

Wise Use of Technology

COTR Sunday school

Epiphany, 2020

What is Technology

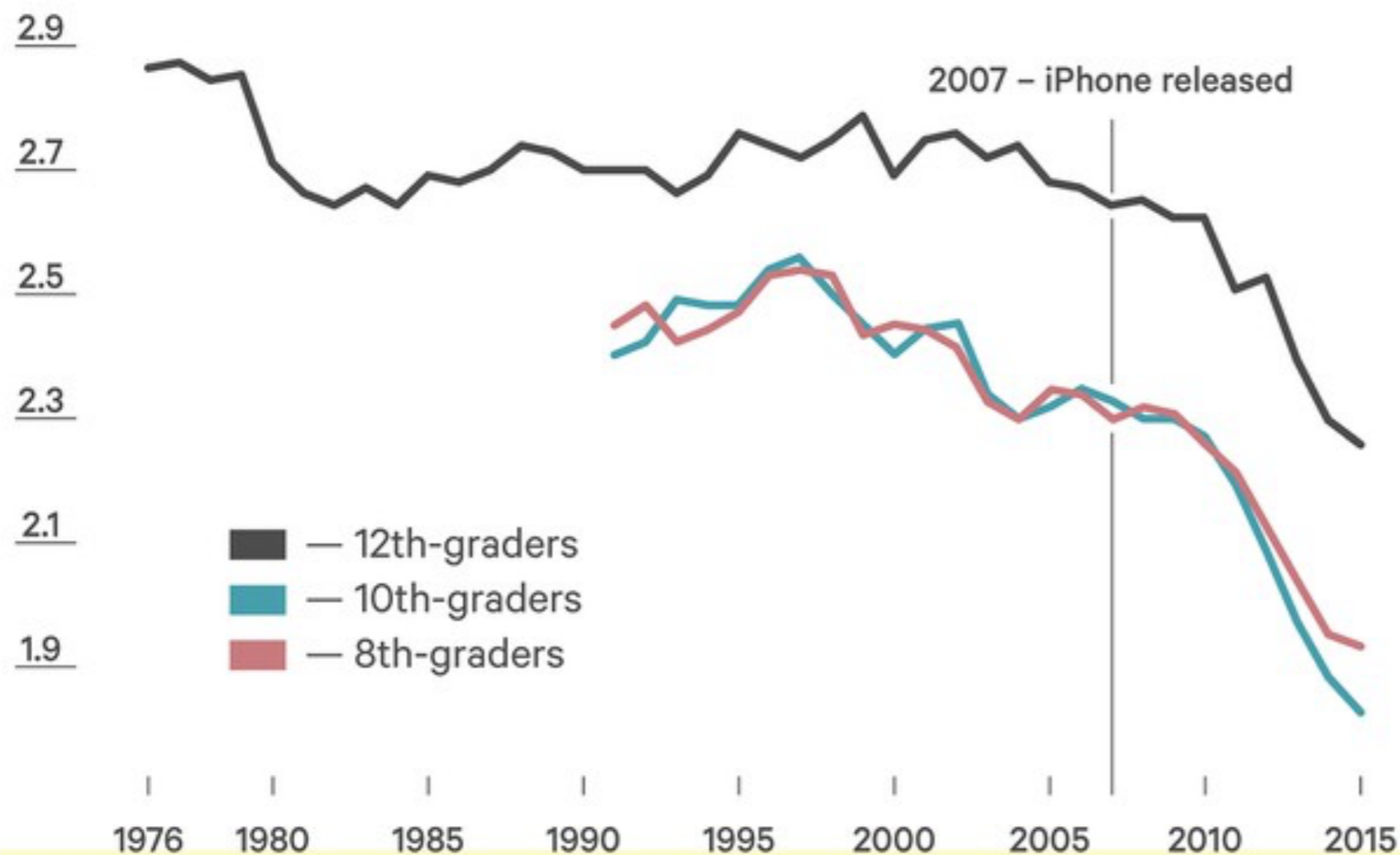
- ❖ What is Technology?: “Technology is a distinct cultural activity in which human beings exercise **freedom** and **responsibility** in response to God by forming and transforming the natural creation, with the aid of tools and procedures, for practical ends or purposes.” -Stephen Monsma
- ❖ “Technology is a distinct cultural activity in which human beings exercise freedom and responsibility in response to God by forming and transforming the natural creation, with the aid of tools and procedures, for the purpose of glorifying God, serving humanity, and facilitating recreational activities. Indeed, technology is used in transforming the Garden Temple into the Heavenly City.”

