

Youth Ministry Parent Newsletter

April 2021

Christians...Always Judging



I've heard it said a few times and in a few different ways just over the course of this last week. Someone preceded an observation about someone else with the words "Now I'm not judging. . ." Another person said, "I'm not here to judge. . .", and then followed up with nothing other than a judgement call about someone else's behavior. And still another said, "I know we're not supposed to judge. . . but. . .". Judgement has become a dirty word in today's culture. Because Christians are oftentimes labeled as "judgmental", there's been a trend in the church, our Christian homes, and our youth ministries to back-pedal and watch our words perhaps too carefully, all in an effort to avoid being labeled as "judgmental."

Let's be honest. Nobody wants to be called that, do we?

One of the places where it's most prevalent, painful, and even frustrating is in our homes. A caring and involved Christian parent may set up boundaries regarding friendships for their kids. The offended teen might respond with a biting retort. . . ironically, in fact a judgement in and of itself. . . labeling mom and dad as being judgmental. More often than not, the teenager is simply being faithful to the worldview that's saturated today's youth culture. It's a worldview where everyone may decide for themselves regarding right, wrong, truth, and error. As a result, who am I or who are you to challenge anyone else's beliefs or behaviors? Raising kids in this kind of moral free-for-all is incredibly frustrating.

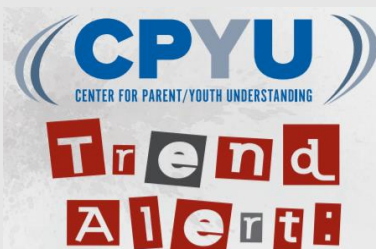
A few years ago, my buddy Duffy Robbins said something in one of the classes we co-teach that was so helpful to everyone in the room. . . myself included. Duffy differentiated between judgement being understood and practiced as condemnation, and judgement being understood and practiced as biblical discernment. There is a huge difference, and we can't mix up one with the other or we risk throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Condemnation of individuals for sin is God's business and God's business alone. Of course, what we're talking about here is taking the call on one's eternal destination out of God's hands, and into our own. We are in fact to engage directly and lovingly with the brother or sister caught in sin. But judging in a condemning way is typically done out of hatred and with no concern for the welfare of the other. But judgement practiced as biblical discernment is done out of love as a way to steer someone we love from that which will undermine their flourishing, into that which conforms to God's will and way. And it can't be emphasized enough that we must love people enough to tell them the truth.

In First Thessalonians 5: 21-22 we are told that discernment is necessary if we are going to be able to tell the difference between truth and error, and right and wrong. Specifically, Paul is talking about prophecy and the dangers of false teaching, but the principle applies to all of life. In Ephesians 4:14 we learn just how necessary a commitment to being sharp at discernment really is, as without it, we risk being "tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes." I think it's fair to add our susceptibility to what Paul calls "the course of this world" and we know as "the Spirit of the times" to this list of dangers that biblical discernment is meant to derail.

All of us are susceptible to believing lies that lead to behaviors that not only undo us, but are very pleasing to the one who is out to wreck God's good world. I have folks in my life who I know are committed to honing their skills of biblical discernment. I admire and trust them. And if I step out of God's will and way I also trust them to step in and "judge" me. . . lovingly and in a way that sets me back onto the narrow path that leads to life.

By Walt Mueller, Link: <https://cpyu.org/2021/03/24/christians-always-judging/>

Teachable Moment: Pointing Kids To God's Providence



THIS TEACHABLE
MOMENT - POINTING
KIDS TO GOD'S
PROVIDENCE

By Walt Mueller

This article helps give you and your child perspective on how we can look at this past year and see God's providence through it all. It has questions to ask your child and how you can help them see God at work. "What we teach them now will help them manage their fears and anxieties not only in these COVID-19 days, but for the rest of their lives."

Link: <https://mk0cpyun84s242df6.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CPYU-Trend-Alert-Teachable-Moment-Gods-Providence.pdf>

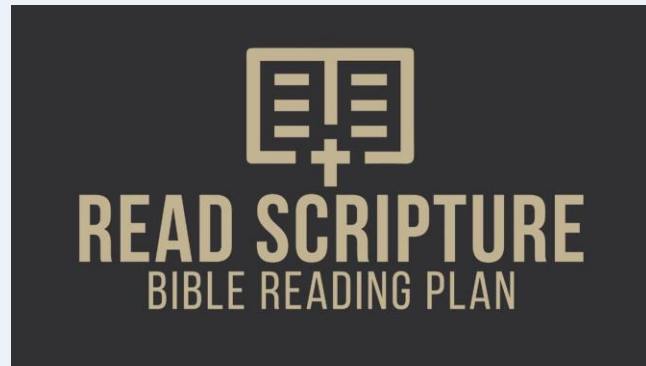
Youth Group -Sunday Nights

Date: Sunday's 5:00-6:45pm

Location: Mountain Christian Fellowship

What Is It?: Youth Group is a time for students from 7th through 12th grade to play games, read the bible, and have discussion groups about Jesus together. The night starts off by playing either an outdoor game or an indoor game together. Then we start our teaching time as a large group and then split off into smaller discussion groups. Students are separated by grade and gender.

