Children and Teens in Worship (and the Life of the Church)

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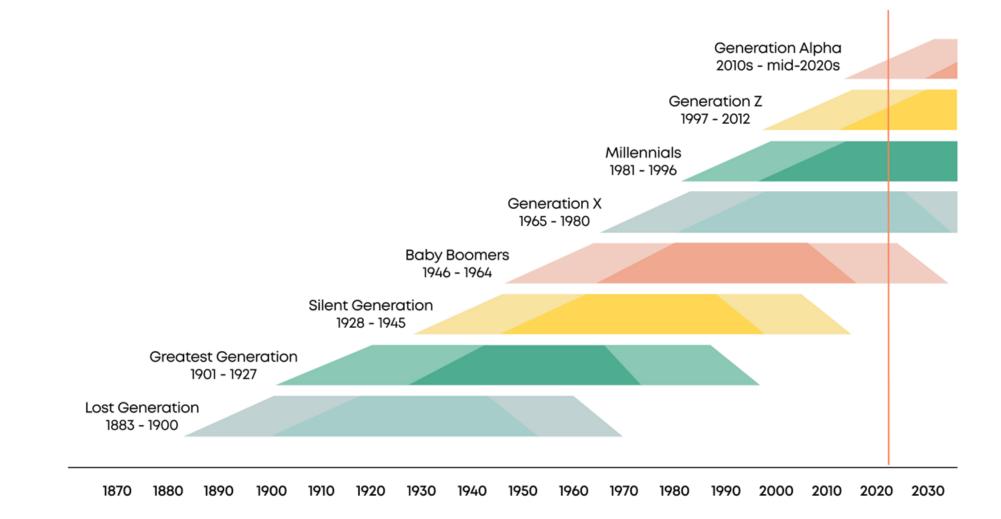
Rev. Dr. Phil Huebner WELS Worship Conference 2024

Short Bio

- Becky, Noah (17), Gwen (14)
- Christ the King, Palm Coast ('07-'16)
- WLHS Campus Pastor (2016-Present)
- '99 WLHS, '03 MLC, '07 WLS
- '11 WLS, '19 CTS-FW



Generational Decay



A appssemble

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

Youth & Teen Problems Today

- Totally overwhelmed
- Breakdown of the family
- Pressure
- Social media comparisons and temptations
- Anxiety, sadness, depression
- Decline in Christianity
- "Expressive Individualism"

Losing Our Youth

- WELS is down 34%-50%+ in various groupings of our youth
- 88% of our own youth express critical doubts about faith before going off to college
- Teens are completely lost in secular culture
- Teens are losing their identity

A DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

Jonathan R. Hein

Evample

33% of WLHS students do not have two parents at home

- 31.6% of WLHS students never read the Bible
- 34.7% read the Bible 1-15 mins per week
- 22.5% of our WELS students never go to church
- 10.5% once/month and 12.8% twice/month

LCMS Reports

- 60-70% make it from baptism to confirmation
- 33% make it from confirmation to adulthood
- 20% make it from baptism to adulthood
- 21% of churches have almost no budget for youth ministry
- 1 in 7 are unsure of their view on LGBTQ issues

SEVEN PRACTICES OF HEALTHY YOUTH MINISTRY



JULIANNA SHULTS // MARK KIESSLING

How do we retain our youth?

- More exciting youth or teen groups?
- Dedicated staff and budget money for events and materials?
- Change our worship styles?
- Offer alternatives in or during worship?
 - Children's church
 - Concurrent Sunday School
- Something else?

What's going on here? What do we do with children today?

What do we do with teens today?

What's going on here?

• What do we do with children today?

• What do we do with teens today?

•What do we do with parents today?

History Repeats Itself?

"The deplorable, wretched deprivation that I recently encountered while I was a visitor has constrained and compelled me to prepare this catechism, or Christian instruction, in such a brief, plain, and simple version. Dear God, what misery I beheld! The ordinary person, especially in the villages, knows absolutely nothing about the Christian faith, and unfortunately many pastors are completely unskilled and incompetent teachers. Yet supposedly they all bear the name Christian, are baptized, and receive the holy sacrament, even though they do not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments! As a result they live like simple cattle or irrational pigs and, despite the fact that the gospel has returned, have mastered the fine art of misusing all their freedom."