Some Effects on Teens

1

Not Hanging Out With Friends

Times per week teenagers go out without their parents



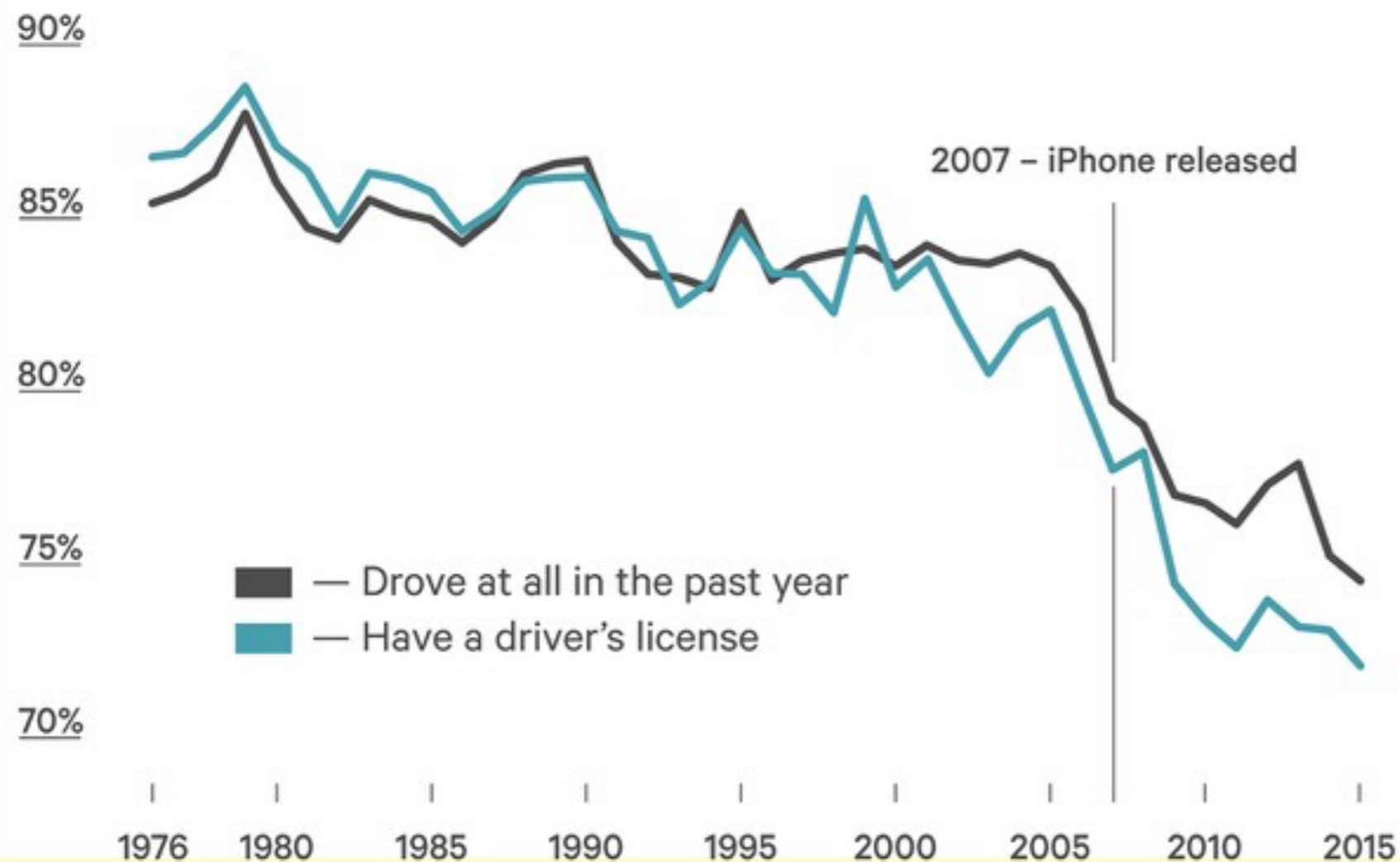
“Teens...seem to be content with this homebody arrangement—not because there so studious, but because their social life is lived on their phone.”

