



Teens want what they think fame brings

Popular culture gives teens the idea that fame is more important than anything else.

It is no surprise that we live in a culture that glorifies the rich and famous. We have become obsessed with breakups and breakdowns of the stars through magazines, Internet, television, and all the other venues. If you don't think this is an issue with teens, think about this question Jake Halpern asked to over 650 teens in his book called "Fame Junkies": "Given a choice of becoming the CEO of a major corporation, the president of Yale or Harvard, a Navy SEAL, a U.S. senator or "the personal assistant to a very famous singer or movie star," almost half of the girls — 43.4% — chose the assistant role" (jakehalpern.com).

You might think this is absurd, but for many teens this is reality. Teens want what they think fame brings, and that is the Three A's: affluence, attractiveness, and achievement. The picture painted by our culture shows that the more of the Three A's you have, the better your life will be. God reminds us in Luke 14 that we have our priorities all wrong. Jesus tells a story of someone being invited to a wedding feast. He reminds us not to take the place of honor because someone more distinguished could show up. Then, He says in Luke 14:11, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Helping teens see the value of exalting Christ instead of themselves is where true success and fame can be found. As we lift Him up, our priorities shift to Him and to others. The most famous in God's eyes are the one's who love, serve, and give when no one else is looking.

Here are some tips to help parents keep fame-obsessed teens under control.

1. Resist putting a television and computer in your teen's room. This allows them to watch indiscriminately. It is better for you to know what they watch; that way you can discuss the programs.
2. Encourage your teen to think about their favorite shows and media personalities. Do they reflect the values of your family, school, community or church?
3. Ask your teen to talk about the kinds of things they like best about their friends, family, teachers, and coaches. Is it that they're famous, rich, and good looking? Or is it that they're fun, funny, helpful, caring, friendly, and smart?
4. Stay current with the programs, music, and video games your teens are consuming so you'll be able to have an informed discussion with them about the people and images they're exposed to.

(Excerpt from the New Mexico Media Literacy Project's publication, "The State of Media Education")

Pulse

Usaweekend.com asked teens some very interesting questions about famous people. Here is what they found:

Which quality matters most to you in a celebrity? (Pick one)

- 36% Talent
- 32% Personality
- 17% Character
- 15% Looks

Do you agree with this statement: When celebrities make the following choices, a lot of teens want to do the same.

- 77% - Lose weight
- 62% - Pierce a body part
- 58% - Get a tattoo
- 48% - Drink alcohol
- 47% - Smoke cigarettes
- 39% - Take drugs

The Parent POV

(point of view)

It's amazing how many teens (and adults) are mesmerized by the thought of being famous. See what your teen thinks about some of these questions.

1. Who is your favorite famous person? What do you like about them?
2. If you could be friends with any famous person, who would it be? Why would you want to be friends with them? Do you think they would be a good friend?
3. Why do you think we are so obsessed with famous people and their mistakes?
4. Do you think fame comes at a price? What are some of the advantages/disadvantages of fame? Would you be willing to pay that price to be famous?
5. Can you name any celebrities who are famous and live for Christ? Why aren't there that many?



Focus on Prayer

Pray that:

1. Your teen will have the desire to store up treasures in heaven instead of trying to store up treasures here on earth.
2. God will continue to use your teen for His glory and for His fame.
3. Your teen will find their importance in Christ, instead of how the world tells them to find their worth.
4. God will help your teen pursue the things of God, to find satisfaction in Him and only Him.

Verse of the month

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:19-21 (NIV)

It is amazing how much cool "stuff" the rich and famous have. It's no wonder that teens want to be famous. The perks seem limitless! It could make any person, not just teens, covet and want those things that bring status and temporary happiness. In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, He reminds all of us where to store our treasures. "What do we treasure?" has to be the question for all us then. When you answer that question truthfully, you figure out where you are storing your riches. We cannot take the things of earth with us to Heaven. Let us pray for our families to have the heart of Christ. When that happens, all the temporary fades away and the eternal becomes the most important.