SEARCHING SCRIPTURE

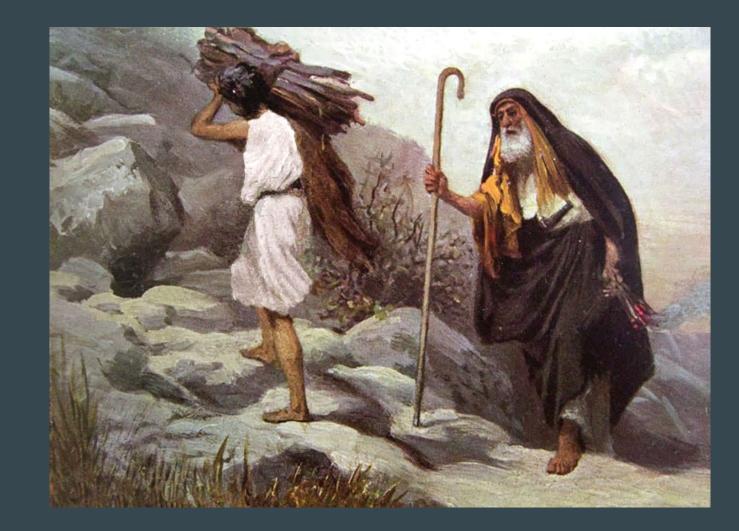
Key Scriptural Thoughts - A Summary

- Children are a blessing
- Children are uniquely created and cared for by God
- Children are to be disciplined
- Children are to be taught the ways of the Lord
- <u>Parents</u> are called first and foremost to raise and teach children
- All are called on to "tell the next generation"

Cain and Abel



Abraham and Isaac

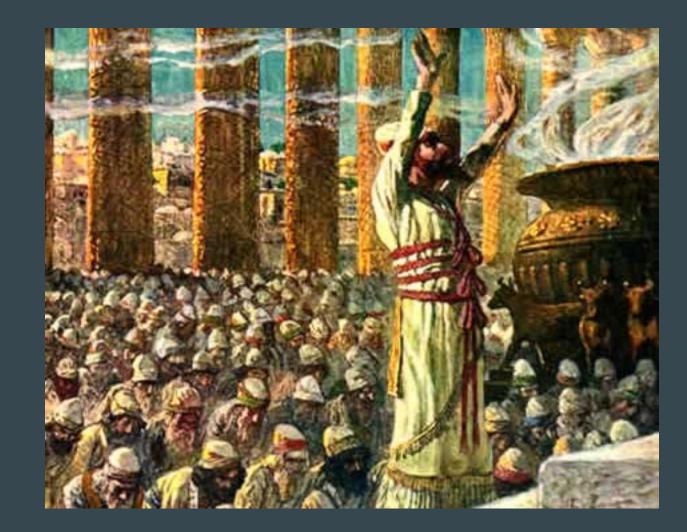


The Passover

And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped.

Exodus 12:26-27

Solomon and the Temple

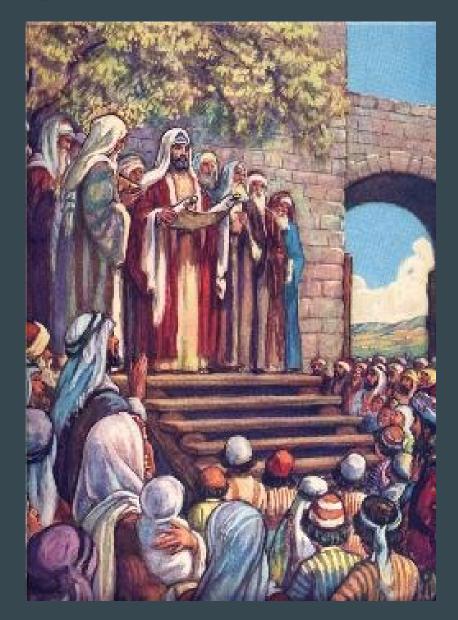


Solomon and the Temple

King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.

1 Kings 8:5

Josiah And the Law

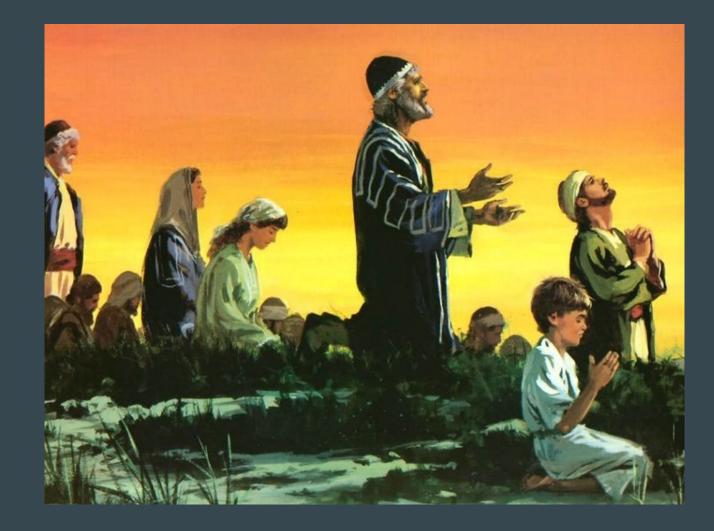


Josiah and the Law

He went up to the temple of the Lord with the men of Judah, the people of Jerusalem, the priests and the prophets—all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord.

