

*Quick*

SCRIPTURE  
REFERENCE

for

Counseling  
Youth

KEITH R. MILLER *and*  
PATRICIA A. MILLER

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To our parents Carl and Leona Miller  
and Hank and Clara Voss. You gave us  
a solid foundation in God's Word.  
What a blessing you have been!

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## Introduction

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### **Purpose of This Book**

This book was our hearts' desire many years ago, but being busy as a dad and mom, we were never able to put the time and energy into preparing it. Teenage years can be such a challenge. How we wish we could say we did everything right with our four children and were perfect examples of godly parents. What we discovered was that while logic, wisdom, and words were not always effective, the response to God's Word was dramatic. God couples with us through his Word to help guide the next generation.

In today's postmodern world, youth are quite aware of the issues of life and are constantly told there are no absolutes. More than ever, they need to have confidence in the things that will never change—God and his Word. As parents, youth leaders, and counselors, we often emphasize that God's Word is the answer for our needs. We are confident that our children and youth also must know it and its power. Why then are we so hesitant to use the Word? Is it because we are not familiar enough

with Scripture ourselves to know where to find just the right text? It is our prayer that this book will assist you greatly in that need. As we grow in our love of God and his Word, the result will be a relaxed and natural sharing of Scripture.

Many times we say to the college students with whom we work that if they are daily in God's Word, we do not fear for them. They may make mistakes but they will not find themselves severely off target. They cannot be diligently in the Word and blatantly involved with sin. God's Word will keep them on the mark.

### **How to Use This Book**

We have made every effort to be true to context. For those texts for which the context does not totally fit, we believe the principle (timeless, universal truth) does apply to the topic at hand.

Many of the Old Testament passages refer, in context, to Israel. Yet the principles reflecting God's care for his people and interest in their welfare can clearly be seen.

Our use of passages from the Mosaic law reflects our conviction that the traditional moral, civil, and ceremonial distinctions for that code are correct. God's moral law, as summarized in the Ten Commandments, is

applicable for all people, for all time. Though the civil and ceremonial laws are not our rule of life in this age of grace, they do reflect the mind of God on issues of right and wrong. Thus we have drawn principles from them for the topics.

To avoid constant repetition of biblical texts, many of the topics provide cross-references to other related topics. Because of space limitations, some of the verses are not printed. Within each topic, references are listed for further study and application. For this second edition, we have added an expanded Biblical Narratives section. We have also added Practical Steps (action ideas to help both counselor and the youth) and Resources (books and pamphlets relevant to the topic).

### ***Suggestions for Youth Leaders and Counselors***

- See our emphasis on the first topic, the Gospel.
- Have your Bible open as you counsel, as an excellent nonverbal emphasis on the value you place on God's Word.
- Ask each young person to bring a Bible to the session. What God says to them is most important. Have them read, memorize, and underline.

- Cross-reference between topics to assist in finding the most applicable texts.
- Make sure the youth are having daily time in God's Word and in prayer!
- Use the Biblical Narratives at the end of many of the topics for further study.
- The Practical Steps are a jumping-off point for your sessions with the young person. Be creative—tweak and add your own ideas.
- Assign homework in the Word—something to study that week. Have the youth report back.
- For further research and understanding, consider the Resources listed. Understand that each book or pamphlet was carefully chosen, but we would not necessarily agree with every statement contained in each one. Internet sites are great for finding used books, and library loan systems are helpful as well.

While the Resources are helpful to youth, most of them are chosen with counselors in mind. Study of them will increase one's knowledge and ability to help others.

### ***Suggestions for Parents***

- Use this book as a part of your family's conversations about God. Read and discuss topics and verses.
- Assign topics to your children and youth for study in areas in which they are struggling.
- Encourage them to memorize Scripture.
- Let your children see the importance of Scripture in your home. Let them see you having your quiet time, using the Word consistently.
- Let them know the Bible is the most important book in your home—and in the world!
- Keep thinking how you can naturally, and with ease, maintain a lifestyle consistently based on Scripture.
- Guard against becoming religion based (legalistic with man-made rules and convictions), and focus on the freedom the Gospel gives us to obey out of a grateful heart.

### ***Suggestions for Youth***

- Take one topic a day to read and study.
- Memorize verses relevant to your needs.
- Seek wise counsel from more mature believers when you need it.

- Share the topics and verses with friends who are struggling.
- Prayerfully consider how you can help your friends with their problems.
- Write in your book—underline—mark it up. Study for yourself.

### ***Psalm 78:1–8***

My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. They would not be like their ancestors—a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him. (NIV)

## The Gospel

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The message of the Gospel breathes true life into our lives. This is the beginning point for you and for those you help. The Gospel story is old, rich, and personal. When an individual truly believes and begins a personal relationship with the heavenly Father through repentance and faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in that person's life. Salvation is granted; sin is forgiven. New life has begun.

Though much of Scripture is applicable and wise counsel will help the nonbeliever, those with a personal relationship with God through Christ will have the greatest benefit.

Essential to any counseling situation is the need to determine if the young person has trusted in Jesus as the only way to heaven. If not, that is the counselor's first task. Only then will the Scripture, with the power of the Holy Spirit, be able to truly do its work.

### **Steps in Guiding an Individual to Christ**

If possible, have youth read the passages themselves from a Bible.

**1. Each person is separated from God because of sin and sinful behavior.**

**Romans 3:23** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (NIV)

**Isaiah 53:6** We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (NIV)

**2. Sin must be punished—separation from God, hell.**

**Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NIV)

**3. There is nothing a person can do to gain favor with God or to earn merit toward salvation.**

**Ephesians 2:8–9** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (NIV)

**Isaiah 64:6** All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy

rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. (NIV)

**Titus 3:5**

- 4. Recognizing this dilemma, God had in place from creation a way for an individual to have a personal relationship with himself. The way was through the death of his Son, Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 5:8** But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. (NLT)

**John 3:16** For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. (NLT)

**Acts 4:12** There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. (NLT)

**Romans 10:9**

- 5. Each person must repent of his or her sin and personally believe (trust) in Jesus Christ as the only way to receive God's forgiveness and gain entrance into heaven.**

**John 1:12** But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. (NLT)

**John 3:36** And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment. (NLT)

**Luke 15:7, 10; John 3:18; 14:6**

## **6. Salvation is assured.**

**1 John 5:13** I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life. (NLT)

**John 5:24** I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life. (NLT)

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Nicodemus, John 3
- Serpent in the wilderness, Numbers 21 with John 3:14 (provides the best view as to what our salvation looks like)

- Woman at the well, John 4
- Philippian jailer, Acts 16

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- Ask the counselee: If you were to die soon, why would you expect God to allow you to join him in heaven?

