

SPRING 2007 Parents Crosslink

People have always been interested in their images. In the ancient world, one could catch a fleeting reflection from the surface of a calm lake. Fast-forward many centuries to a time when the human image can be captured on film, frozen in time, and reproduced thousands of times over. Photography has changed the way we look at ourselves. It has made us self-conscious about our looks. A quick visit to MySpace.com demonstrates that pictures are far more important in today's world than any other symbol for personal identity. And with this emphasis come the inevitable comparisons, not only to others but also to the way we looked on our last driver's license or in the school picture taken 20 years ago. The impact can lead to a lifelong obsession.

Boys and girls really wrestle with this problem. The question, How do I look to others? can lead to devastating conclusions. The whole idea in advertising is to plant the seeds of doubt about the answer to that question and then exploit it. The popular media hold out this promise: Wear this (buy this), and then you will be attractive. But the converse is also implied: If you don't, you're ugly. For those who are attractive, arrogance and pride can be just as destructive.

Peter warns believers about being controlled by a manufactured beauty. "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes" (1 Peter 3:3). There is nothing

**INNER BEAUTY
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inherently wrong with these things, but there is a danger. The focus on physical beauty can cause us to ignore the qualities in a person that constitute godly beauty. Furthermore, man-made beauty is of a temporary nature; what we consider beautiful today will not stand the test of time.

Do an Internet search for a picture of a beauty queen from some bygone era. You will quickly recognize that fashions don't stay fashionable long. Should we be surprised? The very idea that fash-

ions change promotes a false standard for beauty that parallels the world's ever-changing values. It subtly proclaims that personal identity is somehow connected to our ability to keep pace.

In contrast, inner beauty lasts. It transcends time and remains constant when everything else is deteriorating. Its value comes from the "inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit" (1 Peter 3:4). Gentleness and quietness of spirit grow from a confidence that cannot be worn like an article of clothing or applied like the latest beauty aid. As the psalmist says, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well" (139:14). In this respect, all of God's children truly are beautiful—created, redeemed, and called into a family in which good looks are more than skin deep. In God's family beauty radiates from the cross and is reflected in the joyful faces of those who know who they are, why they are here, and where they are going to spend eternity.

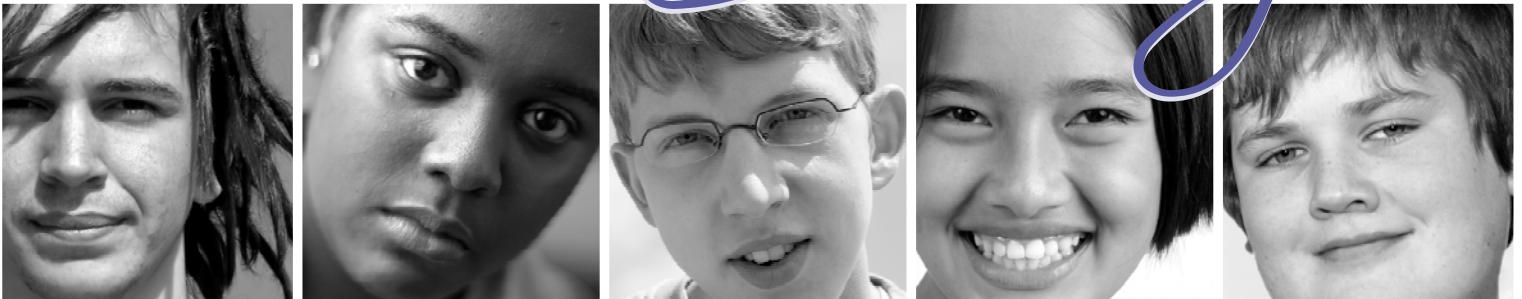
Then again, we have to be careful lest we leave the impression that there is no such thing as physical beauty.

(Continued on page 2.)

What Is *Beauty?*

Our Obsession with Self-Image

Leon Ehler



Photos from Shutterstock

(What Is Beauty? . . . cont.)