2 Kings 23:2

Ezra Confesses



Ezra Confesses

While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a large crowd of Israelites—men, women and children—gathered around him. They too wept bitterly.

Ezra 10:1

Joel Urges Repentance

Rend your heart and not your garments . . . Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast.

Joel 2:13

Other Biblical Examples

- Baby John the Baptist
- The boy Jesus in the temple
- Sermon on the Mount
- Feeding of the 5,000 / 4,000
- Jesus in Nazareth on the Sabbath
- "Let the little children come to me . . ."
- Children as examples of faith

Other Biblical Examples

Peter's Pentecost sermon

- Practice of the early in church in Acts 2
 - o "all the believers"
- Lydia and the jailor at Philippi and their families
- Eutychus and the window
- Young prophet Jeremiah / pastor Timothy
- Practice of reading NT letters
 - o "Children, obey..."

Key Scriptural Thoughts

 Children usually/always seemed to be with their parents for worship and acts of faith.

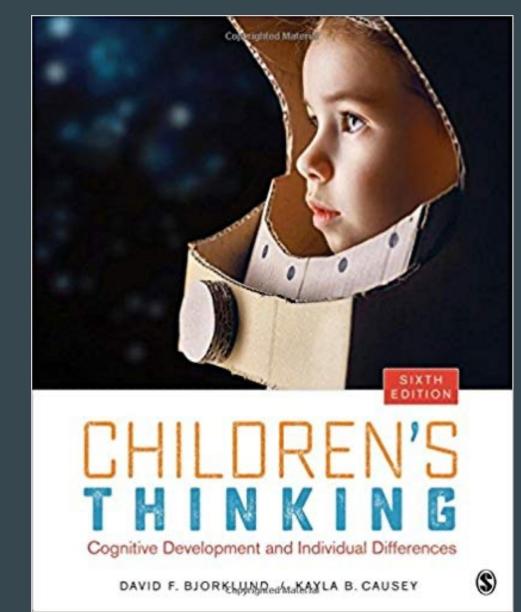
• The whole faith community came together.

- Children are examples of faith in life and worship.
- Children were included
- Parents took the lead in spiritual training
- The whole community of believers was to be a part of training the next generation

SEARCHING SCIENCE & HISTORY

Science

 Children learn best through parental example Children learn socially Children learn through repetition Children learn actively Children learn through the senses.

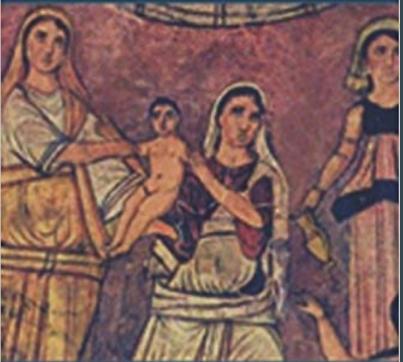


Church History

 God have mercy on the people who do not have mercy on their children!!

 The Church fathers wrote frequently on the importance of parenting and training children Cornelia B. Horn and John W. Martens

"let the little children come to me"



Childhood and Children in Early Christianity

upyrighted Malerial

Church History

Children frequently participated in church / worship

Children were liturgically active

• Lectors

Children's choirs

WHEN CHILDREN The Birth of Childhood in Early Christianity BECAME PEOPLE

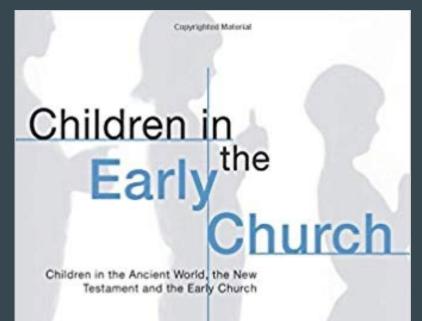


O. M. BAKKE

Church History

 Children (and babies) were baptized in a robust baptismal rite

 Children of varying ages communed with adults for hundreds of years



W.A.Strange

Church History (Luther)

Luther believe the Reformation "must be done through the young"
Home, church and school must cooperate

Father as pastor of the home

CONCORDIA TRIGLOTTA

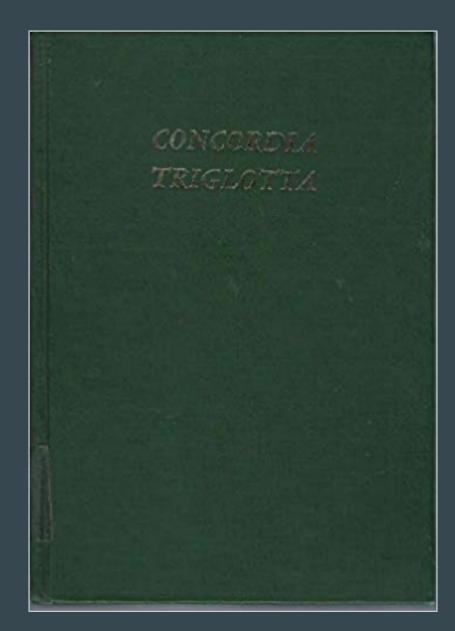
Church History (Luther)

Catechetical hymns

Children's liturgical choirs

• Lectors

Children communed (around 8)



Luther on the 4th Comm.

