

No, Cell Phones Are Not the Problem

Recently, while at a conference, I listened to a discussion about the spiritual crisis that cell phones were causing, especially among our youth. I listened as a group of people, mostly parents, sincerely spoke about the vast amount of problems that hand held devices, but predominantly cell phones, were causing.

One person shared about the hours of time that their teen was spending on games. Another, with tears in their eyes, shared that they found out their child had spent time almost daily looking at pornography. The next person shared about her daughter's addiction to Snapchat and other social media apps.

The discussion went from one parent to the next, each one sharing just how dangerous a cell phone was for a young person in their family—sometimes it was more than one.

As I listened to each person share their experiences and the problems, issues and addictions that were brought upon their children, my heart hurt for them. Each parent spoke with concern rooted in love for their children and, as the conversation went on, nearly every parent had come to tears.

It was clear that their children's cell phone usage was causing serious problems spiritually, mentally and in some cases physically. It was also clear that each parent believed the problem was the cell phone.

Then, there was a moment when it seemed as if everyone that wanted to share had shared, and then one of the women in the room began to speak. She said that she, like the others who shared, had a teen that also had a problem with their cell phone. But then she made a statement that seemed to suck the oxygen out of the room. She said that nearly every complaint

that had been shared about cell phones being a problem could be equally applied to the Bible.

She went on to share that while the Bible is of itself perfect because it is G-D's Word, ever since G-D's Word had been written down, people have misused it. Just as people misuse their cell phones, people have also misused their Bibles.

People have used the Bible to manipulate people. People have used the Bible to justify abuse of their children and their spouses. People have used the Bible to control people's finances. People have misused the Bible to justify theft, rape, slavery, wars and the list goes on.

The truth is that if we were going to place misuse of the Bible on one side of a scale and misuse of a cell phone on the other side, the misuse of the Bible would dramatically outweigh the cell phone side.

While it is true that cell phone abuse and misuse has caused all of the problems the parents and their children experienced, it is also true that the problem isn't the cell phone. Just as the biblical abuse isn't the fault of the Bible, but those who abuse it. A cell phone is a tool that can be used for good or for evil. You see, we don't have a cell phone crisis; we have a responsibility crisis.

However, we prefer to blame the cell phone instead of assuming the responsibility to monitor usage, or better yet, not allow immature children to have a device that can be so dangerous. After all, we don't let 10 year old's drive cars, either.

But it is always easier to blame an object than it is to do the difficult task of parenting.

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