Abraham's wife, Sarah, for example, was reportedly "very beautiful" (Genesis 12:14). Similar things are said in Scripture of Rachel and her son Joseph. We might be tempted to respond to a self-conscious teen with something like, "Beauty? Why, honey, everyone is beautiful!" Such platitudes fail to take into account what it is like to walk down the halls of a high school today. A Christian parent needs to deal with real life, in which physical appearance is still important.

The Declaration of Independence says, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." Bound up in that phrase is the mistaken notion that we are created equal in every way.

The Bible does not back this notion. It tells us that we are equally holy, washed clean from sin by the Savior's blood; but it does not support the idea that there is an equality of gifts. Read 1 Corinthians chapter 12. While the apostle focuses on spiritual gifts, it is no stretch to say that God does not intend for all people to have the same physical gifts. The text encourages those who have been given less of a particular gift—in this case, what the world calls beauty. But it also speaks to anyone who has been blessed with a handsome appearance, helping that person see that his or her gift is a source of humility and thanksgiving rather than a reason for sinful pride.

What a profound teaching moment for a parent to be able to explain that God blesses people as he deems best and that he does so driven by his love for each individual! When I know how I look in God's eyes—as an individual who is washed, restored, and radiant in Christ's holiness—knowing how I look to others won't become an obsession.

Leon Ehlert serves Fox Valley Lutheran High School and coordinates the Hmong Outreach Program for the WELS Northern Wisconsin District. He and his wife, Krystie, have four children.



To add thoughts and continue the discussions about these questions and answers, go to

www.parentsconnect.net.

My standards for modesty and decency in the clothing my kids wear are higher than the standards of society and fashion. How do I keep my kids from looking out of style without violating my standards?

You mention your standards and those of the fashion industry and society. Let me suggest a third—our Lord's. You can scour the entire Bible, and you will not find specifics concerning bare midriffs, appropriate length for skirts, or how low pants can be worn. But God's standards are crystal clear. In general, matters of appearance fall under the heading of Christian freedom. Yet your freedom (and the freedom your children can express in their clothing choices) will be tempered with the reminder that "whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). In 1 Timothy 2:9, an inspired apostle Paul wrote, "I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety."

Perhaps your teenager, whose body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, can ask, "What does my clothing say about me and my relationship with my Savior?" When the heart is in the right place, proper dress will follow.

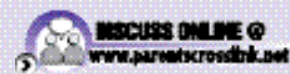
I'm a single mom. I worry that my 15-year-old son is ill-prepared for dating. How can I help him develop the appropriate attitudes and skills for this difficult part of growing up?

Try to identify men in your son's life who have demonstrated God-pleasing treatment of their spouses. This may include relatives, teachers, neighbors, coaches, and adult friends of the family. Look for such traits as maturity, self-worth, leadership, loyalty, kindness, humility, healthy lifestyle, and commitment in relationships. A Christian role model has a healthy relationship with his Savior. Also examine your own relationships and what you communicate to your son by the way you interact in those relationships. Depending on the circumstances, this could include the relationship you have with your son's father. Invite that individual to prayerfully consider helping your son develop the skills and attitudes that he will need. Be clear about your expectations.

What should a parent know when monitoring his or her child's activity on the Internet?

The Internet is a blessing. When used properly, we can praise God's name and aid his people through good communication. But there are a few principles to keep in mind when our children go online. The simplest is to make sure you never become disconnected from your child. Children who sense that their parents don't care are often exasperated, embittered, or frustrated. The Bible warns parents about letting that happen (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21). Take an active interest in what's going on. If you are not getting reliable information, investigate on your own. Talk about safety and propriety on the Internet. Set expectations based on the Ten Commandments. This marks what is and what is not godly activity.

The space and privacy issues are complex. Don't compromise here. Maintaining a close eye on your child's online activities is not an issue of trust but of protection. Know everyone on your child's e-mail buddy list. Track the Web sites your child visits. You can respect your child's space and privacy without compromising trust. And that will lead to safe Internet use.