"For if we want capable and qualified people for both the civil and the spiritual realms, we really must spare no effort, time, and expense in teaching and educating our children to serve God and the world. We must not think only of amassing money and property for them. God can provide for them and make them rich without our help, as indeed he does daily. But he has given us children and entrusted them to us precisely so that we may raise and govern them according to his will; otherwise, God would have no need of fathers and mothers . . .

Luther on the 4th Comm.

"Think what deadly harm you do when you are negligent and fail to bring up your children to be useful and godly. You bring upon yourself sin and wrath, thus earning hell by the way you have reared your own children, no matter how holy and upright you may be otherwise. Because this commandment is neglected, God also terribly punishes the world; hence there is no longer any discipline, government, or peace. We all complain about this situation, but we fail to see that it is our own fault."

SOLUTIONS IN HOME, CHURCH, & SCHOOL

Solutions in the Home - Spiritual Life Checkat is the spiritual life like at the home?

- How can it be enhanced?
- How active are fathers?
- What can we model or resources can we offer?
- When a father attends church regularly, the retention rate for children rises 75% (Hein)
- When family devotions are held regularly, the retention rate is 80% higher than average (Hein)

Solutions in the Home - Early It children are inundated with screens way too early! • Children are exposed to content way too early! Children / teens are thinking about big life issues but few are talking about or addressing them. Children / teens are not prepared well to defend their faith or address real life issues.

Solutions in the Home - Treat Like Adults

- G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence, 1904
- To be a helicopter or not to be . . . ?
- How do you teach and yet empower?

Solutions in the Church - Worship

- Worship that is done well, not just "relevant"
- Worship and sermons that are meaningful and address and include them
- Opportunities for service and inclusion!
 - Musicians, singers, ushers, greeters, tech team, acolytes, lectors, Sunday School, and more!

Solutions in the Church - Training

- Parents need more training
- As parents
- About worship
- 92% receive no training in engaging children in worship from their WELS congregation
- Children need more training
- Other members need training!

Solutions in the Church - Mentoring

 Children/Youths/Teens need **5** adults active in their lives for their faith to "stick." • Could this be a branch of the elders program?



Everyday ideas to build lasting faith in your kids

Dr. Kara E. Powell & Dr. Chap Clark

Foreword by John Ortberg and Jim Candy

Solutions in the Church - Catechism/Groups

- Youth Group needs to change!
- Teens want something meaningful
- Teens want something applicable
- How can parents be involved in Catechism?
- Can we do Confirmation earlier and train better in Middle School?

Faith Formations					
ge Grade Main Material Supplemental Material Faith Activities					
0-4 PreK Basic Bible Stories Songs and Hymns Sunday School, VBS					
5 Kindergarten Basic Bible Stories Songs and Hymns Sunday School, VBS					
1st Grade	Basic Bible Stories	Songs and Hymns	Sunday School, VBS		
Congregation/ LES Presentation of 1st Bible					
	PreK Kindergarten	PreKBasic Bible StoriesKindergartenBasic Bible Stories	GradeMain MaterialSupplemental MaterialPreKBasic Bible StoriesSongs and HymnsKindergartenBasic Bible StoriesSongs and Hymns1st GradeBasic Bible StoriesSongs and Hymns		

	Faith Formations				
Age	Grade	Main Material	Supplemental Material	Faith Activities	
0-4	PreK	Basic Bible Stories	Songs and Hymns	Sunday School, VBS	
5	Kindergarten	Basic Bible Stories	Songs and Hymns	Sunday School, VBS	
6	1st Grade	Basic Bible Stories	Songs and Hymns	Sunday School, VBS	
	Congregation/ LES Presentation of 1st Bible				
			Faith Foundations		
Age	Grade	Main Material	Supplemental Material	Faith Activities	
8	2nd Grade	Bible History		Sunday School, VBS	
9	3rd Grade	Bible History		Sunday School, VBS	
10	4th Grade	Catechism	Bible History	Sunday School, VBS	
11	5th Grade	Catechism	Bible History	Sunday School, VBS	
12	6th Grade	Catechism	Bible History	Sunday School, VBS	
	Rite of 1st Communion				

	Faith Applications				
Age	Age Grade Main Material Supplemental Material Faith Activities				
13	7th Grade	Bible on Sexuality	Large Catechism in Applicaiton, Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project	
14	8th Grade	Bible on Social Media	Large Catechism in Applicaiton, Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project	
15	9th Grade	Junior Apologetics	Large Catechism in Applicaiton, Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally	
	Rite of Youth Confirmattion				

