



# PARENTS, WATCH YOUR BUBBLES

When scuba divers are down deep, it is easy for them to become confused and disoriented. Since water diffuses light, divers often find themselves surrounded by illumination and nothing else, making it difficult to discern which way is up. The sense of weightlessness along with the absence of gravity contributes to this confusion. The only way to distinguish up from down is to watch the direction in which their air bubbles travel. Divers who lose their sense of direction risk drowning if they trust their inner senses more than their bubbles. They are taught early on that no matter how they feel, no matter what they think, their bubbles are *always* right.

Of course, the cultural narrative about how to live and parent in today's world is one that denies that any authority outside one's self could ever be trustworthy and right. Rather, we are told to "trust your heart." Each one of us – young and old alike - needs to learn that no matter how we feel, no matter what we think, no matter what advice any expert gives, the Bible describes things accurately and clearly. Like the scuba diver's bubbles, the Bible is *always* trustworthy and right. Everything we see, think, and feel must be evaluated, considered, and judged in light of God's Word.

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YOUTH  
CULTURE

HOT  
QUOTE

Dr. Donald Hilton, a neurosurgeon and member of the Defend Young Minds Advisory Council.

*"Essentially [pornography use] scripts the reward system. Instead of sex being an essential drive for us to survive as a species and a garnish that can enhance our lives if used and bounded properly, it becomes a master where it dominates our lives and becomes the only thing that people think about. Then it contextualizes sex in porn-scripted ways—not the same sexuality as a married couple who grows together and sexuality enhances their intimacy and their connection. Pornography is essentially sex with strangers or people that they may have just met or know superficially—it's hookup sex, basically."*

From an interview Dr. Hilton gave with Kristen A. Jenson of DefendYoungMinds.com, discussing how porn corrupts the brain's reward system, April 15, 2022.



**“THE BUBBLES OF GOD’S TRUTH ALWAYS RISE TO THE TOP, GIVING US A CLEAR SENSE OF WHO AND WHERE WE ARE, AND WHO AND WHERE WE NEED TO BE.”**



Parents, what does this mean for you? From the moment they are born, our children need parents who tune themselves in to the most reliable source of parenting information and instruction. First and foremost, God has revealed Himself and the life-giving Gospel in His written word, the Bible. In the Bible, we not only are invited to place our faith in Jesus Christ as salvation comes to us through the free gift of God’s grace, but God has also given us the Bible to guide us as faithful followers of Jesus through life in our broken, confusing, and disorienting world.

Your approach to parenting must be built on the foundation of God’s Word. We must be informed and guided by God’s Word. Study the Bible with diligence on a regular basis. Discover how it speaks to the values, attitudes, trends, and messages of contemporary youth culture. As we prayerfully read and study God’s Word we uncover the character, attitudes, and priorities that God calls His followers to embrace in our families and all other aspects of our lives. Take time to read Psalm 119, paying special attention to the

role the Bible is to play in our lives. The Psalmist writes, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).

On a personal note, I have found that my investment of time in knowing God’s Word has been the very thing that has guided me through the deep waters of parenting. I have not been a perfect parent and I have not raised perfect kids. We have experienced the blessing of suffering due to circumstances and poor choices. While these times have been painful, they have also been times of great blessing as we have seen God be true to his Word as he parents us while we parent our children. Through it all, the bubbles of God’s truth always rise to the top, giving us a clear sense of who and where we are, and who and where we need to be. The question is, “Will I trust the bubbles?”

**WALT MUELLER**  
CPYU President



## FROM THE NEWS

### MARVEL’S GAY SPIDERMAN

**Here at CPYU, we are continually reminding you that youth culture is both a map and a mirror.**

As a mirror, cultural artifacts reveal the current beliefs that are shaping the behaviors of our children and teens. When you watch and listen to the music, movies, and everything else, you’ll gain a clearer sense of our culture’s ideological bent. As a map, what our kids interact with in today’s youth culture shapes their beliefs and behaviors about how to live in the world. This is why it’s important for you to know that this fall, Marvel will be introducing it’s first gay Spiderman as the latest variant in the Spiderman universe. Parents, as those called to nurture our children and teens into a lifetime of living out God’s will and way for his grand and glorious gift of sex and gender, we need to talk with our kids about how the cultural message on sex and gender does or does not mesh with what we are told in Scripture. These are conversations we must be having, as God will use them to shape our kids for life.

## TRENDS:

## New Nicotine Products

Just when we think we are making headway in the battle to keep kids from smoking, vaping, and getting addicted to nicotine, a bevy of new nicotine products are becoming popular among our kids. A recent survey of 3,000 teenagers in southern California has found that more and more teenagers are choosing to use lozenges, chewing gum, and flavored gummies that deliver nicotine to their systems. More than 3% of the students surveyed report that they have tried these oral products, and almost 2% said they had done so during the prior month. Teens are led to think these products are safer than smoking, since they are advertised and labeled as tobacco free. The draw might be related to the fact that these products are colorfully packaged and come in sugary fruit flavors. Parents, we need to warn our kids about the addictive nature of these new products, and teach them to make wise and Godly decisions regarding stewarding the health and well-being of their bodies.