The Crossing



2021 Bible Reading Plan

As the new year is upon us, we want to center our hearts, our lives, and our church on God's Word. Beginning Sunday, January 3rd we are encouraging our youth group to read through the Bible for 2021.

We will be using the Read Scripture Bible Reading Plan, which will get us through the entire Bible just before the end of the year. Each day you will read a few chapters as well as one Psalm to pray through. The plan is semi-chronological in order and has optional videos to provide background information to each book and major themes in the Bible.

We encourage you to pick up the reading plan late if you didn't start in January. Below are buttons that will take you to the app, the YouTube videos, and a PDF of the reading plan.

APP IN THE APPLE STORE

APP IN THE GOOGLE PLAY STORE

ONE YEAR BIBLE READING PLAN PDF

BIBLE READING PLAN VIDEO PLAYLIST

Recommended Reading – *Parenting Teens With Love & Logic* by Foster Cline & Jim Fay

Parenting Teens for the Real World

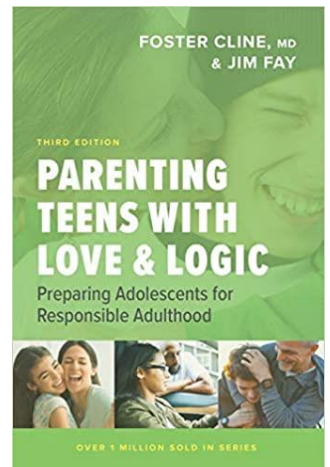
When kids hit the teen years, parenting takes on a whole new dimension. As they struggle toward independence and autonomy, kids face life-and-death decisions long before they're on their own.

So what do you do? Hover over them so they won't get hurt? Drill them so they'll do the right thing? Jim Fay and Dr. Foster Cline believe that the only thing that will effectively prepare teens for the real world is the consistent practice of responsibility. With Love and Logic parenting, you'll learn to give your teens opportunities to make their own decisions, while also allowing them to live with the natural consequences of their mistakes and showing empathy for the pain, disappointment, and frustration they'll experience.

The teen years are challenging, but you also have an incredible opportunity: to guide your children toward and into productive, happy, and responsible adulthood.

Amazon link: https://www.amazon.com/Parenting-Teens-Love-Logic-Adolescents/dp/1641581557/ref=sr_1_5?dchild=1&keywords=parenting+with+love+and+logic+teens&qid=1617042331&sr=8-5

[Adolescents/dp/1641581557/ref=sr_1_5?dchild=1&keywords=parenting+with+love+and+logic+teens&qid=1617042331&sr=8-5](https://www.amazon.com/Parenting-Teens-Love-Logic-Adolescents/dp/1641581557/ref=sr_1_5?dchild=1&keywords=parenting+with+love+and+logic+teens&qid=1617042331&sr=8-5)



April 2021 – Mt. Shasta Youth Ministry

Family Table Talk

Where Can we Find the Goodness of God?

Read: Psalm 73

Think: It has become clear that during this time of quarantine, a lot of our students and children are thinking about big questions with regards to evil, suffering, and justice. Just recently, I had a student wrestling with a sense of doubt in the goodness of God as he thought about all of the people who are suffering under the weight of the pandemic quarantine and social distancing orders. He told me that it didn't seem fair that people who are going to be hit the hardest are people who can't really afford it. His concerns rang familiar to me, and then I remembered that Asaph, the Psalmist, had some of the same concerns here in Psalm 73. Asaph is wrestling with why there are some who spurn God who seem to live really successful lives, and for the first 16 verses, you can see the turmoil in Asaph as he wrestles with this question of evil and suffering. But in verse 17, Asaph's heart is changed and transformed. He enters into the sanctuary and presence of God, and there he is reassured of God's goodness and his justice. Asaph's heart is transformed as he is convicted of his jealousy towards those who have much, and he recognizes that he has been too busy chasing after the gifts of God rather than the Lord himself, the giver of such gifts. Asaph's encounter with the Lord in his sanctuary leaves him with a greater desire to know the Lord himself, and Asaph finds in the Lord a deep well of joy and pleasure. He is also reassured of God making all things right in the end, and even though he doesn't get a step by step breakdown or justification for the "why" concerning evil and suffering, he does receive more of God himself, and that's where Asaph finds the ultimate good. He says that it's "good to be near God", and this is one of the greatest opportunities we have as we quarantine together. We might not be able to discuss and find the answer for all of the suffering being endured right now, but we can press into being near to God because Jesus Christ has redeemed us so that we can confidently "draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