Faith Applications

Age	Grade	Main Material	Supplemental Material	Faith Activities	
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	Rite of Youth Confirmattion				
			Faith Identifications		
Age	Grade	Main Material	Supplemental Material	Faith Activities	
16	10th Grade	Christian Identity	Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally	
17	11th Grade	Christian Vocation	Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally	
18	12th Grade	Christian Life Planning	Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally	

Rite of Adult Confirmattion

Faith Applications

Age	Grade	Main Material	Supplemental Material	Faith Activities	
13	7th Grade	Bible on Sexuality	Large Catechism in Applicaiton, Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project	
14	8th Grade	Bible on Social Media	Large Catechism in Applicaiton, Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project	
15	9th Grade	Junior Apologetics	Large Catechism in Application, Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally	
Rite of Youth Confirmattion					

	Faith Identifications					
Age	Grade	Main Material	Supplemental Material	Faith Activities		
16	10th Grade	Christian Identity	Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally		
17	11th Grade	Christian Vocation	Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally		
18	12th Grade	Christian Life Planning	Biblical Studies	VBS Leaders, Canvassing, Service Project, Mission Trip or Youth Rally		
	Rite of Adult Confirmattion					

	Faith Fortifications					
Age	Age Grade Main Material Supplemental Material Faith Activities					
19	College/Military/Trade	Young Adult Materials	Congregational Mentorship for Young Adults Program	Campus Ministry Programs, Mission Trip		
20	College/Military/Trade	Young Adult Materials	Congregational Mentorship for Young Adults Program	Campus Ministry Programs, Mission Trip		
21	College/Military/Trade	Young Adult Materials	Congregational Mentorship for Young Adults Program	Campus Ministry Programs, Mission Trip		
22	College/Military/Trade	Young Adult Materials	Congregational Mentorship for Young Adults Program	Campus Ministry Programs, Mission Trip		
	Full Congregational Assimilation					

Yearly Family Faith Enrichment Plan

Year	Marriage	Parenting	Devotional Life	Worship Life
1	What is Love?	Discipline	Why Home Devotions?	Understanding Christian Worship
2	Godly Men / Godly Women	Law & Gospel Parenting	How to Have a Devotion	Getting More Out of Worship
3	Communication	Godly Use of Technology	How to Use Your Hymnal	Getting More Out of the Sermon
4	5 Love Languages	The Bible on Sex	A Survey of Devotonional Materials	Worship as a Family

Solutions in the Church - Service & Purpess are capable of WAY more than most would expect

- Teens appreciate mentorship
- Teens appreciate opportunities for leadership
- Teens like to be challenged
- Teens want to make a difference

What Teens Want

- To be loved
- To be respected
- To be valued
- To communicate
- To be active with their faith
- To make a difference in the world & spiritually















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Comments and Discussion with Students



Oliva Hermanson



Micah Buschkopf



Discussion/Questions

Phil Huebner Wisconsin Lutheran High School

386-237-4368 phil.huebner@wlhs.org



Scan for Presentation Slides

Other Ideas Not Shared During Presentation and Resources for Further Learning

Solutions in the Home

 Parents must grow in their identity in Christ

 Parents must double down on discipline

 Parents must double down on catechesis (Christian formation) **Copyrighted Material**

