

## Earlier Is Not Always Better

It has almost become a mantra in my life that earlier is always better. The longer I procrastinate on anything, the harder the task is to accomplish.

Recently I came across some material containing some alarming statistics I wish to pass along to every young parent. Because I have two girls and the older soon to start sixth grade, I find myself very cautious in regards to what is seeking to destroy young girls.

The Executive Director for the Care Net Centers in Amarillo, Texas documented some alarming statistics regarding teenage pregnancy. When a girl begins dating in sixth grade, 91% of the time she will engage in the act of fornication by graduation. However, the percentage of girls committing fornication before graduation is reduced to 20% of the time, if the girl waits until she is in the tenth grade before beginning to date. It was also alarming to hear that the prime time that teenagers are committing fornication during the day is 4:00 p.m. (after school, and before parents get home from work).

The scriptures emphatically teach the seriousness of fornication. Hebrews 13:4 says, *"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."* "Whoremongers" is an old term for fornication. Paul counts fornication as one of the sins which will deny someone entrance into the kingdom of heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). In Romans 1:28-29, fornication is listed among many disgusting sins, described as *"those things which are not fitting,"* and in 1 Timothy 1:10 as *"contrary to sound doctrine."*

We must be so careful as parents about giving our children too many liberties too early. Surely we can see the dangers of granting our children various freedoms before they are mature enough to face the responsibilities that come with those liberties. It's not a matter of being trustworthy, but one of being trust-ready. Part of *"the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* (Ephesians 6:4) is molding their decision-making process when they are young to recognize temptation and turn away before it develops into sin.

I'm equally as concerned about mothers who seem to be pushing their girls to grow up too soon. It's obvious in the way these girls dress, the movies they're allowed to watch, the music they're listening to, and the apparent lack of supervision. Too often this is viewed as harmless fun, innocent "school girl" activity, or even cute. Be careful parents -- the numbers tell a different story. You may inadvertently be encouraging them to engage in sexual activity that is a sin against our God in heaven and will potentially

change their lives forever with an unwanted pregnancy. Because "*children are an heritage of the Lord*" (Psalm 127:4), they deserve better parenting than even some Christians are providing!

Let's not be deceived by Satan's devices nor be ignorant with reference to what our kids are doing and who their friends are. Monitor what your children do! Remember, earlier is not always better.

Adapted From Paul White