



TAKING THE CASUAL OUT OF SEX

In a culture where definitions and expectations related to love, sex, and marriage have quickly shifted, the relatively innocent question “Will you be my Valentine?” has morphed into “Wanna hook up?” God’s good gift of sex is now taken for granted as a personal right void of borders and boundaries. Parents, there’s a positive, straightforward message about sex and sexuality that desperately needs to be heard. . . and it needs to come from you!

Several years ago I led a Bible study on the topic of temptation with a group of high schoolers who didn’t know much about the Bible. To bring the lesson to life I asked them to think about a time when they had been tempted sexually. Then I told them that God’s Word had something to say about sexual temptation. “You

mean the Bible actually talks about sex?!” one high schooler blurted out in amazement. “It sure does,” I said. “There’s an entire book in the Old Testament that is a graphic celebration of the beauty of physical love between a man and woman.” They couldn’t believe it! “Where?” they asked. I directed them to the Song of Solomon and watched them flip excitedly through their Bibles to find it. Needless to say, I don’t think anyone heard anything else I said that entire evening. On the way out the door, one girl said, “This was great tonight. I learned that God doesn’t think sex is dirty!”

For too long our children and teens have been subjected to sex education that is anything but correct. The messages of our culture teach them to express their sexuality freely. On the other extreme are

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YOUTH
CULTURE

HOT
QUOTE

“I think I’m new to being vulnerable outside of songs. So it’s like, I see a lot of pictures of me and there’s like smiles on them. And I was like, it’s just weird though, because I didn’t feel good at all that day. And I kind of am sick of smiling on days when I don’t feel like smiling.”

Machine Gun Kelly,
discussing vulnerability
and being okay with not
being okay.

The Drew Barrymore Show,
December 9, 2021.



“THE SEX EDUCATION THAT OUR KIDS SO DESPERATELY NEED WILL LEAD THEM INTO UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD CREATED SEX TO BE PURPOSEFUL AND MEANINGFUL WHEN EXPERIENCED WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF HIS PLAN.”

churches and many parents who treat sex as a taboo subject, leading kids to believe that sex is a dirty word. Sadly, many kids (like those in the Bible-study group) are left not knowing the truth about sex.

The sex education that our kids so desperately need will lead them into understanding that God created sex to be purposeful and meaningful when experienced within the bounds of his plan. Research has shown that teens want to learn about sexuality from their parents, yet how many of us take the time to talk to our kids about sex on a deep and meaningful interactive level? Here are some suggestions on how and what to teach your children about sexuality.

First, give your children truthful answers to their questions in an age-appropriate manner. Even though you might feel uncomfortable with the types of questions young children are asking these days, you must give them answers.

Second, take time to understand and discuss God’s design for sexuality. Spend time reading and studying God’s Word, making note of passages dealing with sexuality that you can discuss with your kids.

Third, teach your children that God’s guidelines for sex don’t result from some divine desire to take all the fun out of life. Rather, they are given to make our sexual lives as fulfilling, safe, and meaningful as possible.

Finally, remember that the most effective teaching tool of all is modeling. Provide your children with an example of living out God’s sexual will and way.

Wondering what to teach about biblical sexuality? We recommend the book Holy Sexuality and the Gospel by Christopher Yuan.

WALT MUELLER
CPYU President



FROM THE NEWS

PARENTING FOR HOLINESS, NOT HAPPINESS

Our parenting insecurities fuel a style of destructive parenting that is marked by constantly running interference for our kids along with posting their accomplishments on social media.