Sometime between the 11:00 soccer pictures at the junior high, the third-grade soccer game at noon on the grassless out-in-the-middle-of-nowhere field, the Dad-coached K soccer game at 1:00 at the junior high, the 1:30 fifth-grade football game on the other side of town, *Nutcracker* tryouts at 3:30, and family arriving for a birthday party at 5:30 . . . sometime between all that the dog barked, and the mailman delivered a big white envelope announcing my new *Parents Crosslink* assignment. I tore it open and laughed. “Relax!” That was my assigned topic. “*Is this some kind of joke?*” I wondered. (Did I mention we hosted a friend’s birthday party the night before and I was scheduled to play organ on Sunday?)

True story. Relaxing is not one of my strong points. The guy God chose for me to call Hubby (who is currently out buying me dark chocolate M&M’s so I can finish this article) is really good at relaxing. (Some would even say it is his best quality.) He’s the one who made up the RULES FOR LIFE that go something like this: (1) *pace yourself*; (2) *the time to take a break is when you don’t have time*; and (3) *dress for comfort*. I’ve always sort of laughed these little rules off. But as life goes on, I’ve come to see that maybe he’s not so far off base.

When it comes to relaxing, parents vary greatly. There’s the father sitting on a park bench, reading a newspaper, apparently oblivious to his youngsters perched high on the monkey bars. Then, observe the perky mother cheerfully engaged in a pretend tea party consisting of wood mulch and sand. Note the parent over there, the one hovering a few millimeters away from her child’s every move, an aggrieved look on her face. “Playtime is

good,” she keeps repeating. But it’s obvious she can’t wait to be back in the safety of her home. That worried mother is me. The happy mom at the tea party is the parent I want to be. (And the guy with the sports page is my husband.)

Good parents, to my way of thinking, are faith-filled, creative, energetic, consistent, patient, positive, and do not worry. They are confident, in control. They are fun. Their children are healthy, happy, well fed, clean, disciplined, smart, imaginative. Life at their homes is a cheerful mix of chores, homework, extracurriculars, music—all centered around God’s Word. It is peaceful. Above all, *it is relaxed*.

LITTLE PLACARDS, STRATEGICALLY LOCATED, REMIND ME TO “LET GO AND LET GOD.”

Little placards, strategically located around our property, remind me to “let go and let God.” (I ask you, what is a chaotic home but one which has lost its focus?) A cross-stitched Psalm 46 depicts God as a refuge and present help. An illustration of a God-fearing family, heads bowed over a meal, underscored with the words “Prayer Changes Things” hangs over a kitchen portal. A little card clipped on the van’s visor exclaims, “What part of ‘Rest in Him’ don’t I understand?” The poem “cleaning and scrubbing can wait ‘til tomorrow . . . I’m rocking my baby for babies don’t keep” runs through my head every time I complain about not getting around to the dusting. The title of the poem, by the way, is “Prayer for a Fifth

Child.” Should it take five to become so wise? (I laugh when I remember my first-bom’s impatient response one day to my exasperated, “What am I going to do with you?” “Play with me!” he replied.) An e-mail I recently received had a wonderful reminder: “I’m too blessed to be stressed!”

Growing up, the passage I saw each Sunday morning running in Old English script around the sacristy was this: “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” I spent many sermons wondering why the decorating committee chose that verse out of all the splendid verses in Scripture. Now, after 11 years of parenting, I know. The committee consisted of weary and heavily burdened parents like me. What a blessing to know that God is with us and cares for us, especially when we see ourselves as inept and overwhelmed. He is not too big or powerful to deal with our little worries—who to invite to the birthday party, how to comfort the sobbing 5-year-old, quell the name-calling binge of an angry 9-year-old, becalm the feisty 2-year-old, or humble the too-big-for-his-britches 11-year-old. God’s there too when the van’s heater quits working or the bills are overdue or the To Do Lists fail to be completed. (And that was just today!) “Come unto me . . .” and relax! Do it now. Right this minute.

Thanks, God, I needed that!

PS: We skipped the *Nutcracker* tryouts.