Did you know...

- * When given an option to become stronger, smarter, famous, or better looking, boys in a survey chose fame almost as often as intelligence, and girls chose it more often. (usatoday.com)
- * 31% of American teenagers believe they'll become famous one day. (psychologytoday.com)
- * Students were asked to choose which famous person they would most like to have dinner with. The top three choices went to Paris Hilton and 50 Cent (both at 15.8%), who tied for third place. Second place went to Jesus Christ (16.8%) and the winner was Jennifer Lopez (17.4%). (jakehalpern.com)
- * Teens who described themselves as often or always "depressed" were more likely than others to believe that becoming a celebrity would make them happier. Teenagers who described themselves as feeling "lonely" were also more likely to believe that fame would make a positive impact on their lives. (jakehalpern.com)

Music alternative

This Grammy Award winning artist, tobyMac, was a part of the much successful dctalk. He began his solo career in 2001 with the Grammy nominated Momentum. His most recent album, "Diverse City", is "an album bursting with musical flavors and nuances and yet this stylistic blend finds unity through faith as it's threaded through a melding urban rock and hip-hop frame." Despite receiving numerous awards and much notoriety, tobyMac's mission remains the same. He states, "My new album invites people to ponder how they relate to each other and to God and how He relates to them." tobymac.com

trends

It's finally here parents...the iphone has arrived! For \$499.00 (4 GB) or \$599.00 (8 GB), you can have a revolutionary mobile phone, a wide screen iPod with touch controls, and a breakthrough Internet communications device, in one small and lightweight handheld device. Business Week is saying that Apple could sell over 5 million phones in 2007. For information about the iphone (your teen has probably already looked), go to www.apple.com/iphone.

musicspotlight



Albums:

"Future Sex/Love Sounds" - 9/2006

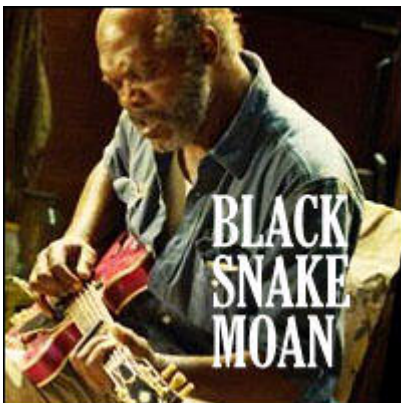
"Maximum Justin Timberlake" - 10/2003

"Justified" - 11/2002

Background: Justin Timberlake has played a major role in the teen pop explosion of the 90's and 2000's. He first got his start, like many other modern pop stars, on the 90's version of the Mickey Mouse Club. His career took off, however, with NSYNC in 1996. Timberlake went solo in 2002 with the release of "Justified". The album reached number 2 on Billboard 200 and landed him two Grammy Awards. His most recent album released in 2006. He has also been trying his hand at acting as seen in his recent big screen releases, Alpha Dog and Black Snake Moan. (vh1.com)

What parents should know: His most recent album contains a parental advisory. Though there is a "clean" version, the album is full of sexual content, suggestive and foul language.

Parent/Teen Q&A: Why do you think some artists who start out clean, change their image and their music to contain harsher or even dirty topics and language? Does it change your perception of them at all?



filmwatch

The month of February has a comic book hero and a popular television show competing for the number one spot. Take the time to be informed!

TITLE	RATING	RED FLAGS	GENRE	STARRING
Ghost Rider	PG-13	For horror, violence, and disturbing images	Action/Adventure	Nicolas Cage, Wes Bentley, Eva Mendes
Black Snake Moan	R	For sexual content, language, some violence, and drug use	Drama	Samuel L. Jackson, Christina Ricci, Justin Timberlake
Reno 911: Miami	R	For sexual conduct, nudity, crude humor, language, and drug use	Comedy	Robert Ben Garant, Thomas Lennon