For the youth:

- Choose one verse from each of the numbered sections above. Rewrite that verse in your own words to think through the Gospel.
- Explain what you learned from this first practical step to another believer or youth leader.
- Memorize John 20:31. Then take the next few weeks reading through the Gospel of John as you think about that verse.
- Security/assurance as a believer: Memorize 1 John 5:13. Then take time to read through 1 John, keeping that verse in mind.

## **Resources**

- *Assurance* (booklet), Susan Heck. Focus.
- *Crazy Love*, Francis Chan. David C. Cook.
- *The Gospel for Children*, John B. Leuzarder. Shepherd.
- *A Gospel Primer for Christians*, Milton Vincent. Focus.
- *Leading Your Child to Christ* (booklet), Marty Machowski. New Growth.

# Abortion

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*See also* **Decision Making, Fear, Hope, Selfishness, Unwed Pregnancy**

## **Choosing Life**

- 1. God is actively and personally involved in the life of every unborn person, even regarding plans for each day of his or her life.**

**Psalm 139:13–16** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (NLT)

- 2. The prophets recognized that God knew them as persons before they were born.**

**Jeremiah 1:5** Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

**Isaiah 49:1** Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name.

- 3. Elizabeth's unborn baby was aware of the unborn child Mary carried. Through a unique situation (the God-man in the womb), evidence is provided for personhood in the womb.**

**Luke 1:44** As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. (NIV)

- 4. Children are a reward—a gift—from God, no matter the circumstances of their conception.**

**Psalms 127:3–4** Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth.

**5. Following what self wants, rather than what God wants, is sin and leads to problems. Choose life!**

**Proverbs 14:12** There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death. (NLT)

**Proverbs 16:2** People may be pure in their own eyes, but the LORD examines their motives. (NLT)

**Philippians 2:3–4** Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. (NLT)

**Romans 8:5–6; 2 Timothy 3:1–2**

**6. Our actions are not hidden from God.**

**Hebrews 4:13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

**7. Our bodies are not ours—they belong to God.**

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20** Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he

bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory. (GNT)

**Romans 12:1–2; 2 Corinthians 6:16**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Mary and Elizabeth, joyful mothers, Luke 1:26–45
- Job, how God's hands fashioned him, Job 10:8–12
- Proverbs 24:11–12 on the need to rescue from death

### **Practical Steps**

- Both the mother and father should study their baby's development. An ultrasound would be helpful.
- Consider adoption; visit a pregnancy center.
- Memorize and review daily Psalm 139:16, and apply Isaiah 43:1–2 to this need.

### **Resource**

- *Pro-life Answers to Pro-choice Arguments*, Randy Alcorn. Multnomah.

## **After an Abortion**

*See also Confession, Forgiveness from God, Grief, Past Memories*

### **1. When you ask God's forgiveness, he gives it freely without reservation.**

**Psalm 32:3–5** When I did not confess my sins, I was worn out from crying all day long. Day and night you punished me, LORD; my strength was completely drained, as moisture is dried up by the summer heat. Then I confessed my sins to you; I did not conceal my wrongdoings. I decided to confess them to you, and you forgave all my sins. (GNT)

### **2. God can take our broken spirit and produce joy.**

**Psalm 51:12–17** Give me again the joy that comes from your salvation, and make me willing to obey you. Then I will teach sinners your commands, and they will turn back to you. Spare my life, O God, and save me, and I will gladly

proclaim your righteousness. Help me to speak, Lord, and I will praise you. You do not want sacrifices, or I would offer them; you are not pleased with burnt offerings. My sacrifice is a humble spirit, O God; you will not reject a humble and repentant heart. (GNT)

### **3. God offers restoration and freedom.**

**Psalm 40:1–3** I waited patiently for the LORD’s help; then he listened to me and heard my cry. He pulled me out of a dangerous pit, out of the deadly quicksand. He set me safely on a rock and made me secure. He taught me to sing a new song, a song of praise to our God. Many who see this will take warning and will put their trust in the LORD. (GNT)

### **4. God understands the grief of the women of Israel for children they would never see again. He understands sorrow for the loss of children.**

**Jeremiah 31:15** Thus says the LORD: “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.”

- 5. As those in Israel's captivity were not to dwell on the awfulness of the captivity, so we also are not to dwell on the past once it is forgiven.**

**Isaiah 43:18–19** Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

- 6. God is the only source of comfort when we have sorrow. He sends relief through Scripture, his Spirit, and godly people.**

**Psalms 18:1–6** I love you, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. The cords of death encompassed me; the torrents of destruction assailed me; the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the LORD; to my God I cried for help. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears.

**Isaiah 25:8**

## Practical Steps

- Purchase a special object or a piece of jewelry as a reminder of God's forgiveness and in memory of your baby.
- Write out your story to share with others.
- Volunteer at a crisis pregnancy center, and allow God to use your story to help others.
- Memorize Isaiah 43:1–2. When discouraged or sad, quote God's Word.
- Keep a journal; write a letter to the baby; name the baby; compose a song for the baby.

## Resources

- *Forgiven and Set Free: A Post-Abortion Bible Study for Women*, Linda Cochrane. Baker.
- *Healing after Abortion* (booklet), David Powlison. CCEF.
- *Living in His Forgiveness*, Sandy Day. Focus.
- *When the Pain Won't Go Away: Dealing with the Effects of Abortion* (booklet), RBC Ministries.

