

Incarnational Parenting

John 1:1-18 “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

Hebrews 4:14-16 “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin.”

**Your kids DO NOT CARE how much you know
until they know how much you care!**

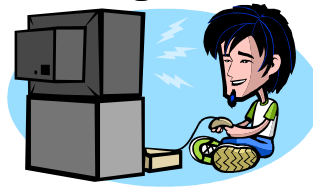
Your kids will not respect your authority if they do not believe you can handle the details and dynamics of their world.

If you immediately shut down their music, movies, online experience, friend choices, etc, without first taking time to understand with them, they will not believe you can handle the details and dynamics of their world.

- *Why does it matter that God put on flesh and lived as a man among us?*
- *What are three of the top values in the lives of your kids?*
- *What are three of the top struggles in the lives of your kids?*
- *What do they enjoy most? What do they fear most?*
- *What do they want most? What do they need most?*
- *How well are you practicing incarnational parenting?*

Tune In Before You **Turn It Off**

- *Connecting with your teens through their media choices*



- Parenting – Judo Style (*Thanks to Hal Runkel of [ScreamFree Living](#) for this concept.*)
 - Don't fight against your kids, risking alienation and damaged relationship. Instead, connect with them where they are, applying guidance through that connection to lead them to the healthiest place you can.
- That Loud Noise Coming from the iPhone May Be a Cry for Help!
 - Be very careful about simply dismissing vile music, movies, etc. If they really relate to it, you are essentially dismissing them in the process. Instead, find out how they connect with it, and how it touches them. If you can display calm and loving acceptance in the midst of unpleasant music, obnoxious games, bizarre blogs, weird YouTube videos, or disturbing movies, you'll be amazed how much your kids will tell you.
- Don't Expect Them to Turn It Off Until They Understand Why
 - Your job is not to protect them from the evils of worldly media (which are legion!). You can make them turn it off while you are around, but they will just turn it back on and get better at keeping it from you and their parents. Your job is to guide their walk with Christ in such a way that they are empowered by His Spirit to stand against evil without your protection. Equip them through sharing the Word, modeling the Jesus way of life, and nurturing their engagement in regular spiritual disciplines.
- Regularly Invite Your Teens to Share Their Favorite Media with You
 - Offer times with your kids where they select the music, movies, games, etc, with a promise from you that they won't be criticized or punished for their choices. The only requirement is they must tell you: 1. why they like it, 2. what it means to them, and 3. what they believe are the moral or life implications. After they have shared with you, engage them in their thoughts, particularly regarding number 3, offering your own perspectives and Biblical guidance. Work together to find some passage of scripture that relates to their media choice.

Protecting Your Kids Against **ONLINE EVIL**

- Empowering your kids to live with wisdom, courage, purity, and integrity offers them far greater protection than simply shielding them from exposure.
- **You cannot empower your kids to live with wisdom, courage, purity, and integrity unless you are practicing these character disciplines in your own life.**
- Your Spirit-led relationship with your child is the most important online protection program you can load. Proactively cultivate a relationship of open, honest dialogue.
- Do not wait until online evil reaches your child to address this issue. YOU take the first steps. If your yard was separated from I-10 by only a small chain-link fence, how long would you wait to begin teaching your kids about traffic safety? I-10 is a tiny dirt alley compared to the “Internet Superhighway!”
- Use these words of Jesus to direct your leadership of your kids in online behavior, **“Do not be overcome by evil. But overcome evil with good.”** Put more emphasis on equipping and encouraging them to do the right things than on avoiding the wrong things, even though the latter is certainly critical.
- Don’t try to lead this undertaking all alone! Partner with God, your spouse, your church, and your school community to stand together in leading your kids on the path of righteousness.
- Check out my “Parenting 101” page entry *“June 25, 2007 - Your Kids and MySpace/Facebook”*
- **Be sure to utilize the terrific guidance and resources on the parents page at www.pureintimacy.org!**
- If this feels like hard work – it’s because it is. But it is essential parenting for our kids in their world of technoscience today. Whether they realize it, want it, or appreciate it, our kids desperately need us to lead them and empower them to navigate through the vast waters of the electronic media ocean. Social electronic media can be used so powerfully for both the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of Darkness. Let’s prepare our young people to be online warriors for Christ!

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Operation Adolescence: Leading Your Teens Well

Brief explanation of the expansion of adolescence to encompass basically ages 10-25+

- 1. YOUR TEENS REALLY DO WANT TO LIVE WELL.**
- 2. God chose YOU to be the parent of this child / these children. This means YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO LEAD THEM WELL.**

Five Key Lessons from the Father of the Prodigal
Luke 15:11-32

1. He modeled healthy living to his son over the years.
2. He respected his son's need to make his own choices.
3. He never gave up hope, even when his son willfully set off down the wrong path.
4. He did not run after his son. He ran to meet him.
5. He didn't beat up his son for being foolish. He allowed him to pay the price for his foolishness, and eagerly showed him how to recover his life when he was broken and humbled by his consequences.

Are you leading your kids by faith? Or by fear?

Are you a proactive parent? Or a reactive parent?

As a parent, are you timid? Overbearing? Confident?

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Resources

“Disconnected: Parenting Teens in a MySpace World” by Chap & Dee Clark (Baker, 2007)

“Hurt: Inside the World of Today’s Teenagers” by Chap Clark (Baker, 2004)

“Loving a Prodigal” by H. Norman Wright (Faith Parenting, 2002)

“Movie Nights: 25 Movies to Spark Spiritual Discussions with Your Teen” edited by Bob Smithouser (Tyndale House, 2002)

“Parenting by the Book” by John Rosemond (Howard, 2007)

“Preparing Your Daughter for Every Woman’s Battle” by Shannon Ethridge (Random House, new release 03/10)

“Preparing Your Son for Every Man’s Battle” by Stephen Arterburn, Fred Stoeker, & Mike Yorkey (Random House, new release 03/10)

“Re-Create: Building a Culture in Your Home Stronger than the Culture Deceiving Your Kids” by Ron Luce (Regal Books, 2008)

“ScreamFree Parenting: The Revolutionary Approach to Raising Your Kids by Keeping Your Cool” by Hal Edward Runkel (Broadway, 2007)

“The Spirit of the Disciplines” by Dallas Willard (HarperCollins 1988)

“Why Do They Act That Way?: A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain for You and Your Teen” by David Walsh & Nat Bennett (Simon & Schuster, 2005)

www.battlecry.com (an online community and resource for Christian teens, churches, youth groups, and leaders)

www.christiananswers.net/spotlight/ (Christian Spotlight on Entertainment)

www.cpyu.org (Center for Parent/Youth Understanding)

www.mediafamily.com (MediaWise)

www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php (extensive listing of shorthand used in texting and instant messaging)

www.pureintimacy.org/parents/ (ministry of Focus on the Family)

www.teenmania.com (a ministry devoted to provoking a young generation to passionately pursue Jesus Christ and to take His life-giving message to the ends of the earth)

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