

"He has set eternity in the hearts of men."

- Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV)

SILENCE?

BY WALT MUELLER

TOP 10 ARTISTS ON MYSPACE MUSIC

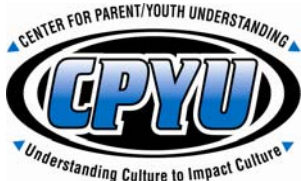
3/24/2010

1. Justin Bieber
2. Lil Wayne
3. Rihanna
4. Young Money
5. Ke\$ha
6. Lady Gaga
7. Usher
8. Jason DeRulo
9. Trey Songz
10. Drake

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"I would love to go to college one day. I would still like to be an actress afterwards, but my education has always been very important."

- 16-year-old actress Dakota Fanning, *Parade.com*, March 17, 2010



A few weeks ago I was speaking at a church that sits directly across the street from the local high school. I had challenged those in attendance to reach out to the large population of broken and confused kids of the school. Afterwards, a woman shared a concern and asked a question. She was part of a group of Christians who were working to get the school to ban the upcoming "Day of Silence." "What can we do to stop it?" she asked.

Founded in 1996 at the University of Virginia, the "Day of Silence" is billed by organizers as the largest student-led action towards creating safer schools for all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Scheduled to be held on Friday, April 16, hundreds of thousands of students in middle schools, high schools, and colleges across America will take a vow of silence in an effort to encourage their schools and peers to address the problem of anti-lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender behavior. The event is now officially sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN).

After pondering the woman's question I offered a response that I think surprised her. My response was rooted in a couple of realities. First, but not foremost, there's my own experience of harassing people during my high school years, something rooted in my own adolescent insecurities. You know - putting others down to feel better about myself. Second, and foremost, is my understanding of who God is, who He's made people to be, and who He's called His followers to be. . . especially to those who, like you and me, are sinners desperately in need of God's saving grace.

And so I told her this. . . First, I believe that God has established sexuality as a good and wonderful gift that is to be experienced and celebrated with great freedom within the bounds of His order and design. Because our world is fallen and broken, there will be sinful distortions of that plan that we are to avoid including adultery, fornication,

pornography, sexual abuse, lust, and homosexuality. . . among other things. We are to teach these truths to our children without hesitation.

Second, banning the "Day of Silence" only deals with symptoms of deeper issues. Shouldn't we be concerned about the hearts from which the issues come? And while we're talking about hearts from which the issues come, what about the hearts from which hate and ignorance flow. . . especially when those hearts belong to those who claim to follow Christ?

Third, we can't force anyone to follow Jesus. Only God's Spirit is able to draw people to Himself. While we can't strong-arm people into the Kingdom of God, we can and must choose to follow Jesus ourselves. Following Jesus means facing our Pharisaical tendencies/sins head-on, while loving sinners as Jesus has loved them (and us! . . . because we're in that group too). Loving on sinners is our calling, just as our calling is to hate and avoid sin.

Finally, I asked her this question: "Have you ever thought about acting on your rightful concern by sitting down and spending some time getting to know and listening to the kids who are planning the 'Day of Silence' at your school?" She paused, as I guess most of us would, and said "no." I then challenged her to find out the names of the kids, invite them out to Starbucks, and then sit with no agenda other than to listen and love.

What would happen if we would stop working so hard to "protect" our kids by legislating morality, and start "providing spiritually" for our kids by modeling how to take the Gospel to those who are hungry for Heaven? I'm learning that while it's easier to wish and work away differences I might not like, Jesus is calling me to go as His ambassador to people He's called me to love. Then, He'll take care of the rest.

CPYU TREND ALERT: COED DORMS

A new study from the *Journal of American College Health* finds that university students who live in coed housing are 2½ times more likely to binge drink every week. Forty-two percent of students in coed housing report binge drinking weekly, as compared to eighteen percent in gender-specific dorms. In addition, they're also more likely to have more sexual partners. Also,

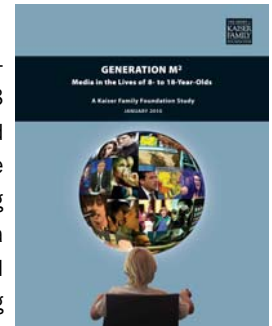
pornography use is higher among students who live in coed dorms. With some ninety percent of U.S. dorms being coed, this should serve as a catalyst for us to intentionally prepare our kids to serve God as they prepare to live in the midst of these campus realities.

LATEST RESEARCH: MEDIA USE

Back in 2004, the Kaiser Family Foundation released a very thorough and helpful report on how our children and teenagers are using media in a fast-changing media world. The report was titled "Generation M – Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds." Now, several years later, they've released an updated version entitled "Generation M²" which reports on media use trends in that same age span. The results are worthy of our attention. The study reports that over the past 5 years since the last research was released, there has been a huge increase in media use among young people. The most significant fact is this: 5 years ago, the average 8-18 year-old spent 6 hours and 21 minutes a day with media. That has increased to

where they are now spending 7 hours and 38 minutes a day with media.

Their time with music and audio has increased by 47 minutes a day. Time spent watching TV has increased by 38 minutes a day. Time spent with computers has increased by 27 minutes a day. While there's been no change in the amount of time spent with movies, they are now spending 24 more minutes a day with video games. The only media use that has declined is their engagement with books and magazines. If we want to monitor what our kids are seeing and hearing so that we can guide them into good and Godly media-consumption habits, we need to know where they are spending their time.



Want more
information about your
kids and their world?
Visit us on the web at
www.cpyu.org
and subscribe to our



free weekly e-Update!

FROM THE WORD

While it might not always seem to be the case, everyone who's ever walked the face of the earth has been made by God for a relationship with God. Consequently, the reality is that everyone has eternity written on their hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Because our rebellion and sin have severed our relationship with God, there remains a deep yearning inside each human being to have that relationship restored. Blaise Pascal described this universal hole in the soul as a God-shaped vacuum. Only God can fill it, even though we spend our lives in futility trying to fill it in other ways and with other things.

While at times it may not seem like it, your teen is no different than anyone else. His great need

– whether or not he knows what to call it – is to have this God-shaped emptiness filled by God. If you listen and look closely, you'll see and hear that your teen's music, films, books, magazines, and very life are full of cries for spiritual wholeness.

John Stott reminds us that even when adolescents are running away from God, they know they "have no other resting place, no other home." This fact should spur us on to constantly and consciously serve as signposts, pointing them to the cross that leads them to their true home.

IN THE NEWS: ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION DROP OUT

The spring sports season is now upon us and kids of all ages will be filling athletic fields across the country to participate in all kinds of organized sport. The playing field can be a great place for our kids to not only enjoy themselves, but to learn great lessons about life and what it means to live and play all of life to the glory of God. But the National Alliance for Youth Sports is telling us that a growing number of kids are walking away from America's playing fields for good, many with their heads held low. Seventy-three percent of our kids drop partici-

pation in organized sport by age thirteen. Experts say that some of the reasons kids drop out are pushy parents, emphasizing winning over fun, the stress of increasingly intense competition, and disliking the coach. Our kids are motivated to play when they have fun, they improve their skills, and when the play allows them time to be with their friends. God created play. He wants us to enjoy it by playing to His honor and glory. Is that what it is for your kids?