Ann Ponath lives in Stillwater, Minnesota, with her husband, David, and their special blessings: David, Christian, Elsa, Madelyn, and a big black dog named Luci.



It's All

Imagine standing in front of a small mirror. Your face fills the entire frame. Glancing at yourself, you acknowledge that you look good. You are special. There is no one else who looks, thinks, or acts like you. You are unique, and you love yourself for who you are.

Anyone under the age of 35 who reads this first paragraph is likely to agree. According to a study done by Dr. Jean M. Twenge, there is no reason not to agree . . . at least for the 35-and-under crowd. Dr. Twenge contends that Americans born after 1970 are part of the phenomenon she refers to as Generation Me, or GenMe. In her book by the same title, Twenge explores this group of Americans—the 30-somethings and the children of today—and she explains “why today’s Americans are more confident, assertive, entitled, and more miserable than ever before.”

What Is Generation Me?

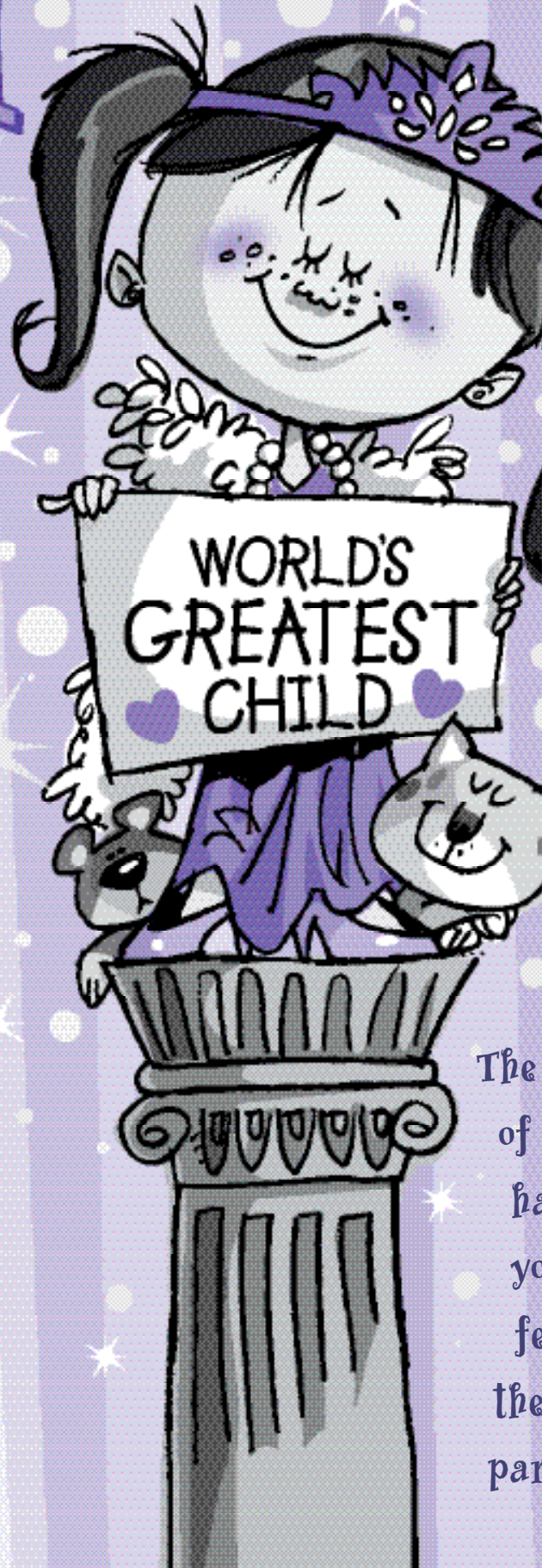
Dr. Twenge, herself part of GenMe, supports with extensive data what is happening to today’s young adults and children. Her research indicates that *when* a person is born actually has more impact on personality than family upbringing. GenMe is an entire generation raised in a culture that teaches, above all else, the primacy of the individual. This generation has been raised on a steady diet of *Sesame Street* and *Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood*, programs representative of the culture. These programs assure viewers that they are unique, that they can be anything they want to be, and that they should follow their dreams.