Apply:

- Who are the people that you're concerned and worried for during this pandemic?
- How can we pray for them?
- How is Asaph's struggle with the Lord resolved? How can we model his approach with the Lord during this time?
- Where have you seen glimpses of the goodness of God during this season of life?

Pray: Lord, give us eyes during this pandemic to see that our pursuits have often been more about obtaining your gifts rather than treasuring the gift-giver. Help us to find more joy in who you are during this time, as we seek to know you more during this family devotional.

Family Table Talk #4 by Kevin Yi, Link: <https://mk0cpyun84s242df6.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/FTT-Conversation-4.pdf>

21 Apps Parents Need to Know About

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THESE APPS CAN EASILY BE USED AS GROOMING TOOLS BY ONLINE PREDATORS LOOKING TO MEET UP & SEXUALLY ABUSE CHILDREN. (UPDATED 2021)



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| WHISPER WHISPER is an anonymous social media app that promotes sharing personal secrets with strangers, (one people) it reveals a users location so people can meet up | CALCULATOR % CALCULATOR % is only one of SEVERAL social media apps disguised as a calculator, the app is actually a secret photo vault to hide photos, videos, files and browser history. | OMEGLE OMEGLE is a video chat website where users are matched randomly with strangers. |
| ASK.FM ASK.FM is an app where users can anonymously ask questions and receive answers. The app has been featured in a number of other bullying cases. | YELLOW YELLOW Similar to Tinder, the app is designed to allow teens to flirt with each other. | HOT ON HOT HOT ON HOT Strangers rate a user's attractiveness with the aim of real world meet ups in your local area. |
| BURN BOOK BURN BOOK Anonymous rumors can be spread about people through audio messages, texts and photos. | WISHBONE WISHBONE This app allows users to compare kids and rate them on a scale. | KIK MESSAGING KIK KIK MESSAGING Kik is a messaging app that allows content normally filtered on a home computer. |
| INSTAGRAM INSTAGRAM Ads are creating like accounts to hide content from their parents, according to police. Messages are also deleted once a user leaves a conversation. | MEET ME MEET ME is a dating social media app that allows users to connect with people based on geographic proximity. The app encourages people to meet in person. | GRINDR GRINDR is a dating app geared towards gay, bisexual and transgender people. The app allows people to chat, share and meet up in person based on a GPS location. |
| SKOUT SKOUT is a location based dating app and website. Whilst people under 17 are unable to share private photos, Children can easily create fake accounts. | SNAPCHAT SNAPCHAT is one of the most popular apps in recent years. Whilst the app promises that photos, videos and stories disappear, others can take screenshots of private photos. | TIK TOK TIK TOK is one of the most popular apps in recent years used for sharing short videos with very limited privacy controls users are vulnerable to explicit material. |
| YIK YAK YIK YAK is a popular app that looks like a harmless messaging app however it allows private anonymous messaging and is location enabled. | Zoomerang Zoomerang is a popular app that looks like a harmless messaging app however it allows private anonymous messaging and is location enabled. | TELOMYN TELOMYN anonymous messenger app. It calls itself "the most honest place on the internet." Age controls are inconsistent and sexual exploit material can be found. |
| FACEBOOK MESSENGER FACEBOOK MESSENGER is one of the most popular message apps in the world. It has already heavily been used by predators and the reach and explosion will make it even more so. | BADDO BADDO is a location based dating app and website. Whilst people under 17 are unable to share private photos, Children can easily create fake accounts. | BUMBLE BUMBLE is a location based dating app and website. Whilst people under 17 are unable to share private photos, Children can easily create fake accounts. |

#CHILDABUSEHELP
WWW.CHILDABUSEHELP.ORG.UK

NSPCC HELPLINE
0800 800 5000

NNECA
WWW.NNECA.ORG.UK



Podcast



Speaking The Truth in Love to Teens

Your words can strengthen your long-term relationship with your teen or push them away. John and Danny offer advice on correcting teens in love.

Link:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/episodes/focus-on-parenting-podcast/speaking-the-truth-in-love-to-teens/>