Some Effects on Teens

2

In No Rush to Drive

Percentage of 12th-graders who drive



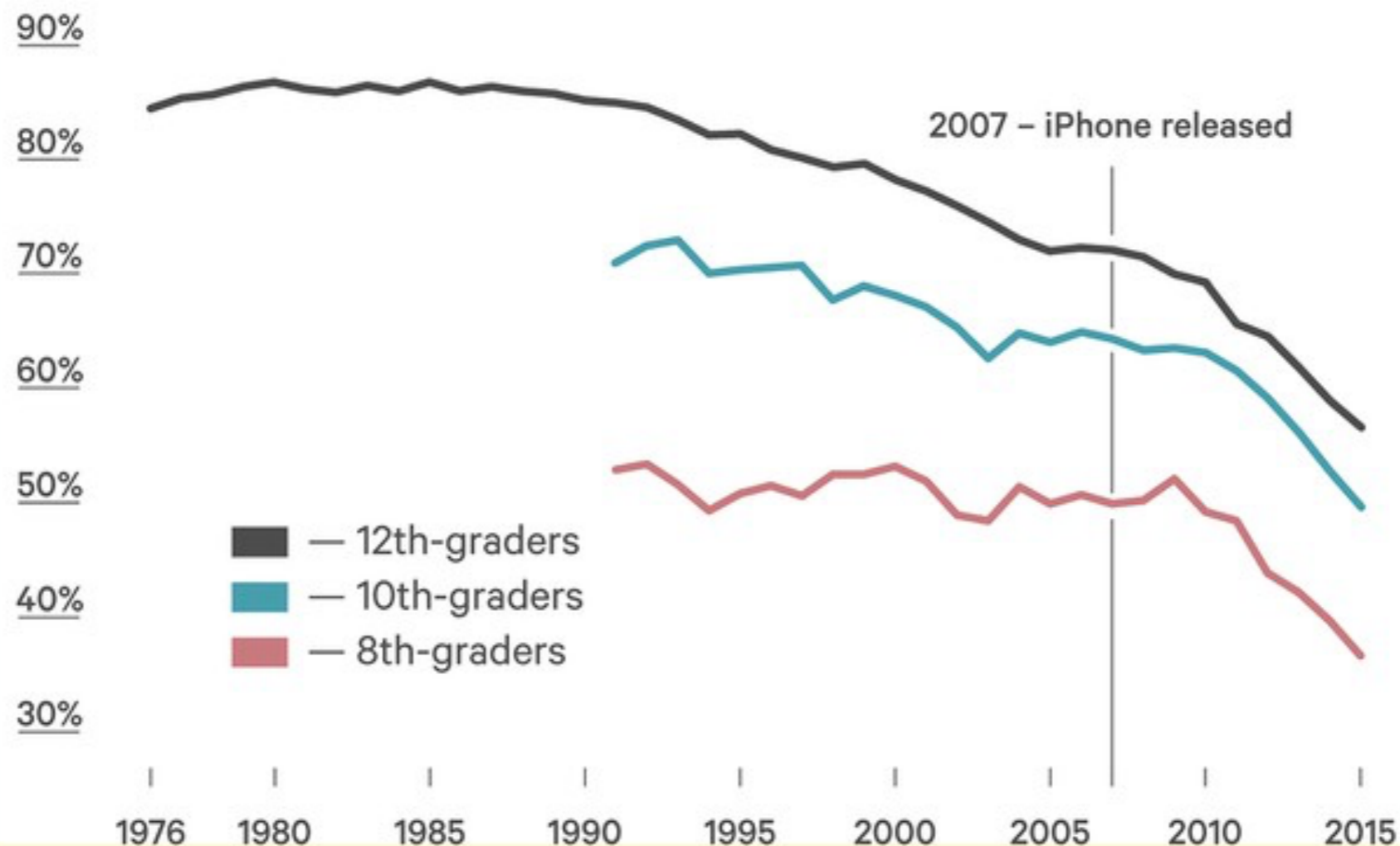
“I didn’t get my license until my mom told me I had to because she could not keep driving me to school.”

Some Effects on Teens

3

Less Dating ...

