

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

“*FOMO (the fear of missing out) can trigger feelings of anxiety. The highlights people present are interpreted as their real life not their real life. If users are spending too much time online on social media sites, it can be difficult to keep perspective on what real life is. ‘Likes’ can be very addictive, causing a dopamine hit to the brain of feel-good chemicals that reinforce like-seeking behavior and compulsive checking. Unplugging allows people to be more mindful and present in their actual lives leaving opportunity for new hobbies and self care.*”

Dr. Shahla Modir, Chief Medical Officer at All Points North Lodge, an addiction treatment center, discussing the addictive nature of social media and the benefits to unplugging and setting limits, USATODAY.com, August 19, 2021.



WILL WE STAND OR Fall?

WALT MUELLER, CPYU President



It's been just three months since the Champlain Condo that sat beachside in Surfside, Florida unexpectedly crumbled to the ground in just a matter of seconds. It was horrifying. There was the video of the overnight collapse. There was the pile of rubble. I thought about the victims, their families, and then the first-responders and other rescue workers who were given the unimaginably gruesome task of sifting through the rubble. The whole thing has served as a clear reminder that our world is broken, it's not the way it's supposed to be, and it is groaning for healing.

But there was something else that jumped immediately to mind as I watched the news. I told my wife about a conversation I remember having 40 years ago with someone who saw this coming. “Neil Frank said this was going to happen somewhere someday,” I said.

Dr. Frank, the Director of the National Hurricane Center at the time, described what he was consistently seeing when he surveyed the damage caused by a hurricane. Much of his focus was on beachfront erosion which exposed the foundations of the high-rise buildings that were popping up all along the East Coast. He saw cracks and structural compromise. Consequently, he embarked on a mission to travel to beachfront communities warning developers and builders that they were setting themselves up for future disaster. Eventually, he said, buildings would begin over time to tumble down. Judging from all the coastal building that's taken place since then, Dr. Frank's warnings have gone unheeded.

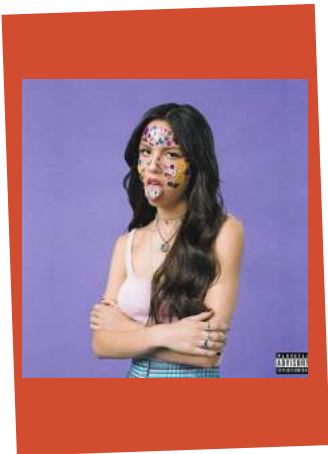
I think about that conversation with Neil Frank whenever I read what Jesus said as he was bringing his Sermon On The Mount to a close. He issued a strong directive and warning (Matthew 7:24-27) that must not be ignored. These words of Jesus became ingrained in the fabric of my being as I grew up singing that old Sunday School song, “The Wise Man Built His House” . . . a song filled with directives and warnings. Like all of us, the two men in the parable both built their lives on the foundation of something. But the strength and endurance of their respective dwellings and their ability to withstand the inevitable storms of life hinged not on what could be seen above the ground line, but what was beneath: the foundation. One built on rock. One built on sand. Both faced the same storm(s). One “did not fall.” One “fell. . . and great was the fall of it.” Simple and straightforward, isn't it?

Will I be a person who “hears these words of mine and does them”? Or, will I be a person who “hears these words of mine and does not do them”? And, in turn, will I be urgent and passionate about teaching my kids to do the same?

Our world is broken. Things are not the way they are supposed to be. All of us are groaning for healing. . . a healing that will come when we enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ that's built on the wise rock-solid foundation of God's Word, both heard *and* put into practice.★

Albums

week of September 18, 2021
Source:
Billboard 200 Chart



1. *Certified Lover Boy* by Drake

2. *Donda* by Kanye West

3. *Senjutsu* by Iron Maiden

4. *Sour* by Olivia Rodrigo

5. *Planet Her* by Doja Cat

6. *Dangerous: The Double Album*

by Morgan Wallen

7. *Happier Than Ever* by Billie

Eilish

8. *F*ck Love* by The Kid LAROI

9. *Mercury - Act 1* by Imagine

Dragons

10. *SoulFly* by Rod Wave



QUICK STATS

In April 2021, 70% of those ages 2 to 12 said they had recently seen ads on YouTube, as opposed to 36% who had seen ads on traditional TV.

(Precise TV and Giraffe Insights)

When Drake's *Certified Lover Boy* album dropped, he became the first artist ever to claim as many as 9 of the top 10 positions in a single frame of the Billboard Hot 100 songs chart.

(Billboard)

FROM THE NEWS:

OnlyFans AND PORNOGRAPHY

Parents, we want to raise your awareness and sound a warning about an internet site being used by online content creators and their fans. The site is called OnlyFans. It was launched back in 2016 to serve as a platform for performers like musicians and physical fitness instructors to post video clips and photos that could be accessed by fans who pay a monthly subscription fee to access the content. As you might imagine, the site which now has over two million content creators and 130 million fan users, quickly became a place for creators and even sex workers to post pornographic material. A little over a year ago, one creator promised to post nude photos of herself, and made over one million dollars within 24 hours. Due to a much-deserved backlash, OnlyFans announced in August of this year that they would no longer allow sexually explicit content beginning October 1st. Six days later, they reversed their decision. Parents, monitor your kids online time!

TRENDS: PEERS AND SINFUL CHOICES

One shift that's taken place in youth culture over the years is the way that kids live out their friendships with their peers. In year's past, kids were more prone to intervene and warn their friends if they saw their friends making dangerous or immoral choices. It wasn't always easy to do so, but issuing warnings was seen as being virtuous.

