

American Toys
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By Chris Carlson

Hi, I'm Chris with Intervarsity and I'm a computer science major at Northern Illinois University and I love technology. Yup, I love walking into Best Buy just to play with the newest and latest gadgets. I remember once I spent an hour playing with a laptop that you could flip the screen around and write on it as you would a piece of paper. Awesome! Yea, in America we love our toys don't we? I remember earlier this summer I went to camp with the purpose of getting away from my high-speed Internet connection, my computer, my e-mail, and from high tech stuff in general. Yet I still brought my palm pilot. Heck, I even brought my palm pilot with me today. As a computer science major I guess you could say technology is a pretty important part of my life. But, there is something more important in my life than technology. In fact, the most important thing in my life was very relevant and new two thousand years ago. But is it possible that what was relevant and new two thousand years ago could be relevant to us today? As relevant as the latest processor from Intel? Two thousand years ago we had boats of wood and today we have airliners of steel. Two thousand years ago we had a primitive abacus and today we have computers. Two thousand years ago a man in the Middle East, by the name of Jesus, taught about a better way to live. But with our technology do we really need a better way to live? Look around you, isn't life good? You're enjoying the sites and sounds of Mackinac Island. Then you're probably going to go home or to a hotel and have access to a warm meal, a shower, and are probably going to be able to spend the evening in leisure if you wish. In today's world, with today's technology is there a better way to live? The answer is yes. Yes – something relevant two thousand years ago can be relevant today and yes there is a better way to live. But what is it? Is it about going to church or living a good spiritual life? Surprisingly, Jesus says no. He doesn't speak against going to church or living a good spiritual life. In fact he says we ought to, but he does say that those in and of themselves aren't enough. He says he is "the way and the truth and the life." This means that Jesus is the way to the better way of life. But what is this better way of life? Thankfully Jesus answers this as well. He says that the greatest thing you can do is to "Love the LORD your God" and the next greatest thing you can do is to "Love your neighbor as yourself." Ok, so Jesus taught about a better way of life two thousand years ago but how is it relevant today? Since I started getting to know Jesus he has shown me that there is more to my life than my job and my technology. His relationship and teachings are a source of wisdom during difficult times. And as I have followed him he has brought healing and release from feelings of worthlessness. He takes care of me as a father does a son. But, best of all he has been a friend that I can count on. This is how Jesus has been relevant to me in my life and how he wants to be relevant to you in yours. And best of all, you don't need e-mail or a cell phone to talk to him. The question I want to pose to you is, what is the most relevant thing in your life? Is it your tech toys? Is it your job? Or could it be Jesus?