Aphorisms such as these help to explain why members of the GenMe era feel so confident, assertive, and entitled. Their confidence comes from thinking that people value them and their opinion. When GenMe is told to do things its own way and to be independent, assertiveness is a natural result. And when told “if you can dream it, you can do it,” a sense of entitlement ensues. Here’s a sampling of a few statements commonly accepted by GenMe: “If you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything”; “As long as I believe in myself, I really do not care what others think”; and “You have to love yourself before you can love others.”

The Generation of Self-Esteemism

Is there anything wrong with loving oneself? School systems, including parochial schools, have long been touting the self-esteem trend. John Hewitt, author of *The Myth of Self-Esteem*, says that many of our educational programs encourage children to feel good about themselves for no particular reason. “We want to anchor self-esteem firmly to the child . . . so that no matter what the performance might be, the self-esteem remains high.” Another term used is *unconditional validation*. Twenge defines it as “feeling good about yourself no matter how you act or whether you learn anything or not.”

Teachers have discovered that working with the children from this generation is difficult. The children tend to be more argumentative and less motivated to learn. There is no longer a lazy student; rather, lack of accomplishment is referred to as “output failure.” Parents, wanting to protect their child’s self-esteem, are more likely to side with their child than with the child’s teacher, regardless of the complaint. Many students



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About ME!

Pam Holz

rate themselves as highly gifted, but their scores are well below average. Studies show that more students are bored with school, to which Twenge comments, "How interesting can school possibly be when everyone gets an A, and self-esteem is more important than learning?"

A high self-esteem without merit is a dangerous creature. Consider the show *American Idol*. Contestants come from across the country for their chance at fame, only to be told they have no talent. The reaction is devastation. They have always been told they have genuine singing talent. Now their dreams are crushed by the judges. Twenge's research indicates that the failed contestants' responses are right on key: "When people with high self-esteem are criticized, they become unfriendly, rude, and uncooperative, even toward people who had nothing to do with the criticism."

The misery indicated by Twenge's research comes when "high on self-esteem" individuals, who love themselves first (just as they were taught), hit the brick wall of reality. Young adults enter a world that does not find them particularly special, talented, or unique. The world is full of talented people who work hard and yet never achieve great fame. The high cost of living makes buying even a modest home a challenge, especially when the dream job (with its fat paycheck) does not land in GenMe's lap. Being raised in a "self is wonderful" environment, GenMe has no idea of how to cope when the startling truth is revealed.

What's To Be Done?

Understanding GenMe is helpful to those who are part of it and to those who look at the products of this generation with frustration. But there is hope for those who are trying to keep their heads above the teeming waters of self-esteemism. Twenge suggests looking to the motto of the movie *Batman Begins*: "It is not who you are underneath, but what you do that defines you." Specifically for parents, Twenge adds:

1) Junk the self-esteem emphasis and unrealistic aphorisms.

Twenge states emphatically, "We must stop telling children 'You can be anything you want to be,' or 'You should never give up on your dreams.'

Both of these statements are patently untrue." Children are going to learn sooner or later that they are not good at everything. It is not that children can't have dreams, but they do need to know that even with hard work, their dreams may not be realized.

2) Teach self-control and good behavior. Children will gain true self-esteem when they have legitimately learned a task by working hard at it. Recognizing good behavior while ignoring poor behavior can be an effective method of discipline.

3) Don't automatically side with your child.

Children learn from their mistakes. A lesson is learned when children find out that broken rules result in consequences. In schools, teachers need the support of parents so they can focus on their job: teaching children.

Looking at this from a Christian perspective, we would surely add more that can be done. God wants us to train our children in the way they should go. That means reining our children in when they are going the wrong way, using law and gospel. It means feeling distress over our own sin. And it means that we appreciate the gospel, that astounding message that forgiveness has been won for us by our Savior's sacrifice. As we daily go to Jesus, seeking forgiveness and, by faith, putting on his righteousness, we need to demonstrate to our children a spirit of selflessness instead of worldly self-centeredness. Daily living in God's Word is the strongest armor to combat the misleading cues of worldly selfism.