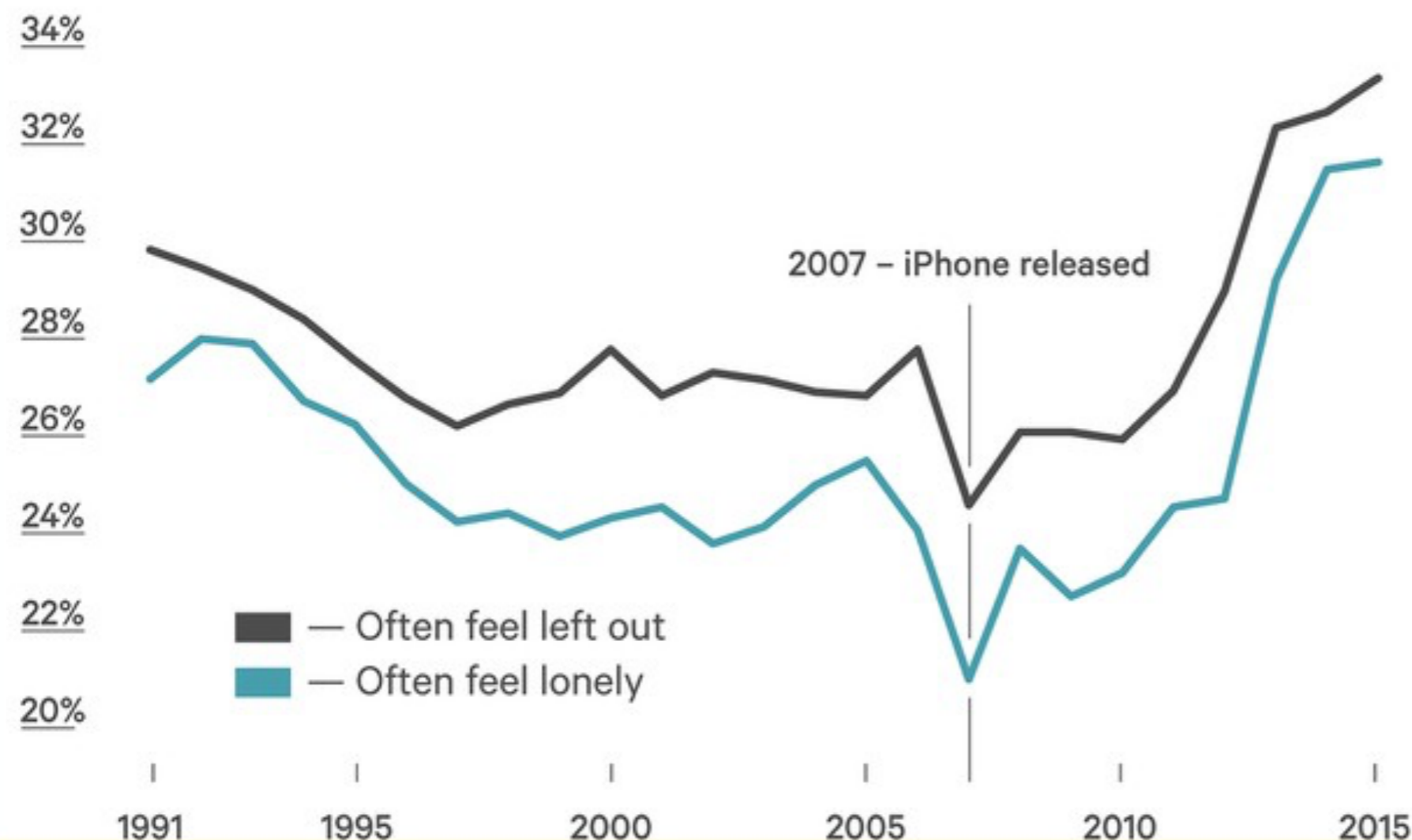
Percentage of teenagers who ever go out on dates



Some Effects on Teens

More Likely to Feel Lonely

Percentage of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders who agree or mostly agree with the statement "I often feel left out of things" or "A lot of times I feel lonely"