## LATEST RESEARCH:

## What Will Your Kids Do When They Grow Up?

Parents, what will your children choose as a career? You've probably found yourself wondering about that with each of your children from the moment they were born. A new survey found that 75% of today's parents say they already know what their child will be

when they grow up. At the top of the list are careers in the science, technology, and engineering fields. After that comes careers in healthcare, and jobs in the food industry. It seems that these choices have been made largely due to trends in the job market, along with a desire for children to have a high-paying career. While it would be easy for Christian parents to pursue these same goals for our kids, there is a better way. Our goal should be to first and foremost encourage our kids to discover and develop their unique God-given gifts and abilities. Monetary

success should not be a prime motivator. And then, we must teach them that whatever they do, they should do it to the glory of God.

## QUICKSTATS

Between 60 and 80% of high school students report having gambled for money during the past year. It's estimated that 5% of 11-17 year-olds meet at least one criteria for problem gambling.

*(National Council on Problem Gambling)*

Nearly two thirds of parents say their child is insecure about some aspect of their appearance and 1 in 5 say their teens avoid scenarios like being in photos because they're too self-conscious. Nearly a third of parents say they notice their child making negative comments about their appearance.

*(C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health at University of Michigan Health)*

TOP

10



## MOST POPULAR BRANDS WITH GEN Z

1. YouTube
2. Google
3. Netflix
4. Amazon
5. M&M's
6. Walmart
7. Target
8. Doritos
9. KitKat
10. Oreo

*Data Set gathered May 1 - August 21, 2022*

*Source: Morning Consult*



## HELPING KIDS HANDLE MONEY

by WALT MUELLER

Parents, how much time and money did you give away last year? And what are you teaching your kids about tithing? In the Old Testament, we learn that we are to give 10% of our property, produce, and income to the Lord and his work. All throughout church history and up until today, tithing is rightly emphasized as a way to faithfully steward that which God has entrusted to us as we not only fund God's work, but are reminded that all we have is ultimately not our own.

There are no reliable statistics on how much our teenagers are giving away. What we do know is that as part of our

responsibility to nurture the faith of our kids, we need to teach them to handle their resources responsibly.

A good rule for us to follow and to teach our kids is the rule my dad instilled in our family. The first tenth of everything you make is to be given to the Lord's work. If you can, give more. The second tenth goes into savings, and with the rest, you live. Teach your kids principles of biblical stewardship.

# FROM THE WORD

This month we celebrate Thanksgiving, a time to pause and thank God for His abundant supply of good gifts. Did you know that your child is a gift from God? For that reason we can't buy into the widespread cultural cynicism

regarding children and teenagers as difficulties or burdens. That's unjustified and deeply wrong.

The psalmist writes, "Don't you see that children are God's best gift? The fruit of the womb his generous legacy? Like a warrior's fistful of arrows are the children of a vigorous youth. Oh, how blessed are you parents, with your quivers full of children." (Psalm 127:3-5, *The Message*). Children are not liabilities; they're rewards from God, given to us as a sign of God's favor. God values them highly and so must we.

Because it's so easy for us as adults to fall prey to the selfish pressures and expectations of life in today's world, we can just as easily see our children and teens as inconveniences and nuisances that suck the life out of us, keeping us from doing the things we want to do and from realizing what we think is our full potential. How selfish are we?!? When you face difficult times with your kids – and you will – always remember that the children God gave you as gifts *remain* gifts. . . even during the teenage years. This month, why not take the time every day to thank God for the gift of your children and teens?!?

"Don't you see that children are God's best gift? The fruit of the womb his generous legacy? Like a warrior's fistful of arrows are the children of a vigorous youth. Oh, how blessed are you parents, with your quivers full of children."

Psalm 127:3-5  
(*The Message*)



## 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

**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT EPISODE 39 -  
TRAINING STUDENTS FOR  
EVANGELISM**

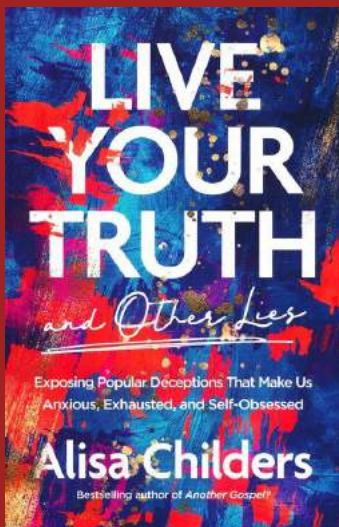


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You have a choice to make.  
Will you choose to stand on the  
unchanging truth of the Scriptures,  
or will you choose whatever  
trendy catchphrase people are  
currently obsessed with?

#LiveYourTruthAndOtherLies

HELPFUL  
RESOURCES



BOOK

We've all seen the memes that populate the internet: live your truth, follow your heart, you only have one life to live. They sound nice and positive. But what if these slogans are actually lies that unhinge us from reality and leave us anxious and exhausted? *Another Gospel?* author Alisa Childers invites you to examine modern lies that are disguised as truths in today's culture. Everyday messages of peace, fulfillment, and empowerment swirl around social media. On the surface, they seem like sentiments of freedom and hope, but in reality they are deeply deceptive.

In *Live Your Truth and Other Lies*, Alisa will help you to

- uncover the common lies repeated within progressive circles
- hold on to the soul-restoring truths that God's Word offers
- be empowered to live in the way your Creator designed you

Being the captain of your own destiny and striving to make your dreams a reality are huge burdens that you were never meant to bear. Find real freedom by choosing to LIVE GOD'S TRUTH.