## Abuse

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*See also* **Fear, Incest, Past Memories, Purpose for Living, Rape, Suffering**

### **Help for the Abused**

#### **1. The Lord Jesus Himself experienced great abuse.**

**Isaiah 53:5–6** But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

**Psalms 22:7–8** Everyone who sees me mocks me. They sneer and shake their heads, saying, “Is this the one who relies on the LORD? Then let the LORD save him!” **22:16** . . . My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs; an evil gang closes in on

me. They have pierced my hands and feet. (NLT).  
See **Luke 23:33–37**

## **2. Others may fail us, but God will always stand by us.**

**Psalm 37:39–40** The LORD rescues the godly; he is their fortress in times of trouble. The LORD helps them, rescuing them from the wicked. He saves them, and they find shelter in him. (NLT)

**Psalm 72:12** He will rescue the poor when they cry to him; he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them. (NLT)

**Lamentations 3:20–23** I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. (NLT)

**Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 25:4**

## **3. God is always present; even when we feel alone, we can call on him.**

**Psalm 139:7–10** I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to

the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. (NLT)

**Psalm 46:1** God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

**Psalm 142:3–6** When my spirit faints within me, you know my way! In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me. Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul. I cry to you, O LORD; I say, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.” Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me!

**Lamentations 3:57–60**

**4. Although we do not know when or how God will rescue us, we do know he will provide the strength we need.**

**Psalm 31:4–5** You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, for You are my strength. (NASB)

**Psalm 61:3** For You have been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy. (NASB)

**Psalm 62:7** My victory and honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 12:9–10** But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (NIV)

**5. David prayed for safety from evil men. We can do the same.**

**Psalm 69:13–18** But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD. At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving faithfulness. Deliver me from sinking in the mire; let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters. Let not the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, or the pit close its mouth over me. Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me. Hide not your face from your servant; for I am in distress; make haste

to answer me. Draw near to my soul, redeem me;  
ransom me because of my enemies!

**Psalm 140:1–5**

- 6. We must not allow past events to control our present life. When there is nothing we can do to correct the past, we must commit it to God's future care.**

**Isaiah 43:18–19** Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

**Matthew 11:28–30** Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

**Philippians 3:13–14**

## **Comfort for the Abused**

- 1. Our God who is sovereign over our past can help us today.**

**Psalm 103:3–11** He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle's! The LORD gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly. He revealed his character to Moses and his deeds to the people of Israel. The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. (NLT)

## **2. We can always talk to God about the problem.**

**Hebrews 4:16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**Philippians 4:6–7** Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard

your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.  
(NLT)

### **3. God is our refuge, our strong protector.**

**Psalm 17:8–9** Guard me as you would guard your own eyes. Hide me in the shadow of your wings. Protect me from wicked people who attack me, from murderous enemies who surround me.  
(NLT)

**Isaiah 25:4** But you are a tower of refuge to the poor, O LORD, a tower of refuge to the needy in distress. You are a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the heat. For the oppressive acts of ruthless people are like a storm beating against a wall. (NLT)

#### **Psalm 46**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Jesus, his trial and crucifixion
- Hagar, who suffered at the hand of Sarah, Genesis 16
- Joseph, who was abused by his brothers, Genesis 37

- David, who was abused by Saul, 1 Samuel 18–26

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- It is good that the abused person is seeking your counsel, but others (parents, doctors, school, law enforcement) must get involved as well for relief to occur. Counselors must report abuse as required by law.
- Be sure to have a safety plan in place—emergency phone numbers, safe house, money, and so on.
- An abused youth needs to have a strong “big sister” or “big brother” relationship—someone to whom they can talk often.
- Since abuse is not acceptable (to God or people), steps need to be taken, with wise counsel, to find relief for the situation.

For the youth:

- Write out your story and share it with a trusted friend or counselor.

- To help others, tell the story of what happened and how God is helping you.
- Construct a time line of the abuse incidents.

## Resources

- *Abuse: Finding Hope in Christ*, John Henderson. P & R.
- *Abused: Finding Hope in Christ* (booklet), John Henderson. P & R.
- *Abused? How You Can Find God's Help*, Richard and Lois Klempel. Fairway Press.
- *Dorie: The Girl Nobody Loved*, Dorie Van Stone. Moody.
- *Recovering from Abuse* (series, booklets), David Powlison. CCEF.
- *Rid of My Disgrace*, Justin and Lindsey Holcomb. Crossway.

# Adoption

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*See also* **Decision Making, Orphan**

- 1. God has a special interest in individuals who for some reason are left without biological parents.**

**Psalms 27:10** Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close. (NLT)

**Isaiah 49:15** Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.

**Ezekiel 34:11–16**

- 2. God looks favorably on those who care for orphans.**

**James 1:27** What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering and to keep oneself from being corrupted by the world. (GNT)

**Matthew 25:40**

### **3. Whether an individual is with a biological family or an adopted family, God is intimately involved in his or her life.**

**Psalm 139:16** You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (NLT)

**Psalm 10:14** But you see the trouble and grief they cause. You take note of it and punish them. The helpless put their trust in you. You defend the orphans. (NLT)

**Deuteronomy 10:18–19** He ensures that orphans and widows receive justice. He shows love to the foreigners living among you and gives them food and clothing. (NLT)

**Jeremiah 29:11** For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

### **4. God adopts us into his family at the point of our salvation.**

**Ephesians 1:5** God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (NLT)

**Romans 8:23** Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. (NIV)

**Galatians 4:7**

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Esther, an orphan, Esther 2:5–7, 15; 4:14

### **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- Help this youth understand adoption as a beautiful gift.

For the youth:

- Study the amazing picture of how God adopted us as his children—Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:5.
- Celebrate adoption. Observe special or significant dates.
- Make a scrapbook of how you came to your family.
- Memorize Jeremiah 1:5 and Psalm 139:16. Write out how God has shown you his plan for your

care.

## Resources

- *Adopted for Life*, Russell Moore. Crossway.
- *Helping Your Adopted Child* (booklet), Paul Tripp. New Growth.
- *Loved by Choice*, Susan Horner. Revell.

# Anger

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*See also Bitterness, Confession, Forgiving Others, Selfishness, Thought Life*

## **Becoming Angry**

### *Righteous/Justified Anger*

Righteous or justified anger is appropriate when, according to Scripture, sin is being committed.

