

Media Madness: Parenting in a Tech Filled World

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I. Introduction

II. Egyptian Gold from Exodus 12

III. Is the battle over media really worth fighting?

IV. What principles should we use to judge whether media is healthy or unhealthy?

Evaluating Music:

A. Instruments are non-moral

B. Lyrics are the primary carrier of morality in a song.

Questions to ask:

- Would I listen to this song with Jesus in the room?
- Is there language in this song that would be inappropriate to use at the dinner table?
- Is there an attitude in this song of rebellion against authority?
- Does the song encourage or glamorize unhealthy or sinful behavior?
Sexual, violent, drugs, etc.

C. Songs can also be judged according to the artist who created it.

Evaluating Movies:

D. Movies ought to be judged on both content and worldview.

E. Explicit sexual content in movies/music is powerful and never redemptive.

V. How can parents use media to help their student grow?

A. Invite your student into the process of evaluating media.

1. Start by expressing to them your interest in making more team decisions about music and movies.

2. Express your desire to be more open minded about media that they like.

3. When making choices about media, invite your student into the process of discovery, discernment, and decision.

For example...your student has a CD that you are concerned about. Make sure you understand the song. Listen to it. Read the lyrics. Apply the principles that we talked about earlier. If you are still concerned that the messages are unhealthy, approach your student like this, "Mike/Suzy, as we have talked about before I am concerned about you listening to this particular CD. I'd like to work with you on this so that we can really understand each other. Would you like to be a part of these sorts of decisions or do you just want me to tell what to do without you being included?"

"I'd like for you to go to your room (now or later) and listen to this song and think about a few questions."

- ❑ Would this be the sort of song that you would listen to if Jesus were sitting in your room with you? The reason that this question is important is that He is sitting in your room with you.
- ❑ Is there an attitude in this song of rebellion or authority?
- ❑ Would Jesus want you to use your money to support this band's or artists influence in the world?
- ❑ Does the song encourage or glamorize unhealthy or sinful behavior? In other words, does it make bad look good?
- ❑ Is the language that is used in the song be the sort of language that would be healthy coming from you?
- ❑ What are the main points or messages of the song? Every song has messages!

Would this be the sort of movie that you would watch if Jesus were sitting in your room with you?

- ❑ Would this be the sort of movie that you would watch if Jesus was sitting in the room with you?
- ❑ Does the movie show evil to be evil and good to be good?
- ❑ Does the movie glamorize or encourage unhealthy or sinful behavior? Does it make sin look cool and fun?
- ❑ What are the main points, messages, or worldviews in the movie?

B. Possible responses from students to being invited into this decision process.

Response #1: Your student enters into the discussion, discerns that the media is unhealthy or inappropriate for them to experience, and decides not to listen to/watch it.

Response #2: Your student enters the discussion, discerns that the media is unhealthy or inappropriate for them to experience, but decides that they still want to have it regardless of how God might feel about it.

Response #3: I have thought about this, and I think Jesus would be fine with this music/movie. There is nothing unhealthy in it.

Response #4: I don't really want to talk about this. This is stupid. I don't care what God thinks. I don't care what you think. There are lots of versions to this one, but basically is an unwillingness to enter the process.

VI. Final Items

A. Set the example that you want your kids to follow.

B. Regarding internet usage

- ❑ Put internet ready computers in public places in the house.
- ❑ Regularly check all available histories to see where your students have been. Instructions on how to check computer histories are available by emailing. Be sure to check "temporary internet files" as well.
- ❑ Get a family subscription to www.covenanteyes.com and install it on all computers and laptops.

C. Resources for discovery and discernment

- ❑ www.screenit.com - get the straight scoop on any movie.
- ❑ www.cpyu.org - center for parent and youth understanding
- ❑ www.pluggedinmagazine.com - Christian media reviews, Focus on the Family