

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."  
- 1 Timothy 4:16 (NIV)

## THE RESOLUTION OF TIME

BY WALT MUELLER

### TOP 10 ONLINE SEARCHES OF 2009 ON YAHOO!

1. Michael Jackson
2. The Twilight Saga
3. WWE
4. Megan Fox
5. Britney Spears
6. Naruto
7. American Idol
8. Kim Kardashian
9. NASCAR
10. RuneScape

### YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"I love instant access; I'm an instant gratification kind of person. That's why I don't shop online, because I can't wait for the three days for it to get to me."

- Miley Cyrus, *Seventeen*, December 2009/January 2010

I recently read about a busy woman who was struggling to balance the demands of her life outside the home while being a wife and mother. One night her nine-year-old son approached her as she typed diligently on her computer in the corner of the family room.

"Mommy," the little boy said, "if you had a dog, and you really loved this dog, and you worked real hard to earn the money to buy him the fanciest dog house and the best dog food, don't you think it would be better if once in a while you played with that dog?"

Parents, when you aren't spending time with your children, three things happen.

**First, someone else raises your kids for you.** It could be anyone from a baby-sitter to a day-care worker to a schoolteacher to the television or other media. One of the risks of living in today's pluralistic society is that these surrogate parents can instill false values in your children.

**Second, your kids will learn from your busy lifestyle.** They will look at how you live out your commitments to career, family, and church and learn that it is more important to achieve, work, and expand social circles than it is to be at home. And what they learn gets passed on to the next generation. If you find it difficult to be at home with your family, your children will find it even harder to spend time with your grandchildren. If you place a premium on job and career, they will grow up to do the same.

**Third, your children may suffer in ways you never imagined.** When we are not available to help them through the difficult years of adolescence, we open the

door for our children's involvement in a vast array of dangerous behaviors and problems. Children of absent-due-to-busyness parents are not only left to listen more closely to the life-shaping messages of media and their peers, but they tend to be more prone to emotional and substance abuse problems. The reason? Mom and Dad are absent, a reality that can hurt so deeply that kids may enlist unhealthy ways to deal with their pain.

When we choose to have children, we make another choice commonly forgotten in these busy days: We choose to become parents. Parenting takes time. Don't allow yourself to fall into the trap of believing that "quality time" is more important than "quantity time." Quality time always has a way of fitting a parent's schedule while disregarding the need of the child. We must learn to say no to other demands that are not as important as our children. When we don't spend time with our kids, they will begin to interpret our actions as rejection. It isn't long before rejection becomes resentment, and resentment turns into hostility, which in turn leads to rebellion.

There is an old Navajo saying: "A man can't get rich if he takes proper care of his family." If we were to add some more time-tested wisdom to that saying it would continue on: "but a man who spends time with his family can pass on the legacy of what it means to love God and his family more than his things."

It's a new year. While I'm not one for making New Year's resolutions, here's one that all parents would do well to make: *This year, I will consciously work to give more of my time to my kids.*

## CPYU TREND ALERT: PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

It used to be illicit drugs that went by names like marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and LSD that were peddled in the halls of high school. While those drugs can still be found and secured in today's world, it's the stuff found in the family medicine cabinet that's increasingly being distributed and sold on high school and college campuses across the country. Some of the most popular drugs being abused today are those prescribed for ADHD. These include drugs like Adder-

all, Ritalin, and Concerta. Reports from college campuses indicate that anywhere from 9 to 25 percent of students report using the drugs. Many get them from their friends. They say that the drugs help them to stay awake and study, or to focus more clearly while writing papers, reading, or taking exams. Even if your kids are too young to be at college, warn them now about the dangers of self-medicating with these highly available and potentially dangerous drugs.

## LATEST RESEARCH: TEEN PREGNANCY

There's new information on teens and pregnancy. During the fourteen years prior to 2005, the rate of American teens giving birth was on the decline. Now, the birthrate for girls ages fifteen to nineteen is on the rise, going up 1.4 percent between 2006 and 2007, and 3.4 percent the year before that. As expected, there are many debates raging over what these numbers truly indicate, along with the implications of why they are on the rise. There are a few facts that we know are true. First, our kids' attitudes to-

wards sex continue to change. As standards of right and wrong diminish and disappear, more and more kids will see premarital sex as normal and right. Second, more and more girls are looking to find the love they haven't experienced elsewhere, through a relationship with a baby. And third, we should rejoice that even in the midst of premarital pregnancy, some teenagers are opting for life over the alternative of abortion. Let's remember to pray for our teens as they seek to learn how to live out their sexuality.



## FROM THE WORD

Some of the greatest practical guidance available for us to tap into comes from the pen of the Apostle Paul as he writes to the younger Timothy. While Paul's words to Timothy apply to all areas of life, it's worthwhile to pause and think about how those words can be applied specifically to our calling as parents and our relationships with our teens.

One very valuable directive is found in his first letter to Timothy. Paul advises Timothy to "watch your life and doctrine closely" (4:16). As parents, we must do the same. Watching our lives entails paying close attention to our character and conduct by caring for our own soul. Watching our doctrine entails paying close attention to what we are teaching our children regarding God and His Word.

But Paul doesn't stop there. He tells Timothy about what happens "if you do" and "persevere" in these things. What results is salvation of both yourself and your hearers. Paul is *not* saying that we can save ourselves. Our salvation is always no fault of our own and always a free gift from God. What Paul is saying is that we are to work out the reality of our salvation by persevering in the truth. In regards to the salvation of our young hearers (our children), Paul is affirming the fact that God works primarily in and through us - parents - to preach the Gospel to our kids.

Parents, it's by design that your kids are watching you. Take care to watch yourself, so that when they have their eyes and ears on you, they will see and hear the life-giving Good News about Jesus Christ.

Want more  
information about your  
kids and their world?



Visit us on the web at  
[www.cpyu.org](http://www.cpyu.org)  
and subscribe to our  
free weekly e-Update!

## IN THE NEWS: DEPRESSION

Our children and teens are growing up in an increasingly difficult world. The pressures to perform and conform seem to grow by the minute. Not only are more kids experiencing depression, but depression is hitting kids for the first time at younger and younger ages. It's important that we as parents understand just how prevalent depression is among young people. When it comes to our girls, sixteen-year-olds face twice the risk of depression as boys. That ratio continues throughout the rest of their lives. By the time

they reach the age of nineteen, one in five girls will experience an episode of major depression. Countless more experience depression of a lesser degree. Sadly, one in ten adolescent girls report making an attempt at suicide. Regardless of whether you're raising a son or daughter, be sure you stay deeply connected during the teenage years. Parents, God has given you a role to play in your home, and that role includes diligent attention to what's going on in your child's life.

