

# The Family Friend



*A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.*

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## **The Bible and the College Cheating Scandal**

One of the nation's biggest news stories last week involved a college admissions scam that included several high-profile people, including at least two Hollywood actresses. A California man, Rick Singer, spearheaded a scheme to bribe coaches and administrators at such colleges as Yale, Stanford, Georgetown, USC, and other prestigious universities. The bribes bought these privileged High School students extra time to take the SAT and ACT, make fake athletic profiles, and substitutes to take their entrance exams for them. This has proven embarrassing for both the colleges and those breaching this most basic of ethical codes (via Foxnews.com, Madeline Farber).

Someone observed that there is a bit of irony and hypocrisy in all of this. We feel outraged at this glaring lack of honesty and ethics, but students who attend these (and other) universities have been taught for decades that there is no such thing as absolute truth and an

objective standard of right and wrong. Are we surprised when people live out the consequences of such world views? Remove a measurable, immutable standard, and anything goes! It disgusts us to see such values in action, but people of influence in our society have been pushing such values for a long time.



In addition to it's answers to all of life's crucial questions, the Bible lays down an ethical code that is universal and logical. It's rules are blind to nationality, economic status, gender, age, or any other category one falls into he or she might appeal to as an exception. In fact, those who have more have greater expectations made of them (see Luke 12:48). The Judgment Day will be eminently

impartial. No one will manipulate the results. No one can sidestep heaven's requirements for salvation without an eternal consequence. Just because one is religious leader does not mean that they are above the law of Christ. Again, there are higher standards for those who are in positions of leadership (Jas. 3:1; Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 4:16; etc.).

It's not at all surprising that a society which rejects God's guidelines finds itself sinking into a moral and ethical abyss (cf. Prov. 14:34). But, it does go to show that no one wants to reap the harvest from sowing the seeds of sin. However, there is no way to avoid it (Hos. 8:7; Gal. 6:7-8). Our challenge is to live lives of consistency, exemplifying the benefits of respecting and adhering to God's standards. Jesus calls such modeling "salt" and "light" which highlights God's existence and relevance in our world (Mat. 5:13-16).

We cannot keep others from being cheaters and liars, but we can show them a powerful alternative.

--Neal Pollard

# The Cicada Syndrome

You might know cicadas best either by their loud, buzzing chorus, or by their distinctive thumb-sized appearance.

What do you know about the cicada lifecycle? These insects lay their eggs in tree branches. When the eggs hatch, the nymphs drop to the ground, burrow into the soil, and feed on sap in the roots of plants.



Dog-day cicadas or annual cicadas stay that way for two to seven years. Periodical cicadas persist in this immature state for 13 or 17 years! Do you know what all kinds of cicadas have in common? They live for only a few weeks as adults.

Do you know anybody with “the cicada syndrome”? They are the kind of people who refuse to grow up. Kids have the right to be kids. But, to borrow Paul’s illustration, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave

up childish ways” (1 Cor.13:11).

Selfish men and women have the cicada syndrome. They have a hard time thinking about anybody but themselves. The needs of their children, spouses, parents, brethren, and friends (if they have any) must take a back seat. “Me first” is their mantra.

Children are born utterly dependent on others. They cry when their needs and wants are going unmet. God expects more of adults. “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil. 2:4).

Irresponsible men and women have the cicada syndrome. They see nothing wrong with continually getting something for nothing. Youngsters deserve to be fed, clothed and sheltered by their parents and other caregivers.

On the other hand, when it comes to able-bodied adults, God says: “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat” (2 Thess. 3:10). “Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need” (Eph. 4:28).

Naïve men and women have the cicada syndrome. Some people stay fixated on material things like a child with the Toys “R” Us Christmas catalog. They think that they can pursue more and more without hurting themselves.

They assume that “R-rated” movies, “rated ‘M’ for mature” games, and television shows that

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glorify illicit sex or always revolve around murder can entertain them without infecting their hearts, minds, and souls. They imagine that they can mate without marriage and leave nothing behind.

“But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people” (Eph. 5:3).

Multiplied symptoms indicate the presence of the cicada syndrome. They all reflect thought patterns that are excusable in a child but utterly inexcusable in a grownup. “Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature” (1 Cor. 14:20).

–Danny Boggs

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## ***Ethical Principles for Husbands and Wives***

- Leave Father and Mother and become one flesh (Matt 19:4-6, Eph 5:31)
- Do not commit adultery (Romans 13:9)
- Be holy and possess the other in sanctification (1 Thess 4:4-8)
- Dwell with each other according to knowledge (1 Peter 3:7)
- Defraud ye not one the other (1 Cor 7:1-5)

–F. Furman Kearley