A recent headline in the *New York Times Magazine* should catch our attention. It reads, “Dr. Becky Doesn’t Think the Goal of Parenting Is to Make Your Kid Happy.” The article features an interview with clinical psychologist Becky Kennedy. The highly popular parenting advisor has built a following as she gives advice in our day and age of helicopter parenting, along with raising kids in the social media fueled world of competitive parenting. CPYU would agree that our parenting insecurities fuel a style of destructive parenting that is marked by constantly running interference for our kids along with posting their accomplishments on social media. From a Christian perspective, we fail our children when our parenting trajectory is to lead our kids to happiness. This goal fuels self-centered narcissism and entitlement. Parents, our goal should not be to make our children happy. Our goal should be to prepare them for life in a difficult world, living to the glory of God, as they pursue holiness, not happiness.

TRENDS:

#flex

One of the trends you can't miss if you've spent any time watching professional football is the increasingly common practice of displaying boastful and arrogant behavior. Whether it's a quarterback sack, an interception, running for a first down, or scoring a touchdown, there's usually that moment where the player hops up and flexes their muscles in a pose that seems to say, "I told you! Don't ever mess with me!". Seen in the past as a vice, bragging has now become something seen as expected, normal, and even virtuous. Whatever happened to a quiet humility? Last year, the folks at the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* recognized this trend by adding a new and additional definition for the little four-letter word "flex". The dictionary tells us that "flex" is now an internet slang word defined as an act of bragging or showing off on social media. Let's teach our kids that we must die to ourselves, and then humbly find our value and worth in who we are as new creations in Jesus Christ.



LATEST RESEARCH:

Positive News on Kids and Drug Use

One good bit of news coming out of the pandemic is that the percentage of adolescents reporting drug use decreased significantly in 2021. This news comes from the long-running annual Monitoring the Future Survey. The 2021 survey reports significant decreases in the adolescent use of alcohol, marijuana, and vaped

nicotine. The study also found that in regards to mental health, students across all groups from eighth to twelfth grade report moderate increases in feelings of boredom, anxiety, depression, loneliness, worry, and difficulty sleeping. While the jury is still out on why drug use decreased at the same time mental health

issues increased, we suspect a couple of factors. First, kids were spending less face-to-face time with their friends. Peer influence is a huge factor in drug and alcohol abuse. And second, kids were spending more time with their families. We know that building strong family relationships also builds resilience in kids. We can thank God for these positive developments.

QUICKSTATS

For those who choose to use a tanning bed before the age of 35, the chances of developing melanoma increase by 59%. Despite this, 16% of teenagers and 1 out of 3 teenage girls consistently use a tanning bed. (Anne Arundel Dermatology/Healthgrades)

Just 9% of American teens are getting enough physical activity during the pandemic. This has fallen from the already low 16% that were getting enough exercise prior to COVID-19. Health experts recommend that kids get about 60 minutes of physical activity per day. (Preventive Medicine Reports)

III TOP III

10



HIGHEST PAID YOUTUBE STARS

1. MrBeast
2. Jake Paul
3. Markiplier
4. Rhett and Link
5. Unspeakable
6. Nastya
7. Ryan Kaji
8. Dude Perfect
9. Logan Paul
10. Preston Arsement

of 2021
Source: Forbes



PARENTING AND GOD'S WORD

by WALT MUELLER

From the moment they're born, our kids need parents who tune themselves in to the most reliable source of parenting information and instruction. God has given us the Bible to guide us through these difficult and confusing days in our fallen world and rapidly changing youth culture. Our approach to parenting must be guided by God's Word.

Study the Bible with diligence so that you'll fill a deep well from which to draw great wisdom, help, and advice. Discover what it says to the life-

shaping messages your kids hear on a daily basis from today's youth culture. Uncover the character traits and attitudes God calls us to exhibit in our families and other interpersonal relationships.

On a personal note, I've found that my investment of time in knowing God's word has been the very thing that's guided me through the sometimes deep waters of parenting. God will parent you through His word, as you parent your kids.

