

Be Careful What You Write on the Tablet of Your Heart

Recently my 14-year-old daughter, Rachel, asked her mother and I if she could tag along to a concert here in Orlando. When I asked what band or bands were going to perform at the concert, Rachel directed me to the event's website.

Upon visiting the site, my heart sank and my jaw dropped.

What I saw on the home page was photos of girls scantily dressed and with body paint. That alone put up a red flag with me, but I was still curious to know who the bands were and wanted to look at the lyrics of some of their songs.

The bands' song lyrics did not shock me. It was pretty much what I expected. Not only are some of the lyrics vulgar, but check out some of the suggestive titles of the songs: "Strangle You" (Bobaflex); "Medicate" (I'll leave it to your imagination as to what that's about.) and "Dance With the Devil" by Breaking Benjamin; "Razor," "Murder" and "Let's Get Dead" by New Year's Day.

I certainly could go on and on, but you get my point and, hopefully, my concern. Needless to say, Rachel did not attend the concert. She protested mildly, but understood our concerns when we discussed the matter. To her credit, I don't even think she knew what some of the bands were about. She also understood when I printed out and showed her some of the suggestive lyrics.

Thank You, Holy Spirit.

Please don't get me wrong, I'm not against all secular music. It's just that there are some types of songs and bands, like the ones mentioned above, that I would rather no member of my family—including myself—listen to.

I would not allow my daughter, or son, to attend a Beyonce concert, especially not after reading this article from *The Blaze*. You may disagree with me, but that's your preference as a parent, not mine. I wouldn't want the lyrics of Beyonce's songs written on the tablet of my daughter's heart.

For all of Rachel's life, my wife and I have tried to live by Proverbs 22:6, which says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Although many times we have failed—at least I'm well-aware of the fact that I have—we have tried to be a godly example to them and have continuously encouraged them to develop a relationship with Jesus.

In the past year, I have amped up my own prayer life and read God's Word much more than I ever had before. We pray with our children, and we have committed to going back to a regular time of devotion. Additionally, we pray and believe that they are getting fed much more in their Sunday middle school service at church.

We try to keep a prayer covering over our children as best as we can I constantly pray Psalm 91 around my home, my marriage and my children. Satan is working overtime these days to do what he can to disrupt and destroy families, especially those who serve the Lord. I certainly don't want to provide any added fuel for him.

God says in Hebrews 8:10, "I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (MEV).

As a loving parent and a Christ follower, I would rather have the Word of God written upon my daughter's heart than the lyrics of the songs from the above-mentioned rock bands. I would much rather her soak in "*No mountain top will ever be too high, 'cause with Jesus by your side, there's nothing you can't do, you're gonna make it through*" (Natalie

Grant) than *"I'm standing right in front of you, And saying that I'm through with you. For everything you put me through, now I just want you to die"* (New Year's Day).

I pray that she and my son, Josh, will live out Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think on these things" (MEV).

What we put into our heads totally impacts how we think, how we act, how we treat others and how we speak. In the verse above, God instructs us to control what we put into our heads and our hearts. We need to examine and scrutinize what we're feeding our minds with every day.

Remember, "whatsoever things are pure" Write those things upon the tablet of your heart.

I realize all of this is simply part of parenting. I realize Rachel will be a freshman in high school this fall and this is only the beginning of what will be many parental challenges in the upcoming years. I remember the grief I gave my own mom with the choices I made, and I know Rachel will make some mistakes as well. It's part of life and growing up.

But I think my mom would say I turned out OK, in no small part to her prayers and her godly instruction.

Have you faced similar situations with your children? What challenges has parenting in this culture presented to you? What are you writing upon not only your children's heart but also your own?

And as I always like to say, "there is that." {eoat}

Step Out of the Boat is a ministry created by Charisma Media Online Managing Editor **Shawn A. Akers** and dedicated to helping

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