PAUL DAVID TRIPP

PARENTING

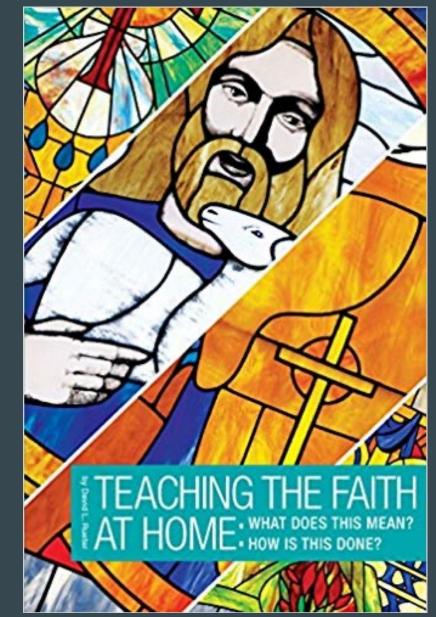


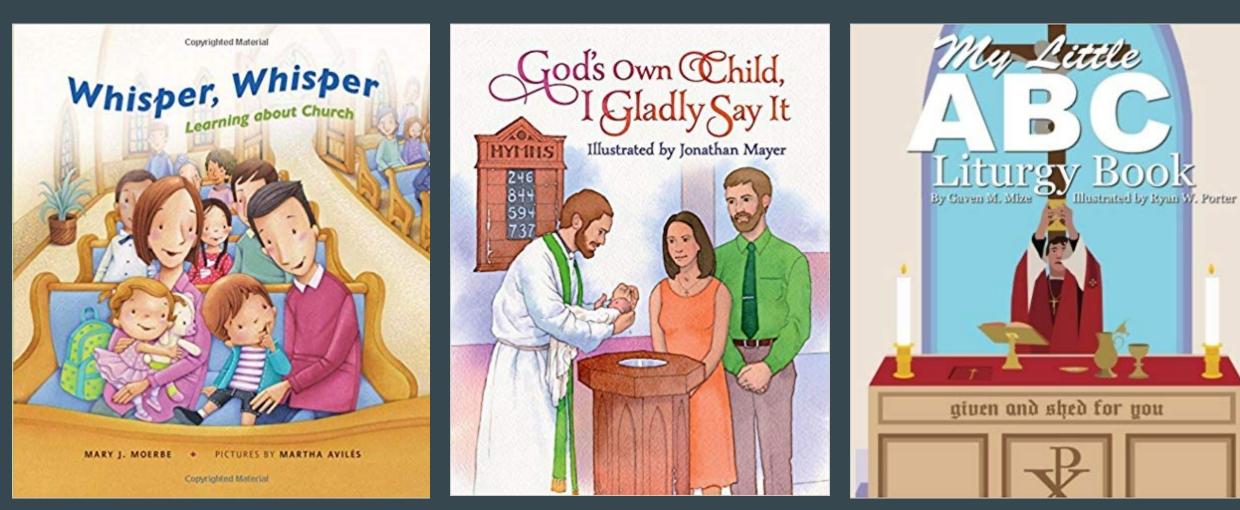
GOSPEL PRINCIPLES That Can Radically Change Your Family



Solutions in the Home

- Double down on home devotional and worship time!!
- Personal Bible reading time
- Use of the catechism
- Use of the hymnal
- Live the liturgical life: Seasons, readings, hymns, baptismal candle, etc.





<u>www.kloria.com/books</u> <u>www.cph.org</u> and <u>www.nph.net</u>

Solutions in the School

- Teacher incorporation of worship concepts
- Hymnology coordination with pastor
- Liturgical choirs
- Promotion of the arts
- School Chapel
- Pastoral presence
- Pastors, principals, and teachers on the same page!

Solutions in the School

Modeling of home devotional life

Encouragement of home devotional life

Resources provided or created for devotional life

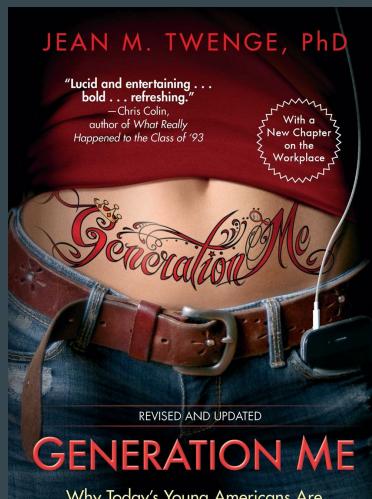
WELS Resources

Worship Resources
 Preacher Podcast
 Family Devotions
 Teen Devotions

School Devotions

THE FOUNDATION EB

WELS Family Devotions, Teen Devotions



Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled—and More Miserable Than Ever Before

Jean M. Twenge, PhD author of Generation Me i Ge iGen Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More v Todav's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happyand Completely Unprepared for Surprising. Adulthood* -TIME

*and What That Means for the Rest of Us

The Real Differences between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers and Silents and What They Mean for America's Future



JEAN M. TWENGE, PhD

author of *iGen*

Ministry Suggestions from the Book

- A vision for churches with youth:
- **Congregations Have...**
- Warmth, challenge, and grace
- Supportive adults
- Engaged parents
- Opportunities to serve and lead

SEVEN PRACTICES OF HEALTHY YOUTH MINISTRY

JULIANNA SHULTS // MARK KIESSLING



Ministry Suggestions from the Book

A vision for churches with youth:

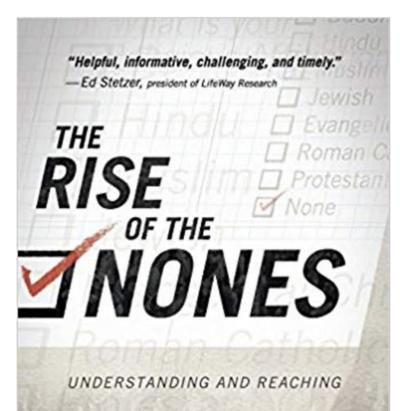
Congregations help all young people . . .
Deeply understand their baptismal faith