Instead of the *Batman Begins* motto, our children need to learn that their self-worth is not defined by what *they* do but by what *Jesus* has done. The apostle Paul said, "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14).

As Christians living in a world full of GenMe thinking, we do look in a mirror. But our mirror needs to be much bigger. It needs to reflect others: our family and friends, neighbors and community. Most important, it needs to reflect that hill outside Jerusalem. There, on the cross, we see Jesus. His innocent life and sacrifice give us the perfect example of selflessness to follow. The message of the world is all about loving oneself. The Bible has a different message: "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16).

Pam Holz lives in Appleton, Wisconsin, with her husband, Kent, and their four children.



The self-esteemism of the GenMe era has encouraged young people to feel good about themselves for no particular reason.

Viewpoint

A Special Relationship

Carol Albrecht

The Sunday school lesson asked students to think of a person they'd most like to ask a question. It could be a movie or sports star, a relative, anyone. I did the exercise with the children and smiled as I wrote, "my grandma," certain that I was the only person in the room with that choice. When we revealed our names, I discovered that everyone had chosen either a grandma or grandpa. I don't remember the Bible story for that day, but I do remember the lesson I learned: **GRANDPARENTS MATTER A WHOLE LOT TO THEIR GRANDCHILDREN.**

Why are grandparents so special? I think it's because our love is so unrestrained. What freedom to simply enjoy a child without caring if she eats her veggies, goes to bed on time, or finger-paints the kitchen table! I love having the fun without having the responsibilities of parenting.

No, that's not entirely true. There is one responsibility I take very seriously: the responsibility to share my faith. One reason for that is the example of my own grandma. An adult convert, her faith radiated in everything she did, from her daily reading of Scripture to her genuine kindness. She taught me what it means to be a Christian.

Now it's my turn to share that same faith with my own grandchildren. Our special bond helps my words and

actions have an impact in their lives. In my own case, my grandchildren are blessed with Christian parents who teach them about Jesus at home. That is not always the case. Sometimes parents don't have a relationship with the Savior, leaving their children without spiritual direction. Grandparents can fill the void and give those precious souls the greatest gift of all: the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus.

Sharing Jesus with my grandchildren is a priority. The world and Satan continually tempt them with materialism, self-indulgence, and attitudes that conflict sharply with the Christian life. They need their faith to be constantly reinforced by people they love and trust.

Deuteronomy 4:9 tells us to teach the godly things we've learned to our "children and to their children after them." What a joyful privilege it is to pass the torch of Christ on to the next generation! What a blessed honor we grandparents have been given to be able to instill godly values in young hearts and prepare them to become tomorrow's torch carriers!

Carol Albrecht lives in Superior, Nebraska. She is a retired grade school paraprofessional, a freelance writer, a mother of four, and a grandmother of four.



One grandparenting responsibility I take very seriously is the responsibility to share my faith.

family MATTERS

Amanda Swiontek

Becoming More Like . . .



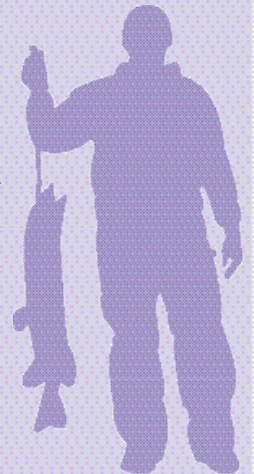
I once vowed never to *become* my parents. Now that I am a parent I pray, "Please, Lord, help me be more like my dad and mom!" (Well, maybe not exactly like them.)

