

TLP 416: Children and Technology | the biggest parenting challenges you will face, Part 2

I. What is Technology?

- Though most people imagine smartphones and computers with which you can talk and 3D gaming systems, technology has been around ever since the creation of man.
- According to Merriam-Webster, technology is “the practical application of knowledge especially in a particular area; a capability given by the practical application of knowledge.”
- Technically, the first use of technology was the first use of language.
- Even in their sinless state, if Adam and Eve used anything other than their physical bodies to remove a fruit from the upper branches of a tree, groom a lion’s mane, or float in a lake . . . they were using technology.
- In order to simplify our discussion, technology will refer to our *tools*. Whether it be something we hold in our hands, ride, or inhabit, everything that man has invented that was not present immediately after God created the world is technology.
- Genesis 3:7 – Not only did Adam and Eve invent clothes for the purpose of covering themselves, it’s likely that they had to invent other implements to make the clothes.
- Is necessity truly the mother of invention? Why did Adam and Eve make tools for sewing? Well, they needed clothes. Why did they need clothes? They realized they were naked and their sin caused them shame. Like everything else in a human life, we can most accurately say that “*Belief* is the mother of invention.” Adam and Eve believed they needed to cover their nakedness. So they desired to cover their nakedness. So they did something about it.

II. How is Technology Related to Security?

- Why would a fifteen year old boy get his hands on a phone so that he can look at pornography? Why? Because he believes he needs it. Why? Because it’s a question of *satisfaction*.
- Safety and satisfaction are the most basic temptations you and your kids will ever face.
- What is going to make you happy — God’s plan or your own? The crux of the matter again comes down to whether or not I’m going to trust God’s plan or make up my own.
- Doing “good” things for nothing more than personal satisfaction outside of God’s will is a sin. (Proverbs 29:25; Galatians 1:10; Romans 14:23)
- Many children exhibit an apparent love for the Lord and passion for all things churchy, but they too “fall off the wagon.” Of course, when that happens, the reality is that they were never on the wagon in the first place.
- The biggest parenting challenge you will ever face is not teaching your child to do the right things. It’s teaching your children to do the right things . . . *for the right reasons*.
- If I reject God’s authority, I’m in charge of my safety and satisfaction. Therefore, I’m going to invent more and more ways to gain more and more safety and satisfaction. The more technology I have, the more in control and powerful I feel. The more powerful I feel, the easier it is to think of myself as being the god of my own life . . . which — of course — further substantiates the idea that I don’t need God’s plan.

III. The Technology of the Tower of Babel

- Genesis 11 The chapter opens telling us that the whole earth was unified with one language. And Nimrod and his people travel to Shinar and decide they’ve found a good place for a city. Enter the technology.

- Verse three tells us they said, “Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.’ And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.” So, they’re either creating the tools necessary for this or they’re using what they already know, but they get so good at it that they decide to build a whole city and — specifically — a tower whose top will reach into heaven so that they can make a name for themselves. And they had this fear that they would otherwise be scattered over the face of the earth.
- Thankfully the Lord unpacks their inner motivation a bit more in the following verses. According to God, this was a problem. He said “nothing they purpose to do will be impossible for them.”
- The people of Babel were trying to gain security, safety, and satisfaction by utilizing their technology — to the extent that they would reach up to God.
- Of course, God wasn’t concerned that they would reach Him or overthrow Him or anything, but He tells us that a group of people dead set on using their technology to achieve their own satisfaction will accomplish it.
- It doesn’t matter if it’s a teething ring or a laptop, a car or a guitar, your children will only ever utilize the technology in order to gain satisfaction. And that satisfaction is either going to be rooted in their own perceptions of security and comfort or their trust that obeying God is more satisfying than anything they could dream up. That’s it.
- This means that technology is definitely going to be a problem in your home.
- We’re all sinners. We all — far too often — choose to sacrifice our technology on the alter to self for our own pleasure. Unless your family members are perfect, toys and skateboards and game systems and beds and notebooks and cars and Christmas trees and computers and phones are going to be used to usurp God.
- Sure, your seven year old isn’t going to proclaim that he’s going to build a tower that will reach to heaven where he can rival God for authority of his life . . . but if he’s playing with those blocks simply because he enjoys it . . . with no thought whatsoever to God’s will for his life . . . then, yeah, in that moment, for that time, he’s displacing God.
- If he gets mad that his sibling knocked it over, if he doesn’t want to share, if he throws them when he can’t make his tower as perfectly as he imagined, if he complains when you tell him it’s time to clean up . . . you know for whom he was living. And it wasn’t God.
- Now, when it comes to the technology we normally consider when someone says technology — computers in the form of phones, TV’s, game systems, and the like . . . we Christians have a really bad habit of swinging to extremes.
 - Some of us are no more concerned about how our daughters use their phones than we are about how their brother uses his blocks.
 - But others who have no concerns about the blocks — even though the child is potentially just worshipping himself with them — those same people are petrified of the technology.
 - However, the technology — whether blocks or computers — are not the problem.
 - The problem is that we’re not addressing our children’s understanding of safety and security. We’re not rooting that in Scripture and a relationship with God, and we’re not teaching our kids how our technology can grow out of that relationship with Christ.
- Our kids are running around using tech for their own pleasure, and we’re running around trying to police how they use that tech for our own pleasure.
- Honestly, it doesn’t matter if a child is accessing pornography or being selfish with his matchbox cars . . . God is not pleased. The child is not living for Christ. He’s participating in idolatry