- 1. Our heavenly Father and Jesus both expressed righteous anger against sin. This is the only acceptable anger a believer should express.**

**Romans 1:18** The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness. (NIV)

**Mark 3:5** He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. (NIV)

## **Exodus 32:10**

### **2. The believer can also express righteous anger.**

**Ephesians 4:26** Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger. (NASB)

### *Unrighteous/Sinful Anger*

When we choose an angry response because of personally being affronted in some way, this is sinful.

### **1. Sinful anger is included in a list of equally disturbing sins.**

**Galatians 5:19–21** Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (NASB)

**Proverbs 29:22** A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.

### **2. Anger is loss of self-control and must be removed.**

**Proverbs 29:11** A fool always loses his temper, but a wise man holds it back. (NASB)

**Ephesians 4:31–32** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. (NASB)

**Psalms 37:8; Colossians 3:8**

### **3. Avoiding anger requires listening, talking less, proceeding slowly, and not overreacting.**

**Proverbs 20:3** Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, but any fool will quarrel. (NASB)

**Ecclesiastes 7:9** Do not be eager in your heart to be angry, for anger resides in the bosom of fools. (NASB)

**James 1:19–20** This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. (NASB)

**Proverbs 14:17**

## **Responding to Anger**

- 1. The practice of answering gently, and without returned anger, will help reduce the occurrence of anger.**

**Proverbs 15:1** A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (NASB)

**Proverbs 15:18** A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute. (NASB)

**Proverbs 20:22**

- 2. If anger occurs, the issue should be resolved that day or, at the very least, a specific plan made for quick resolution.**

**Ephesians 4:26** If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day. (GNT)

**Psalms 4:4** Tremble with fear and stop sinning; think deeply about this, when you lie in silence on your beds. (GNT)

- 3. Practice patience, the opposite of anger.**

**Proverbs 14:29** He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly. (NASB)

**Proverbs 16:32** It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities. (GNT)

**4. People who have a tendency toward anger are not the best choices for close friends (or marriage partners).**

**Proverbs 22:24–25** Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself. (NASB)

**Proverbs 21:19** It is better to live in a desert land than with a contentious and vexing woman. (NASB)

**Psalms 119:63; Proverbs 19:19**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Cain and Abel, Genesis 4
- Asa's anger, 2 Chronicles 16:10

### **Practical Steps**

- Learn to think back to causes for anger. What prompted it? What were your feelings or

thoughts? Use this to identify and avoid your triggers.

- Anger is often tied to a lack of forgiveness. Remind yourself that as Christ forgave you, so should you forgive your brother and sister.
- Apologize after anger outbursts. Work on restoration.
- Memorize Ecclesiastes 7:9. When you sense anger coming, ask if you are being a fool.

## **Resources**

- *Anger: Aim It in the Right Direction* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *Controlling Anger* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.
- *Get Outta My Face! How to Reach Angry, Unmotivated Teens with Biblical Counsel*, Rick Horne. Shepherd.
- *Getting a Grip: The Heart of Anger Handbook for Teens*, Lou Priolo. P & R.

## Attitude/Mind

*See also Purpose for Living, Selfishness, Self-Worth, Thought Life*

### **1. Loving God must have first priority in our thinking.**

**Matthew 22:37** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”

**Deuteronomy 10:12** And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

**Joshua 23:11**

### **2. We must maintain an eternal perspective in our thinking.**

**Colossians 3:2** Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

**2 Corinthians 4:18** We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

**Romans 14:7–8**

**3. Our minds must be focused on spiritual things —what God desires for us.**

**Romans 8:5–8** Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. (NIV)

**4. We must have transformed, renewed minds and must not think as unbelievers think.**

**Romans 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the

will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Ephesians 4:17–18, 22–24** So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. . . . You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (NIV)

**5. Firm decisions are necessary for areas of conduct not specifically dealt with in Scripture.**

**Romans 14:5** One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. [See context.]

**6. We must think sacrificially, placing others ahead of ourselves.**

**John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.

**Philippians 2:3, 5–7** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. . . . Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

**Ephesians 4:2**

**7. We must develop a proper view of ourselves, being humble, not prideful.**

**Romans 12:3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

**Romans 12:16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited.

**Proverbs 16:18; 18:12**

## **8. Prayer and correct thinking produce minds that overcome worry.**

**Philippians 4:6–8** Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (NLT)

### **Practical Steps**

- Do a biblical word study of the many uses of “mind,” “thinking,” “thoughts,” to better understand God's view of how we should think.
- Because sin begins with a thought pattern, pay attention to the “thought path” you take before sin occurs. Memorize Romans 12:2. On a card write: *I will change in regard to \_\_\_\_\_, when I choose to think biblically about it.*

- Ask the question often: What difference will this make in eternity? Keep perspective when frustration happens with “little things.”
- Write out Philippians 4:8 on a card. Read it at each meal, evaluating if you are thinking what is true and right and pure.

## Resources

- *Choosing Gratitude*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *Idols of the Heart*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. P & R.
- *Instructing a Child's Heart*, Tedd and Margy Tripp. Shepherd.
- *Lord, Change My Attitude*, James McDonald. Moody.
- *Loving God with All Your Mind*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Authority/Rebellion/Submission

*See also Complaining, Integrity, Work Ethic*

### **1. Each individual must acknowledge God as the ultimate authority.**

**Jeremiah 7:23** But this command I gave them: “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.”

**Psalms 25:7** Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

**Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

**Psalms 119:59–60; John 15:10–11; 1 Peter 1:14–15**

**2. Rebellious attitudes and actions are sinful and will bring God's discipline.**

**Isaiah 63:10** But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

**Isaiah 65:2** I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices.

**1 Samuel 15:23; Isaiah 1:19–20**

**3. God commands young people to be in submission to their parents.**

**Colossians 3:20** Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

**Proverbs 6:20** My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching.

**Proverbs 23:22–25** Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding. The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers

a wise son will be glad in him. Let your father and mother be glad; let her who bore you rejoice.