- Develop a resilient identity in Christ
- Live out their unique vocation

SEVEN PRACTICES OF HEALTHY YOUTH MINISTRY

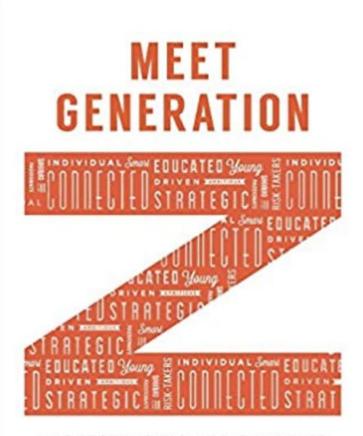
JULIANNA SHULTS // MARK KIESSLING





THE RELIGIOUSLY UNAFFILIATED

JAMES EMERY WHITE



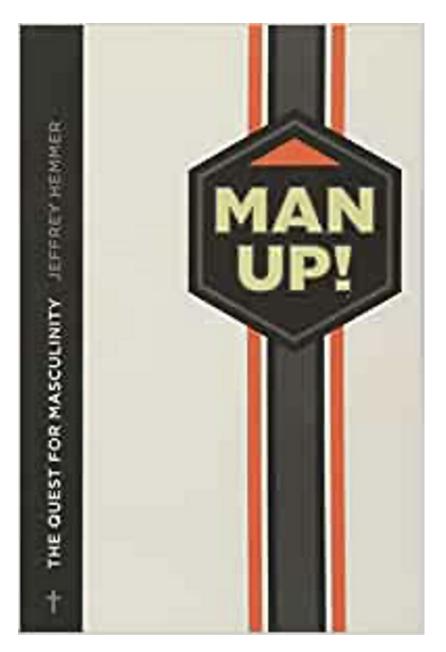
UNDERSTANDING AND REACHING THE NEW POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

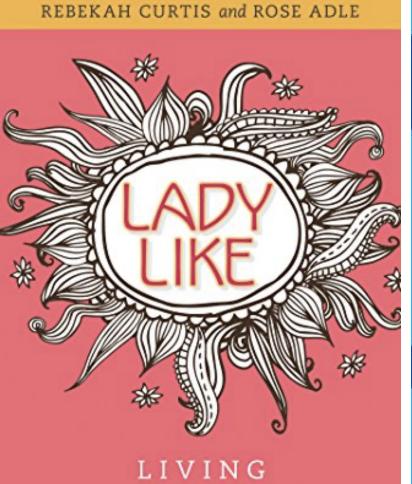
JAMES EMERY WHITE

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President of the Barra Group

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MALE FEMALE

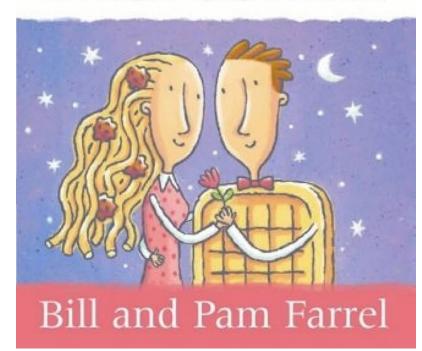
Embracing Your Role in God's Design

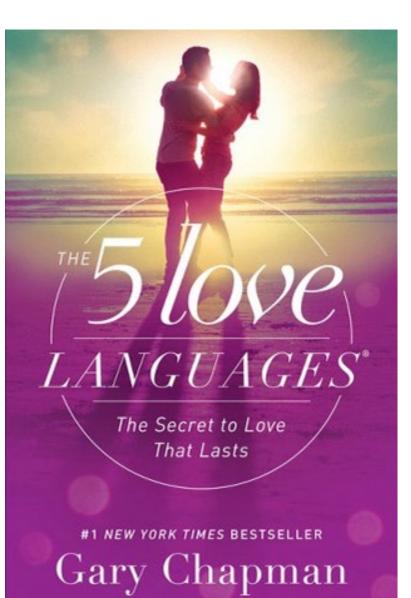
JONATHAN AND CHRISTA PETZOLD

Men Are Like Waffles Women Are Like Spaghetti

Over 150,000 Sold

Understanding and Delighting in Your Differences





New York Times Bestselling Author of *THE REASON FOR GOD* and *THE PRODIGAL GOD*

TIMOTHY KELLER

with KATHY KELLER

THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God **Copyrighted Material**

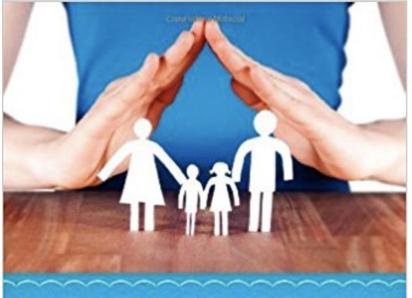
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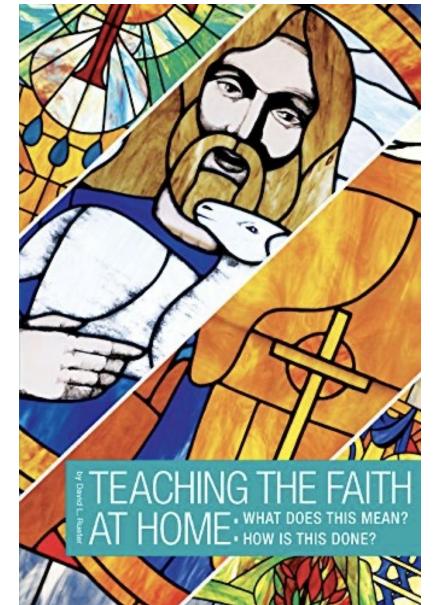