But that has shifted over the years as moral relativism has taken root and grown. In today's world, it is seen as virtuous if you allow and even encourage your friends to choose to do what seems right to them. Even if I believe that your choice is dangerous or immoral, who am I to intervene with a warning? It's up to you to do what seems right for you. In her book *10 Questions Every Teen Should Ask and Answer About Christianity*, Rebecca McLaughlin offers these words of advice: "It's not offensive and unloving for Christians to tell people that the ship is going down and to plead with them to run to Jesus. It's offensive and unloving not to!"



LATEST RESEARCH:

THE MONEY WE SPEND ON OUR KIDS

With our kids being back in school and the school year now a month or so into full swing, it bears mentioning that this last year, parents

spent an average of \$843 per child on back-to-school shopping. That's up 19% from the average of \$707 per child that was spent at the start of the 2020-2021 school year. The top things parents splurged on were clothes, school supplies, backpacks, and electronics. While back to school shopping is a necessity, I believe we should, as followers of Christ, ask serious questions about the amount we spend, and whether or not our spending is being done to meet needs, or to meet wants. The reality is that our kids put a premium on social acceptance, fitting in, and having

the latest and greatest. As Christians, we are called to live counter-cultural lives, and how we spend our money should reflect that commitment. Let your kids know that things don't bring happiness. True joy comes only in following Jesus.

COLLEGE TRANSITION INITIATIVE

a resource of CPYU



www.CollegeTransitionInitiative.com

Stress and Depression Among College Students

There are many issues that students face that can lead to stress and depression (homesickness, relational disappointments, financial worries, body-image problems), but academic floundering is near the top of the list. Here's how parents and college ministers can help relieve some of the academic stress students have when facing an incoherent curriculum: remind students why they study. Point them to Jesus, the Lord of learning, the One who holds all things together (Colossians 1:15-20). Teach students the centrality of learning within the biblical story and cast a vision for how college learning is preparing them to be used by God in their communities. To be a disciple literally means to be a student, a life long learner. Do students in your church love God with their minds? Are students able to articulate how their faith relates to their major? Much of the stress around academics is because students don't have good reasons for learning.

It's also important for parents and youth workers to create safe places for their families to discuss mental health. Let young people in your family and church know that depression is a reality for many students. Be aware of the symptoms. And be honest about the culture of the Christian community you are a part. What do youth and college students think about depression as it relates to faith? Have a chat with them and ask them.

New Podcast

Youth Culture Matters

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



Listen at www.cpyu.org/podcast.

Be sure to check out Episode 136 titled "A Student's Guide to Navigating Culture."

FROM THE WORD

As a parent, you're no doubt aware of the many competing voices that exist in today's world, summoning our kids' allegiance. They cry out with a compelling ability to convince, encouraging kids to "Come and follow, come and follow, come and follow." All too often, our kids choose to follow voices other than the truth-telling life-giving voice of the Savior.

Matthew 5-7 contains the words of Jesus known as "The Sermon on the Mount." It is here that we find the most concise description of who Jesus wants his followers to be and what he wants them to do. As he brings his Sermon on the Mount to a conclusion, he utters words about hearing *and* doing. Jesus illustrates the difference between obedient and disobedient listeners through the parable of the two builders.

"THEREFORE EVERYONE WHO HEARS THESE WORDS OFF MINE AND PUTS THEM INTO PRACTICE IS LIKE A WISE MAN WHO BUILT HIS HOUSE ON THE ROCK."
MATTHEW 7:24

Those who choose not to heed Jesus' words by hearing *and* doing are likened to fools who are so ready to get on with life that they fail to dig deep and build a strong foundation. Those who heed Jesus' words to hear *and* do are wise, building their lives on a strong and secure foundation.

We know what comes next. Even though the houses look the same from the ground up, the shaky and weak foundation of one and the strong foundation of the other are quickly exposed when the inevitable storms of life hit. And, whether one stands or falls depends on the foundation that's been built.

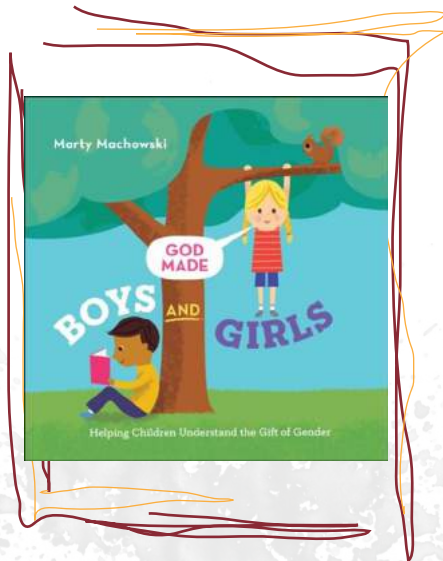
What kind of foundation sits at the base of your life? Your kids are watching. God is using the foundation they see in your life as the basis for the blueprint they will use, both now and into the future. Parents, God has called you to be a builder. Our greatest attention must be paid to the foundation!

HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

God Made Boys and Girls: Helping Children Understand the Gift of Gender helps children understand that their gender is a gift from the God who made them and loves them. The story begins as the girls and boys at Grace Christian School are discussing if boys will always be boys and girls will always be girls. Their teacher explains that God gives each of us the gift of being male or female before we are born, and that you continue to be a boy or a girl whether you like to climb trees or play house, play tag or color pictures, cause a ruckus or sit quietly.

In a world where there is so much confusion about gender and identity, pastor and best-selling author Marty Machowski shares the simple, clear truth that all of us are made in God's image as either male or female—and what God made is very good!

Included in the back of the book is a special section just for parents and caregivers that gives biblical guidance and help as they have this important conversation with their children. It's never too soon to start having discussions about gender and identity with our younger children!



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