as these habits will bear fruit in knowledge.

WALT MUELLER
CPYU President



FROM THE NEWS

Cursing Culture

The headline of a recent *New York Times* article reads, "What Teenagers Are Saying About Cursing."

This question was posed to teenagers: Is there too much cursing these days? How did the kids respond? Among other things, many of the kids surveyed said that cursing is an ever-present reality in today's world, and it is problematic. Others wrote cursing off as being just the way people talk these days. Still others are concerned that the use of profanity was too widespread and commonplace, especially in the online world. One girl even said that what she calls "cursing culture" is everywhere. Parents, we need to raise up children and teens who heed Paul's words to the Ephesians, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear... Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving."



TRENDS:



Paper or Digital Bible?

In a recent article from the folks at Lifeway, we were reminded of the importance of training our kids to use physical paper Bibles rather than depending on our smartphones and other screens. We do know that when we read on a screen, we read differently than we do on the printed page. Screen reading does not facilitate the kind of line-by-line deep reading that occurs on the printed page. In the article, Tim Pollard from Lifeway offers up some helpful reasons for using a paper Bible. He says it makes the Bible physical and tangible. It minimizes distractions. The text is prevented from changing. A paper Bible doesn't run out of battery. It reinforces the sanctity of the Scriptures. Memory is enhanced. Readers can see how the canon of Scripture is organized and how the books of the Bible are structured, which provides context for what we are reading. In addition, it facilitates focus and note-taking. Here at CPYU we encourage you and your kids to use a physical, ink-on-paper Bible!



LATEST RESEARCH:

Who Are Teens Most Comfortable Talking to about Mental Health?

Late last year, the Pew Research Center conducted a survey of almost 1,400 teens, ages 13-17, to come to an understanding of our teenagers' experiences and attitudes around social media and their mental health. One of the most interesting findings is one that we can also find encouraging. Teens were asked about who they are most comfortable talking about their mental health with. The options included parents, friends, a mental health therapist, a family member other than a parent, and a teacher. 52% of the kids said they are extremely or very likely to talk to their parent. However, 16% did say they are not too or not at all likely to talk to a parent. No matter what, we can always exert greater effort at building the kind of relationships with our kids that encourage good communication and a willingness to open up. Be sure your kids know that along with God, you are always available whenever they want to talk!



QUICKSTATS



65% of Gen Z adults use location sharing, and 16% of them share with five or more people.

(Civic Science)

In 2023, it is estimated that 7.4% (or 2.55 million) of US adolescents were currently vaping delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), while 2.9% (or 999,000) were vaping cannabidiol (CBD), and 1.8% (or 620,000) were vaping synthetic cannabinoids (SCs).

(American Journal of Preventive Medicine)

III TOP III 10

MAJOR MEDIA-CONSUMING ACTIVITIES

Source:
eMarketer
Based on average
time spent per day
with select media by
US adults, May 2025

1. Traditional TV
2. Subscription OTT (streaming)
3. Social networks
4. Digital audio
5. Radio
6. Digital gaming
7. YouTube
8. Messaging
9. Free ad-supported streaming TV
10. Print



HANDLING REJECTION

by WALT MUELLER

Most of us can remember those pit-in-the-stomach times we experienced as teenagers when we realized we had been left out. I remember a summer day in the neighborhood when I couldn't find any of my friends at home. I couldn't figure out why they were all gone until somebody spilled the beans later, telling me that they had all been invited to go to a home in another neighborhood to swim in the families' pool. Truth be told, I felt like a loser.

The journal *Frontiers in Digital Health* reports that for kids living in today's social media world, the feelings I felt on that one summer day occur far more frequently, as our kids see visual and story content recounting activities and gatherings of friends from which they've been excluded. This ramps up feelings of exclusion, jealousy, and rejection. Researchers say this is feeding emotional stress and creating interpersonal conflict. Let's use these moments to teach our kids to handle disappointment and conflict with the kindness and grace of Jesus Christ.

FROM THE WORD

In the Old Testament book of Micah, there is a sobering exchange going on between God and His covenant people. God calls them out for their unfaithfulness. They respond, trying to justify themselves by listing several of their religious practices, including their attendance at worship and their sacrifices. God's answer to them is one that we must hear and heed today: What God tells them He desires is not their rituals and sacrifices, but rather the obedience of their hearts.

"And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Micah 6:8

God, through the prophet Micah, lays out three basic responses He desires from His people as a result of His covenant love. First, He requires them to "do justice." We are not to mistreat others, doing what is right to others, even

when it is costly to us. Second, he requires


them to "love kindness." We are to be merciful and generous to those who are weak and less fortunate. And finally, God requires them to "walk humbly with your God." We are to put aside our pride and bent towards self-rule in order to humbly endeavor to bring our lives into conformity to God's will.

This year, determine to live out your faith in ways that glorify God while offering your kids a clear view of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.



PODCAST




The WORD
in Youth Ministry

A CPYU PODCAST

The Word in Youth Ministry

is a podcast from CPYU for youth workers by youth workers.

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT EPISODE 89:

"MINISTRY TO TEENAGE GIRLS" WITH BETHANY HEARNE AND BETH HARRELL



LISTEN AT WWW.CPYU.ORG/TWIYM



HELPFUL RESOURCES



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