**Proverbs 12:1; 13:1; Ephesians 6:2–3;  
2 Timothy 3:2**

#### **4. God has established governmental authorities for our good.**

**Romans 13:1, 4–5** Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. . . . The authorities are God’s servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God’s servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. (NLT)

**1 Peter 2:13–15**

#### **5. Respect must be given to other adults, including school authorities.**

**1 Peter 5:5** Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you,

with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

**Titus 3:1–2** Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

**Leviticus 19:32** Stand up in the presence of the elderly, and show respect for the aged. Fear your God. I am the LORD. (NLT)

**1 Peter 2:17**

## **6. Church leaders are to be respected and obeyed.**

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit. (NLT)

**1 Thessalonians 5:12–13; Hebrews 13:7**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Tower of Babel, Genesis 11
- Esau, Genesis 28:6–9

- Sons of Eli, 1 Samuel 2:22–25
- Saul, 1 Samuel 15
- Jesus, who submitted properly, Luke 2:51–52
- Prodigal son, Luke 15:11–32

## **Practical Steps**

- Study the following: Why does God give us rules and standards to live by? Make a list of what happens when people obey God, and what happens when we get outside of God's boundaries.
- Have you played with Lego products? What happens if you do not follow the instruction booklet—trying it on your own? Or what happens when you follow the step-by-step instructions? Remember that God's Word is our instruction booklet.
- Dump out a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle. Don't look at the box top picture. How easy is it to put the puzzle together? Remember that God designed you—he has the plan for you. Follow his guidelines.
- Show interest in your parents. Spend fifteen minutes a day talking to them about their day.

- Make a list of positive, good things that authority figures provide for you.

## Resources

- *Addressing the Problems of Rebellious Children*, Mary Somerville. Harvest House.
- *Authority Issues*, Robert Smith. New Growth.
- *Get Outta My Face! How to Reach Angry, Unmotivated Teens with Biblical Counsel*, Rick Horne. Shepherd.
- *Help! My Teen Is Rebellious*, Dave and Judi Coats. Day One.
- “Replace a Rebellious Attitude . . . with an Attitude of Submission” in *Lord, Change My Attitude*, James McDonald and Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *Why Do Kids Turn Out the Way They Do?* Jim Newheiser. CCEF.

# Bitterness

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*See also Anger, Attitude, Forgiving Others, Selfishness*

## **1. Bitterness is sin and negatively affects others and ourselves.**

**Hebrews 12:15** See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. (NIV)

**James 3:14–16** But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. (NIV)

## **2. Bitterness, as a characteristic of the unsaved, is an unacceptable emotion for a believer.**

**Romans 3:14** Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.

**Acts 8:23** For I can see that you are full of bitter jealousy and are held captive by sin. (NLT)

**3. Bitterness needs to be removed through kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.**

**Ephesians 4:31–32** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. (NASB)

**4. Each person has his or her own areas of bitterness to work on.**

**Proverbs 14:10** Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy. (NIV)

**5. God is sovereign over everything that has happened, so trust his perfect plan.**

**Romans 8:28** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (NASB)

**Romans 12:17–19** Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at

peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord. (NASB)

### **Psalm 37:1–2**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Esau with Jacob, Genesis 32–33
- Naomi, who needed to get rid of bitterness, Ruth 1:20
- David, Psalm 37

## **Practical Steps**

- Read the story of Esau and Jacob, Genesis 32–33. What are the characteristics of each man? How did bitterness affect this family?
- As with all ungodly habits, bitterness is an unattractive characteristic. Bitterness makes us ugly. Read the topic Forgiving Others in this book. Make a list of those you need to forgive.
- Interview five people. What is it like for them when they struggle with bitterness or when

others treat them with bitterness? Are they held captive by this sin?

## **Resources**

- *Bitterness*, Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *Freedom from Resentment: Stopping Hurts from Turning Bitter* (booklet), Robert Jones. New Growth.
- *Overcoming Emotions That Destroy*, Chip Ingram. Baker.
- *When You've Been Wronged: Moving from Bitterness to Forgiveness*, Erwin Lutzer. Moody.

## Boundaries/Limits

*See also Abuse, Choices, Forgiveness from God, Manipulation, Peer Pressure, Rebellion*

- 1. God establishes boundaries for our good—he desires to protect us and provide for us for our happiness, health, holiness.**

**Deuteronomy 32:46–47** He [Moses] said, “Be sure to obey all these commands that I have given you today. Repeat them to your children, so that they may faithfully obey all of God’s teachings. These teachings are not empty words; they are your very life. Obey them and you will live long in that land across the Jordan that you are about to occupy.” (GNT)

**Joshua 1:8** This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

**Jeremiah 6:16** Thus says the LORD: “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”

**Psalm 74:12–17**

- 2. Satan’s primary, number one attack has always been to question God’s Word and his authority to establish boundaries. “Did God really say that?!”**

**Genesis 3:1–4** Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.”

- 3. Refusing to obey God’s boundaries—sin—always has negative consequences.**

**Genesis 3:16–19** To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

**Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

**Judges 2:10–15** All that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel. And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the

peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for harm, as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.

**Hosea 8:5–8; Romans 1:18–32**

**4. The world's secular culture is in rebellion against God's boundaries and worships the gods of personal freedom.**

**Psalm 2:1–3** Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."

**Judges 17:6** In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own

eyes.

**Jeremiah 2:12–13** Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

- 5. True freedom is in Christ. He redeemed us out of slavery to sin. We now are free to serve him. Think: I do what I do because Christ gave himself for me and now I want to please him, always with an awareness of God's expectations, standards, and commands for me.**

**Galatians 5:1, 13** Freedom is what we have—Christ has set us free! Stand, then, as free people, and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again. . . . As for you, my friends, you were called to be free. But do not let this freedom become an excuse for letting your physical desires control you. Instead, let love make you serve one another. (GNT)

**Galatians 2:19–20** I have been put to death with Christ on his cross, so that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. This life that I

live now, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me. (GNT)

**1 John 4:19** We love because God first loved us. (GNT)

**Romans 12:1–2**

**6. A blessed, happy life comes as we establish godly, biblical boundaries, delighting in the Word of God.**

**Psalms 1:1–3** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

**Exodus 23:2**

**7. Boundaries we need to establish.**

Thinking—**Philippians 4:8**

Purity—**1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 7:1–4**

Tongue—**James 3**

Partnerships only in Christ—**2 Corinthians 6:14**

Honoring our parents—**Ephesians 6:1–3**

Telling the truth; no lying—**Ephesians 4:25**

Not involved in the works of darkness—

**Ephesians 5:11–12**

In our busy lives, with so much pressure to perform, we must be careful to establish biblical priorities, and not those others impose upon us. Though living sacrificially is good, allowing others to take advantage of us is unacceptable. Balance is needed. We need not permit everyone into our lives, nor is there a need to keep everyone out.