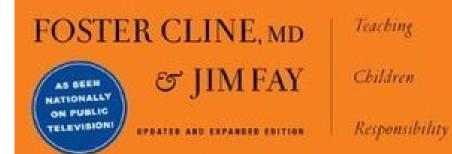


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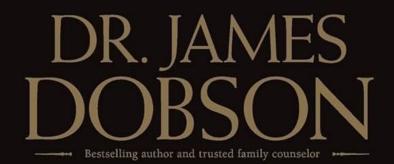


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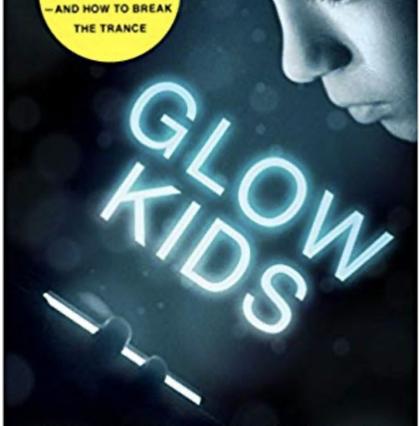


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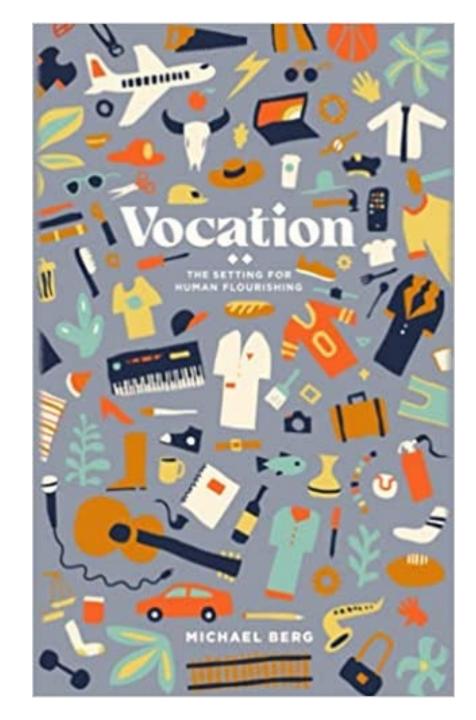
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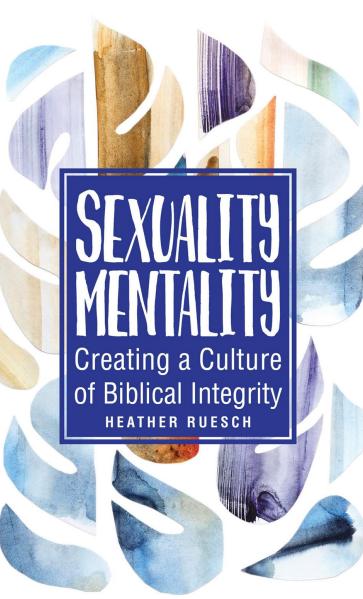
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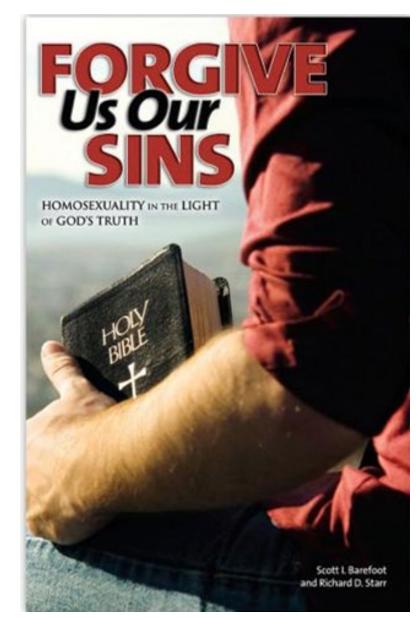
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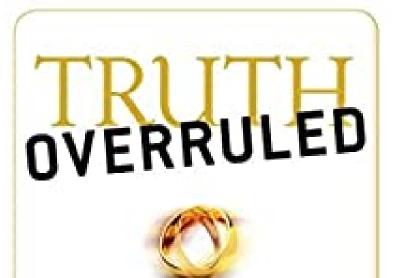


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