FROM THE WORD

he Bible tells us that one of the evidences of the fact that we have been born again and are in Christ is love. Followers of Jesus are consistently called to love each other because we've been loved by God. The great evidence of God's

love for us is that he sent his son as a sacrifice for our sin. In other words, God demonstrated his love for us with the death of his son Jesus on the cross. God's love is *faithful, giving, self-sacrificing, and consistent.*

In I John 4:7 we are called to "love one another," a statement which is not a suggestion, but a command. The word used here for "love" indicates the distinct and particular kind of love God has shown to us. . . a love that is *giving* love. It does not seek its own good, its own reward, or anything in return. It contains the thought of loving by caring for others, showing loyalty to others, and seeking their good.

Sadly, in today's world the way we understand, live, and give "love" has become self-serving and self-seeking. Parents, is it the latter or former kind of love that you are living out in your home with your spouse and children? If our "love" is a "love" that seeks to satisfy itself, it is nothing but selfishness. Instead, love your children and spouse in a truly biblical manner, thereby fulfilling your calling to be *faithful, giving, self-sacrificing, and consistent* in love.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."

I John 4:7 (ESV)



PODCAST



The Word in Youth Ministry

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


The WORD
in Youth Ministry

A CPYU PODCAST

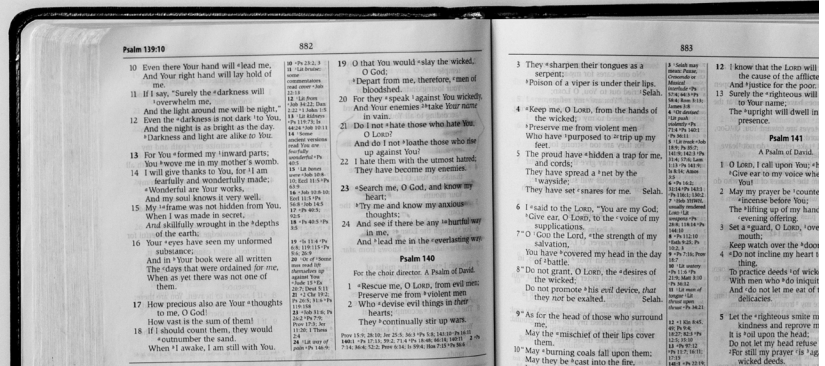
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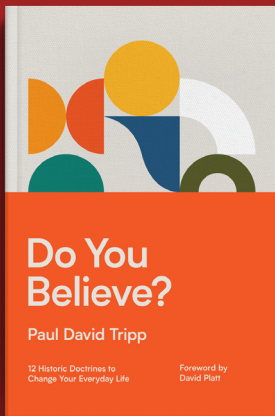
LISTEN AT WWW.CPYU.ORG/TWIYM

“The Bible is the result of a loving Creator unpacking what is true for his creatures so that they will know how properly to make sense out of life. Without his loving revelation, we wouldn’t know how to know, we wouldn’t know for sure what we know, and we would have no way to know if what we think we know is true or not. In the Bible, God, the meaning-giver, explains foundational truths to the meaning-makers he created.”

- Paul David Tripp



HELPFUL
RESOURCES



BOOK

Doctrine—what Christians believe—directly influences how they live. The biblical truths about God, humanity, and the world are not merely about knowing more—they are also about loving God and making sense of this life and the life to come. But what happens when there is disparity between what believers confess and how they live?

In his latest book, *Do You Believe?: 12 Historic Doctrines to Change Your Everyday Life*, pastor and best-selling author Paul David Tripp takes a close look at 12 core doctrines and how they engage and transform the human heart and mind. According to Tripp, “true belief is always lived.” To demonstrate, he unpacks each doctrine and presents its relevance for the Christian life. As readers explore topics such as the doctrine of God, the holiness of God, and the doctrine of Scripture, they will be fueled to fall deeper in love with and stand in awe of their Creator and Father—putting the truths of God’s word on display for all the world to see.



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(717) 361-8429 | CPYU@CPYU.ORG | PO BOX 414, ELIZABETHTOWN, PA 17022 | WWW.CPYU.ORG