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Eating of fruit in the garden, Genesis 1–3
- Laban taking advantage of Jacob, Genesis 29–31
- Israel at the mountain of God, Exodus 19
- Intermarriage with non-Israelites, Deuteronomy 7:3; Judges 3:6
- Israel crosses God's boundaries, 2 Kings 17:7–18
- Partnerships (including marriage) with non-Christians, 2 Corinthians 6:14

- Ministry roles, 1 Timothy 2:11–14; 3:2

## **Practical Steps**

- Make a list of the boundaries God has placed around you personally.
- Journal a prayer to God, thanking him for his boundaries and seeking his help not to push against and test them.
- Answer these questions: Do you let others cross boundaries in your life? Do you permit others to make you go places, do things you would rather not, or take advantage of you? Because others take advantage of you, do you do the same to them, or others?
- Set a boundary that after 9:00 at night you “go primitive” (no use of electronics of any kind after that time).

## **Resources**

- “Boundaries in Relationships” in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Spring 2004, Ed Welch.
- *When People Are Big and God Is Small: Overcoming Peer Pressure, Co-Dependency and*

*Fear of Man*, Ed Welch. CCEF.

## Career

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*See also Choices, Future Plans, Work Ethic*

- 1. Parents need to encourage their children toward individual choices and interests in career decisions.**

**Proverbs 22:6** Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it. (NASB) “In the way he should go” is literally “according to his natural bent.”

- 2. Forcing a career decision on a child could be a violation of the command for parents (especially fathers) not to exasperate their children.**

**Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (NASB)

**Colossians 3:21** Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart. (NASB)

**3. Seeking God's wisdom in any matter, including career choices, is always necessary.**

**James 1:5** But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (NASB)

**4. As we trust in God completely, allowing him to give us direction for the pathways of our lives, we can be confident that he will lead us.**

**Proverbs 3:5–6** Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. (NLT)

**Psalms 20:4–5** May he grant your heart's desires and make all your plans succeed. May we shout for joy when we hear of your victory and raise a victory banner in the name of our God. May the LORD answer all your prayers. (NLT)

**Joshua 1:9; Proverbs 4:25–26**

**5. Whatever career choice is made, all work must be done ultimately for God's glory.**

**Colossians 3:17** Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving

thanks through Him to God the Father. (NASB)

**Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men. (NASB)

**1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:11–12**

- 6. A young man who chooses to be a husband and father must make that calling his first and foremost career responsibility.**

**Ephesians 5:25, 28** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. . . . In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (NIV)

**Deuteronomy 6:6–7** These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you talk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. (NASB)

**Psalms 128:1–4; Matthew 7:9–11**

- 7. A young woman who chooses to be a wife and mother must make that calling her first and foremost career responsibility.**

**Titus 2:3–5** Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. (NASB)

**8. Every Christian is called to serve God. Yet God does ask some to serve him through a vocation or job in Christian ministry. If God asks, accept it!**

**Matthew 9:37–38** Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

**Isaiah 6:8** And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

**Isaiah 52:7; John 4:35**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Prophets, chosen for special service—Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, and others
- Disciples, called to leave their boats behind—Simon, Andrew, James, John—Mark 1:16–20

## **Practical Steps**

- As a youth, understand that knowing what career path to follow may take time and trying several possibilities before you know what God has for you. With assistance from others who know you well, write out a list of your gifts, talents, and interests. Use this as you begin your search.
- Consider attending a Bible college for a year to grow and to learn of options God might have for you.
- Prepare a list of questions about a possible career choice. Find several individuals in that career to interview. Keep in mind: How does God fit into that career?
- Make provisions to go on a field trip to view a prospective career or to attend a job or college fair.
- It's valuable to learn to type the right way (accurately, without looking). Take a high school

class or download a program. Just do it!

## **Resources**

- *Choosing Your Career: The Christian's Decision Manual*, Martin Clark. P & R.
- *A Young Man's Guide to Making Right Choices*, Jim George. Harvest House.
- *A Young Woman's Guide to Making Right Choices*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Choices/Decision Making/God's Will

*See also Career, Future Plans, Peer Pressure, Purpose for Living*

### **1. Prayer for wisdom in every decision is essential.**

**James 1:5** But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all. (GNT)

**Psalm 25:4–5** Teach me your ways, O LORD; make them known to me. Teach me to live according to your truth, for you are my God, who saves me. I always trust in you. (GNT)

**Jeremiah 10:23** LORD, I know that none of us are in charge of our own destiny; none of us have control over our own life. (GNT)

**James 3:17**

### **2. Knowing God's will requires a submissive heart.**

**Psalm 40:8** How I love to do your will, my God! I keep your teaching in my heart. (GNT)

**Jeremiah 6:16** The LORD said to his people, “Stand at the crossroads and look. Ask for the ancient paths and where the best road is. Walk in it, and you will live in peace.” But they said, “No, we will not!” (GNT)

**Hosea 14:9; Romans 12:1–2; James 4:13–15**

**3. When we proceed with a submissive heart, God will provide direction, even when we must choose between two equally good decisions.**

**Psalm 25:12–14** Who, then, are those who fear the LORD? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. They will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the land. The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them. (NIV)

**Proverbs 4:11–13** I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble. Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life. (NIV)

**Psalm 48:14** For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end. (NIV)

**Proverbs 3:5–6; Isaiah 42:16**

**4. God is sovereign and has a plan in which we can have complete confidence.**

**Isaiah 25:1** O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; for You have worked wonders, plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness. (NASB)

**Psalm 138:8** The LORD will accomplish what concerns me; Your lovingkindness, O LORD, is everlasting; do not forsake the works of Your hands. (NASB)

