

“My Son Wants To Go to a Britney Spears Concert”

My son is 15 years old. My husband and I have differing opinions on our son's attraction to Britney Spears. Our son has requested tickets to her concert. The photographs I've seen are extremely sexual and seem pornographic. Her physical gyrations at the concerts are repulsive to me but I know my son loves it. It seems that this fixation on Britney is cultivating a strong appetite for more sexually explicit visual stimulations in the future. Share your thoughts or scripture please.

Dear _____,

I know what *I* think, but I thought it might be helpful to ask my son Kevin, a college sophomore home for a visit, how HE would answer your question.

First of all, he just shook his head and said “Keep that boy away from her!! She has incited so many guys to lust—I don't care WHAT she says about being a virgin. She's a tease.”

Then he sat down with his Bible and provided the following perspective:

Proverbs 5:3-5 says, “For the lips of the adulteress drip honey. . . her steps lead straight to the grave.” Verse 8 says, “Keep far away from her and do not go near the door of her house.” Kevin pointed out that Britney's provocative dress and onstage behavior has invited so many men to lust after her that, according to the way the Lord Jesus equated lust with adultery in the mind, she could reasonably be considered an adulteress. Not literally, of course, but acting deliberately with the intent of making young men lust after her. And not very different from the woman warned against in Proverbs.

2 Timothy 2:22 says, "FLEE youthful lusts. . ." Don't even let there be an opportunity, either in behavior or in one's mind, to pursue unholy thoughts. Going to a Britney Spears concert is the exact opposite of fleeing youthful lusts.

And finally, Kevin brought up Proverbs 6:20 and 24-25: "My son, observe the commandment of your father and *do not forsake the teaching of your mother* . . . To keep you from the evil woman, From the smooth tongue of the adulteress. Do not desire her beauty in your heart, Not let her capture you with her eyelids."

My mother's heart is delighted that he put such emphasis on your (and my!) role in your son's life. From that same mother's perspective, I would put this in the same context as the kind of unpopular decisions we make all the time:

- "I realize you don't want to brush your teeth and you don't see any reason for it, but you need to do it anyway."
- "I realize you prefer pizza and chocolate cake to anything green, but it's important for you to eat vegetables, and there will BE no pizza or chocolate cake until you eat the healthy stuff."
- "I understand you hate pain and so do I, but you have to go to the doctor and get this booster shot, and I'm afraid you don't have a choice in this."

So it follows that we would say, "Yes, son, I know you think Britney Spears is the hottest thing since fire and this constitutes child abuse, but because I love you and want to protect you from your own flesh and hormones, you can't go. End of discussion."

Part of the value of God placing parents in a place of authority and protection over children is that we are able to see farther down the road than they are, and we can see the big picture of life better than they can. So we make them do

things they don't want to do, and we prevent them from doing things they really want to do, because acting in their best interests is more important to us than feeling popular and well-liked by our kids. We are no longer in high school; we can choose being wise and responsible over being popular.

But then there's the other issue, which is that your husband and your son are apparently in agreement *against* your position and beliefs. I'm so sorry you have to deal with that!

But according to what the scripture says about our role as wives, we need to be in submission at the same time that we support our husbands by providing our God-given woman's perspective. So all you can do is speak to your husband (ALONE) about how you think about this issue (and I would use the word "thoughts" rather than "feelings" since it's a temptation for many men to dismiss women's feelings as unreliable and not valuable. Not fair, I know, but it seems to be the way it is a lot of the time). The more logical and analytical you can be in sharing your perspective, the better the communication will probably be. Once your husband knows your position, leave the final decision up to him (which it should be anyway since he's the dad) and turn over the situation into God's hands. (This reminds me of a word of wisdom I heard the other day: If you can't change something, release it.) If your son ends up going to the concert, pray for him! Pray that he will have eyes to see the truth about what Britney's doing; pray that he will feel guilty; pray that he will have a growing discomfort with this kind of self-absorbed fleshly behavior. And if you haven't read *The Power of a Praying Parent* by Stormie Omartian, get it and pray it!

I hope this helps.