My oldest son wanted his grandpa to take him fishing, so I dropped them off at the park. Seeing my son shuffle down to the water's edge with my dad, each with a fishing pole in one hand and a tackle box in the other, I was overwhelmed with gratitude. Aside from being one of those infamous Kodak moments, something very special was happening. My boy was spending quality time with someone

who would have great influence in his life. Who knew what they would talk about for an hour? It didn't matter. This had little to do with grandfatherly lessons on baiting a hook or casting near the weeds. It was all about sharing wisdom—the kind of wisdom that comes from loving God's

Word and teaching, by example, how to *become* more Christlike. My boys are blessed with a double portion—one from Christian parents, another dose from godly grandparents. They have plenty of choices about who they would, or wouldn't, want to *become* more like someday. What really matters anyway is that they all *become* more like Jesus.

Amanda Swiontek is a copy editor for Northwester Publishing House. She lives in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, with her husband, Craig, and their three sons.





Michael Albrecht

ESTHER



It could be a television miniseries. Mighty Xerxes slowly lifts his head as the doors gradually part. The beautiful Queen Esther boldly enters. The audience holds its breath in tortured suspense. Will Esther be permitted to speak or be deposed like Vashti, her predecessor?

The book of Esther is full of such electric moments. But its real value is found in the unstated theme: *God has complete control over all the events of history.*

Xerxes, ruler of the Persian Empire, has banished Queen Vashti for failing to heed his drunken demands. So the king held a beauty pageant, gathering the most beautiful women in all of Persia. A lovely Jewish girl named Esther was among the contestants.

Many Jews remained in the Persian Empire more than a hundred years after Nebuchadnezzar had forced them into exile from Israel. Esther was herself an orphan, raised by her older cousin Mordecai. When she took her place in the king's harem, Mordecai urged Esther to hide her Jewish ancestry. Soon she became Xerxes' favorite, and he made her queen.

One day, as Mordecai sat by the king's gate, he overheard conspirators plotting to assassinate the king. Mordecai reported this to Esther, who, in turn, informed the king.

Years later Mordecai refused to bow to the king's second-in-command, a man named Haman. The vengeful Haman redirected his hatred of Mordecai onto all of the Jews living in the land. He tricked Xerxes into signing an edict declaring it legal to kill Jews on one particular day.

Here Esther began to grasp her role in God's world. In the ancient Persian Empire, it was unthinkable for anyone, including a queen, to approach the king without being summoned. Doing so could end in death. Esther was well aware of the risk. But she loved her people and understood that their lives rested in her decision to intervene on their behalf.

The Lord was with Esther. Xerxes invited her to come forward, and he listened.

Esther explained the plans she had for a splendid feast.

Meanwhile, Haman's anger burned red hot against Mordecai. He obsessed over a plan to bring vengeance down on his Jewish enemy. So sure was he that his moment for revenge was at hand that he had a 75-foot tall gallows built. On it he planned to execute Mordecai.

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But God would not let Haman destroy his chosen people. So the Lord set in motion a series of remarkable twists in the story.

First, God had King Xerxes discover a record that told of Mordecai's long-ago role in the foiled assassination plot. Xerxes decided it was time to honor Mordecai's loyalty. And honor him he did. The king clothed Mordecai in royal robes and awarded him a parade fit for a prince. Then, at her feast, Esther told Xerxes about her Jewish lineage. She also went on to explain Haman's plot to kill Mordecai and the other Jews living in Persia.

Haman panicked and begged for mercy. Xerxes mistook Haman's pleas for more impropriety and ordered him put to death on the same gallows that Haman had earlier constructed for Mordecai's execution.

In the ancient Persian Empire, once a law was written, even the king could not undo it. So Xerxes issued a new edict that allowed the Jews to take up arms and retaliate against anyone who threatened them. When the eventful day came, the Jews struck down many of their enemies. In this way, the Lord assured the continuation of his people and once again secured his promise to send a Savior.

The story of Esther teaches us that God is in control of everything. When sickness or death touches our families, when school problems multiply by the day, when our relationships are disasters or events start spinning out of control, we humbly recognize God's guiding hand in our lives. Our best-laid plans often go awry. God's plans never fail. He knows our past, present, and future needs better than we do. And he controls the events of our lives so that the outcomes will always be for our good.

Some see the book of Esther as a riveting tale, complete with a heinous villain and unassuming hero. We see it as an awesome reminder of God's active and loving presence in our lives.