**Psalm 37:23–24; Jeremiah 29:11–13**

**5. God's plans will happen; he will carry them through.**

**Isaiah 14:24, 27** The LORD Almighty has sworn, “Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will happen. . . . For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back? (NIV)

**Proverbs 16:9** In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps. (NIV)

**Isaiah 43:13**

**6. Never make a decision contrary to the Word of God.**

**Deuteronomy 5:29** Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever! (NASB)

**Proverbs 4:25–27** Let your eyes look directly ahead and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil. (NASB)

**2 Timothy 3:16–17** All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work. (NLT)

**Isaiah 30:1; 55:8**

**7. Determining God's will involves seeking the counsel of strong Christians who are wise.**

**Proverbs 11:14** Without wise leadership, a nation falls; there is safety in having many advisers. (NLT)

**Proverbs 15:22** Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success. (NLT)

## **8. What God desires for our lives is found in his Word.**

**Deuteronomy 32:46–47** He said to them, “Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.” (NIV)

**Joshua 1:8** Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (NIV)

**Psalms 119:105; Micah 6:8**

## **9. Determining God’s will involves prayer for ourselves as well as others praying for us.**

**Colossians 1:9–11** So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We

ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better. We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. (NLT)

## **10. Choose to serve God rather than the idols of this world.**

**Joshua 24:15** If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. (NASB)

**1 Kings 18:21** Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people did not answer him a word. (NASB)

**Isaiah 42:8**

## Questions to Ask When Making Decisions

### 1. Does this activity or plan please God or sadden him?

**Ephesians 4:30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (NIV)

**John 8:28–29** So Jesus said, . . . “The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.” (NIV)

### 2. Is this activity an act of my sinful nature or a fruit of the Spirit?

**Galatians 5:16** So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (NIV)

**Galatians 5:17–23**

### 3. Does this activity or plan honor God, or is it something to draw attention to myself?

**1 Corinthians 10:31** Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (NASB)

**Philippians 2:3** Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard

one another as more important than yourselves.  
(NASB)

**4. Would this equip me to serve Jesus better?**

**2 Timothy 2:21–22** Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (NASB)

**5. Does this activity or plan please my parents or grieve them? Is it in disobedience to them?**

**Ephesians 6:1–2** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise).

**Colossians 3:20**

**6. Would this activity cause others to stumble in their walk with the Lord?**

**Romans 14:21** It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

**Matthew 18:6–7** But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. What sorrow awaits the world, because it tempts people to sin. Temptations are inevitable, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 8:13**

**7. Does this activity show that I love God or that I love the world?**

**1 John 2:15–17** Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever. (NLT)

**Biblical Narratives**

- Lot, who made poor choices, Genesis 13–14, 18–19
- Abraham’s servant, who sought God’s will, Genesis 24:12–15
- How early church leaders were chosen, Acts 6:1–6

### **Practical Steps**

- Write down the decision you are making. Ask yourself questions 1–7 (just above) and write out answers in reference to this decision.
- Commit to making no decision that goes against God’s Word. Obeying God must always be your first choice. Memorize Psalm 25:4–6.
- When you have decisions to make, write out a daily prayer asking God for his help in knowing his will.
- Make a prayer list of things in which you are interested. Ask God for discernment to know his will. List pros and cons for each idea. Example: make a list of colleges you would like to attend with a pros and cons contrast—what each could offer you in respect to your faith, activities, and goals for the future.

## Resources

- *Every Young Man, God's Man*, Stephen Arterburn. WaterBrook.
- *Found: God's Will*, John MacArthur. David C. Cook.
- *When Good Kids Make Bad Choices*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.
- *A Young Man's Guide to Making Right Choices*, Jim George. Harvest House.
- *A Young Woman's Guide to Making Right Choices*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Church Life

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*See also Gospel (The), Spiritual Gifts*

**1. God asks believers not to neglect their meeting together.**

**Hebrews 10:24–25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Psalms 122:1** I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD!”

**2. Submission to the leadership of church authorities is God’s will, as long as they are submissive to God’s Word.**

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

### **3. Church leaders are to be honored and respected.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:12–13** We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

### **4. Believers need each other for the body of Christ to function as God planned.**

**Romans 12:4–6** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.

**1 Corinthians 12:21** The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

**1 Corinthians 12:26** If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

**1 Corinthians 12:12–18**

**5. Learning God's Word from gifted individuals within the body is necessary for personal growth.**

**Ephesians 4:11–13** And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. (NASB)

**Colossians 1:9–10, 28; 3:16**

**6. The Bible has many passages that encourage us in our relationships with one another.**

**John 13:34–35** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

**Galatians 6:2** Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are

doing.

**Romans 15:7** Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory. (NLT)

**Ephesians 4:2** Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. (NLT)

**Romans 12:10; Ephesians 4:32;  
1 Thessalonians 5:15; Hebrews 3:13; James  
5:16**

**7. Understand that not everyone who is a member or attendee of a church is a true believer. Some may still be searching for the truth.**

**Matthew 13:36–40** Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age.”

**2 Peter 2:1** But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

**Matthew 15:8–9**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Parables of Jesus, describing the Church he will build, Matthew 13
- The many “one another” passages of the New Testament

### **Practical Steps**

- Reach out to senior citizens in your church. Ask them what church was like for them when they were young.
- If you have trouble attending church consistently, ask a friend to call you the night before, or in the morning, to encourage you. Have someone give you a ride.
- When you attend church, practice praying that God will help you learn and worship him. Take

the focus off yourself and give it to God.

- Take your Bible to church and youth group. Practice taking notes on the message. Write down at least one application point for your life.

## Resources

- “Do I Need to Be a Part of the Church to Follow Jesus?” in *The Post-Church Christian: Dealing with the Generational Baggage of Our Faith*, J. Paul Nyquist. Moody.
- *The Master’s Plan for the Church*, John MacArthur. Moody.
- *Why Church Matters*, Joshua Harris. Multnomah.