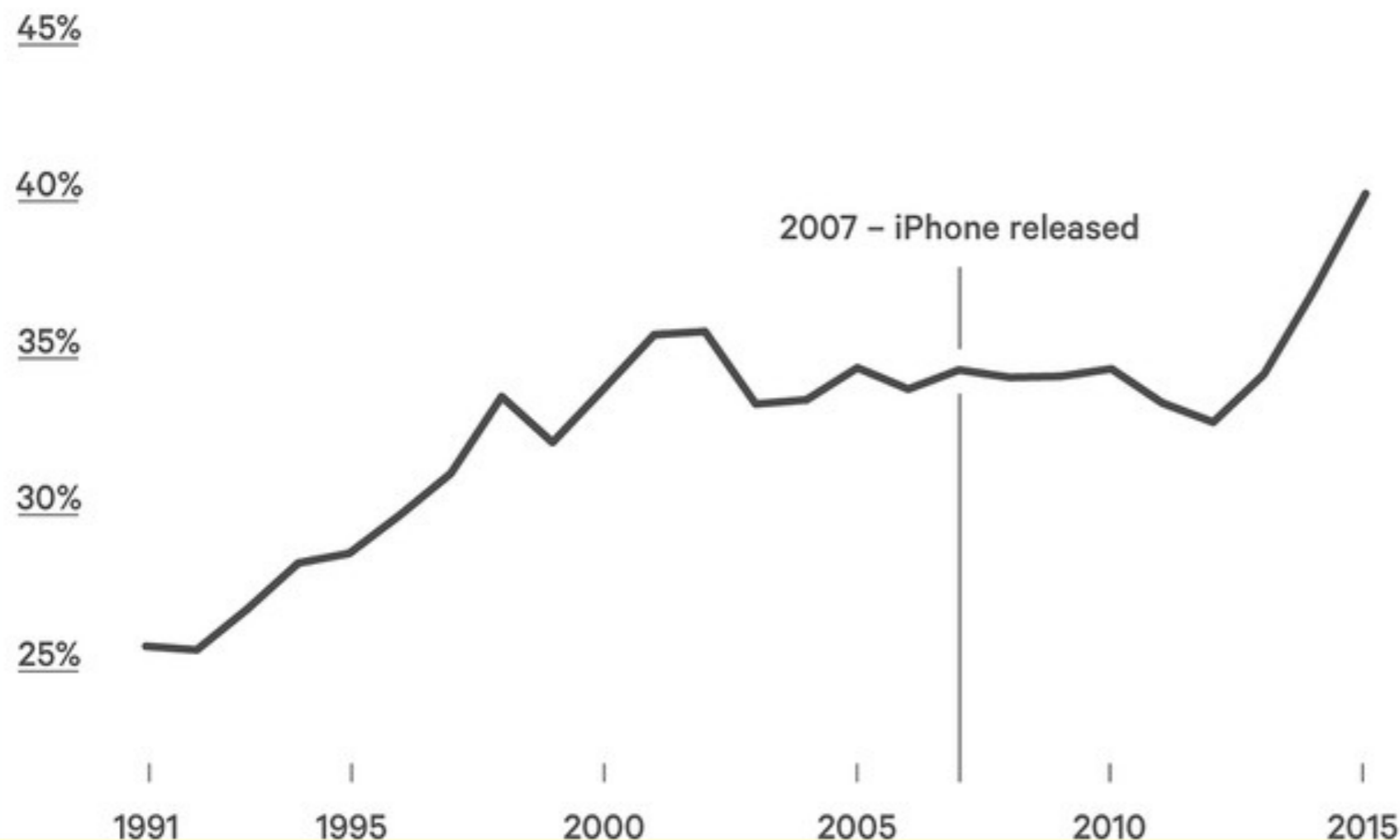
“Eight-graders who spend 10 or more hours a week on social media are 56 percent more likely to say they’re unhappy.”

Some Effects on Teens

6

Less Likely to Get Enough Sleep

Percentage of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders who get less than seven hours of sleep most nights



57% more teens were sleep-deprived in 2015 than in 1991

“Having my phone closer to me while I’m sleeping is a comfort.”

So what is it about Smart Phones?

Why can interaction with a smart phone have such adverse effects?

The answer is that smart phones can and often do facilitate an undermining of essential aspects of our personhood.

We are Embodied Creatures

We are embodied creatures—not brains on a stick, or souls entrapped in flesh waiting for heaven.

“Scripture does not at all view man’s bodliness as something secondary; rather, the moment one devalues the body, one has ‘deactualized’ man’s whole being as a creature of God.” —G.C. Berkouwer

This means that our bodily activities are just as important as ideas.

- Digital communication with other people is good, but it is a gnostic alternative to personal communication.
- A purely facebook friend is not a friend. If our social interactions are solely in a digital realm, we are not truly interacting and knowing our “friends”
- Social media allows for the construction of parallel, artificial community. And, real embodied community cannot be replaced.

We are Relational Creatures

- Kevin Vanhoozer said that “I think therefore I am” has been changed to “I connect therefore I am.”
- Much of the western tradition (Augustine, Boethius, Descartes) views the self as established through reason and expression.
- Boethius: “A person is an individual substance with a rational nature.”
- But, is this the way God has made us?
- “The persons [God] do not simply enter into relations with one another, but are constituted by one another in relations. Father, Son and Spirit are eternally what they are by virtue of what they are from and to one another....we [man] are constituted in a network of relations that takes shape within our boundedness in time and space.” -Colin Gunton
- In embodied community (and even more so in redeemed community), we are truly socially nourished, challenged, and loved.

So, what does this mean for us?

- Do we reject the use of Social Media?
- I don't think so. In fact, Social Media CAN be used to augment and facilitate real and actual community.
- But, we always need to be aware of the dehumanizing tendencies latent in social media. We need to remember that:
 - We are embodied creatures, created for personal interaction.
 - Our selfness is constituted in community with others.
 - Personal applications. Parental applications. Church applications.