Michael Albrecht teaches third and fourth grades in Grafton, Wisconsin, where he lives with his wife, Heather, and their three children.

FOOTNOTE

If you would like to read more about the remarkable life of Esther, order Esther: Born for Her Time. It's a quick, informative read by James A. Aderman (NPH, 2005). Call (800) 662-6022 to order or go to the NPH Web site at www.nph.net.



WHAT KIDS ARE SAYING ABOUT SUMMER PROGRAMS

Each summer the number of camp offerings grows. These popular programs include a wide range of summertime activities to augment a child's formal education in school. Several fourth, fifth, and sixth graders have written to tell us about their summer camp experiences. Here's what they had to say.

"Last summer I went to a cheerleading camp. They taught us stunts, sideline cheers, dances, tumbling, jumps, and how to work together. I thought it was really fun. . . ."

Katie Gnat, WLHS Cheerleading Camp

"I went to a Bible camp. We did many crafts and watched a Christian movie. We also had Bible lessons every day. My favorite part was setting a Christian example for the little kids. Helping them was the best part of all."

Jessica Kreuser, Fiesta! Bible Camp

"This story is about me and the soccer camp I went to. We had a tournament and fell just short of winning the bronze. . . . It was an excellent experience for me and my friends."

Mason LaMarche, WLHS Soccer Camp

"This summer I attended a basketball camp. . . . We got to meet the players and learn a lot about basketball. We did drills and worked on our ball handling and shots. We got a basketball and a shirt when it was all over."

Jake Postl, FVL Basketball Camp

"This summer was extraordinary. I went to volleyball camp with three of my best friends: Kelsey, Jessica, and Lauren. I learned to serve overhand and underhand. My favorite part was learning how to set and spike. . . ."

Taylor Pollesch, Junior Viking Volleyball Camp

"Have you ever wanted to live back in history? This summer, as an Old World Apprentice, I dressed up and became a Norwegian schoolgirl from 1898. I told visitors about the one-room schoolhouse and my lessons. I had fun playing nineteenth century games and doing the chores."

Claire Williams, Old World Wisconsin Day Camp

" . . . The camp I went to was a choral camp. We had nice teachers. I had fun and want to go to the same camp next year."

Lauren Kuske, WLHS Choral Camp

"I went to golf camp at FVL this year. . . . They taught me to swing the golf club better and putt better. I can drive 150 yards now. . . ."

Chrystyan Woyak, FVL Golf Camp

Many area high schools, local colleges, and municipalities offer summer programs for children. To find a WELS summer camp for your child, go to www.parentscrosslink.net for a complete listing of area camps. Look for "Summer Camps."



Parents Crosslink

DEAR READER,

Today's parents learn from each other, sharing ideas and encouraging one another to meet the daily challenges of living in an increasingly godless society. In the context of the gospel, this is a very powerful dynamic. *Parents Crosslink* (PCL) is a response to the demand for an interactive approach to assisting parents with a biblical view of family. Please join our ongoing conversation about Christian parenting at the PCL Web site located at www.parentscrosslink.net.

Kenneth Kremer, PCL Editor

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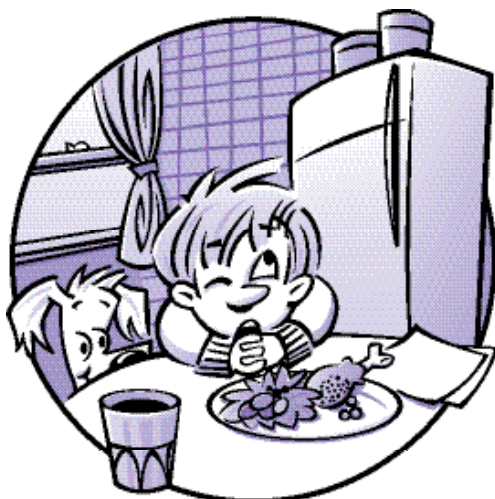
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Cartoon by Ed Koehler



"I gave thanks for the food, but I didn't hear you say, 'You're welcome!'"