Blessings on you,

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“Is It Safe For an Older Homosexual Man to Spend Time with Teenage Boys?”

There is a man in our church in his mid forties. I believe he really loves the Lord and is always a blessing to those who need him. We used to often have him to our home, but I noticed that he was often physical with our teen boys (rough-housing, etc.) I felt uncomfortable with this but thought perhaps he just wanted to be an uncle-type image. He has always enjoyed spending time with the young adult and teen men in our church, and, to my knowledge, has never behaved inappropriately with any of them.

We later learned, however, that he struggles with homosexual feelings. This is not common knowledge to others in our church, and we have decided it is not for us to say anything as we love this person and would not want to see him hurt. We told our boys that if they spent time with him it should be in a group or meet at a restaurant for dinner. This has worked well and there have been no problems, especially since our boys know the situation. Our dilemma is this. There is another teen in our church that he sometimes helps and spends time with. He is an 18 year old and I'm sure would say something if a problem occurred (he is also very close to our family). I truly believe nothing has happened. We don't want to say anything to him or his family, but worry that if something should happen it would be our fault. It seems if someone is struggling with this type of thing, it would be best if he not spend time alone with young men. Am I correct? Just need any advice you might be able to give.

P.S. He does not spend time with younger children....(that I know of) mostly just older teens and young adults. He may just want friendship as a single man.

I asked my friend Ricky Chelette, a pastor and Executive Director of Living Hope Ministries, for help in answering your question. I loved his answer! I hope it helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

As someone who has worked with male strugglers for a long time I appreciate your concerns and your cautions as a mother and friend. I think your concerns are real and I would too have some cautions if this gentleman is spending one on one time with an 18-year-old.

I really think that the best thing to do, as he is your friend, would be to sit down and talk to him. You obviously know that he struggles with homosexuality, yet you love him. He needs to know that. It will be terribly helpful for him to have you in the know and help him in his accountability.

I would suggest that you sit down with him and in a very loving manner state to him. "John, you have been a part of our church and family for a long time and we know that you struggle with homosexuality. We also know that you are a godly man, and we love you so very much. Because we do love you we want to know how we can walk with you on this difficult road. I am sure there are times that it is very difficult for you, and we want to be of help and support to you. How can we help?" He may or may not give you some answers. Depends. But at some point I would also say, "I know you wouldn't want to engage anyone in our church in this activity, but I do want to caution you about being with some of the younger adults and older youth alone. These are crazy days we live in, and I wouldn't want someone to falsely accuse you of something you never intended to do

(i.e. Catholic Church scandal, etc.). You know we trust you with our boys and they love you greatly. But I do want you to be careful for your own good and theirs." Something to that effect.

I realize this is a VERY touchy subject, but I think that the cautions are real. I doubt that anything has happened, but at the same time, that age of young adult/older youth 18-26 are prime candidates for someone that is struggling. That is the "ideal" age of our masculinity and those that struggle tend to "idealize" that age and desire that they were the people toward whom they experience same-gender attraction.

I pray that all this has been completely harmless and it probably has. However, you cannot ignore this. It needs to be addressed and you are responsible to him and to the young adults for your knowledge. To say nothing would be a disservice to all.

Many of the folks who struggle with this are very sensitive to younger guys. They feel as though they can give them some of what they didn't get from their own fathers – touch, affirmation, attention, and love. They are most genuine and pure in that regard and do it with a deep sense of passion for God and for the folks they help. So it well might be that this is the case for the man you speak of. I pray that it is, but the fact that he does struggle should still put some more serious boundaries in his life.

Even if he were a married man, I would say the same thing. I don't think that a married man should be spending one on one time with a youth or young adult on a regular basis. There is just too much room for misinterpretation. He (your friend) should know that. It is NOT just about his struggle, it is about being smart and safe for everyone involved.

I pray that this will be of help to you. Should I be of

further help, please let me know. I pray that God will give you wisdom and grace as you share with him. You are a brave and good friend for addressing this issue with him.

Blessings.

Ricky Chelette

Executive Director, Living Hope Ministries

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