## Clothes

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*See also Attitude, Contentment, Flirting, Sexual Purity*

### **1. God has promised to supply the clothing we need.**

**Matthew 6:28–30** Why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! (NASB)

### **2. Focus on God comes first, knowing that he will provide.**

**Matthew 6:32–33** For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (NASB)

**3. Israelites who did not put God first in their lives found no benefit from dressing even in essential clothing. Focus on self brings emptiness.**

**Haggai 1:6** You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

**4. A godly contentment with our present possessions is a mark of Christian maturity.**

**1 Timothy 6:6–8** Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

**Philippians 4:12** I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

**1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 John 5:21**

**5. The apostle Paul was willing to be poorly dressed for the sake of the gospel.**

**1 Corinthians 4:11** To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless.

**6. God is concerned about those living in poverty without adequate clothing and expects us to be part of the solution.**

**Deuteronomy 10:18–19** He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

**James 2:15–16** If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

**7. We should not accept or reject people based on their clothes.**

**James 2:2–4** For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,”

while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

- 8. While God does not expect us to remain dated or dowdy in our apparel, he does require modesty, good taste, and moderation. (Principles from these texts would also apply to young men.)**

**1 Timothy 2:9–10** And I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do. (NLT)

**1 Peter 3:3–5** Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. (NLT)

**Romans 14:13; 1 Corinthians 10:32**

**9. People see outward appearance; God sees the heart.**

**1 Samuel 16:7** But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”  
(NASB)

**Matthew 23:27–28**

**10. Spiritual qualities are the most important “clothing.”**

**Colossians 3:12–14** Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

**1 Peter 5:5** Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

**Proverbs 3:21–22**

**11. It is important that men and women accept their masculinity and femininity as given by God, and dress accordingly.**

**Deuteronomy 22:5** A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God. (NASB) (The context is cross-dressing, but the principle applies to everyone.)

**Titus 2:3–8**

**Biblical Narratives**

- Sarah, 1 Peter 3:1–6
- Women of Zion, Isaiah 3:16–26

**Practical Steps**

- Are you expressing your thankfulness to God by taking care of the clothes you have?
- Evaluate: Do you feel you would have greater acceptance by others if you had the “right” clothes? Is having more clothes a status symbol or an overwhelming need?

- Go through your closet and check for immodest clothing. Ask someone older and wiser to help you evaluate your wardrobe. Ask: As a young woman, do I reflect God's design for femininity? As a young man, do I reflect God's design for masculinity?
- Journal about who you are trying to impress based on what you are wearing.
- Have someone take pictures of you in several different outfits you currently wear. Look at the pictures and decide what those outfits are saying about you? Our clothes tell a story about us. Ask: Is this what God would want me to say?
- To increase appreciation for what you have, volunteer at a local clothing closet for the less fortunate.

## Resources

- *The Girl in the Mirror: Reflections for Teens*, Michelle Grover. BJU.
- *How Do I Look? Important Questions in Every Girl's Life*, Susan Lutz. New Growth.
- *Modesty: Does God Really Care What I Wear?* (DVD), Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Revive Our

Hearts.

- *Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty*,  
Dannah Gresh. Moody.

# Compassion

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*See also Attitude, Selfishness*

## **1. God's compassion for us is clearly evident.**

**Psalm 116:5** Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yes, our God is compassionate. (NASB)

**Lamentations 3:21–23** This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. (NASB)

**Micah 7:18–19** Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (NASB)

## **2. We should have compassion for others.**

**Proverbs 29:7** The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, the wicked does not understand such concern. (NASB)

**Zechariah 7:9–10** This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. And do not scheme against each other. (NLT)

**Colossians 3:12–14** Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (NLT)

**1 John 3:17–19** If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person? Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. (NLT)

**James 2:15–16** Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, “Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and

eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? (NLT)

### **Biblical Narrative**

- David to Mephibosheth, 2 Samuel 9
- Jonah recognizing God’s compassion, Jonah 4
- Jesus, Matthew 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:40–42
- Good Samaritan, Luke 10:30–37

### **Practical Steps**

- If showing care and concern for others is a problem for you, consider volunteer work with those less blessed.
- Read the parable of the good Samaritan from Luke 10, and make a list of what true compassion looks like.
- If your heart seems hard, commit to praying for increased compassion.
- On a card write: *BREATHE GRACE*. Place it where you see it often. Practice extending grace to others.

- Get involved in the lives of needy people through ministries such as Christmas shoe boxes or Angel Tree. Consider sponsoring a child through organizations such as Compassion International or Samaritan's Purse.

## **Resource**

- “Love as Christ Loved” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.

## Complaining/Critical Spirit

*See also Attitude, Bitterness, Contentment*

### **1. Complaining should not be a part of a Christian's life.**

**Philippians 2:14–15** Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people. (NLT)

**James 5:9** Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door! (NLT)

**Colossians 3:13** Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 10:10**

### **2. Let your outlook and manner be that of patient acceptance.**

**Ecclesiastes 7:8–9** The end of something is better than its beginning. Patience is better than pride. Keep your temper under control; it is foolish to harbor a grudge. (GNT)

**Romans 15:7** Accept one another, then, for the glory of God, as Christ has accepted you. (GNT)

**Ephesians 4:2** Be always humble, gentle, and patient. Show your love by being tolerant with one another. (GNT)

**Psalms 40:1** I waited patiently for the LORD to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 6:6** We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our patience, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and by our sincere love. (NLT)

**Galatians 5:22** But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. (NLT)

### **3. Christ's peace and contentment are necessary ingredients for a positive spirit.**

**John 14:27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (NIV)

**Philippians 4:11–13** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength. (NIV)

**Colossians 3:12–13** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (NIV)

## **Biblical Narrative**

- Israel in the wilderness, complaining, Exodus 16; Numbers 16

## **Practical Steps**

- Ask your friends if they see you as someone who complains often.
- Practice giving genuine praise and compliments. Look for the positive in others.
- Why do you complain or criticize? Is it to make yourself feel better? Smarter? More cool?
- Every time you complain add twenty-five cents to a jar and give that money monthly to your church.
- Permit others with fewer items to go ahead of you when you are in line at a busy store.

## Resources

- “Replace a Complaining Attitude . . . with a Thankful Attitude” in *Lord, Change My Attitude*, James McDonald and Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- “Thankful—I Appreciate You” in *A Young Woman Who Reflects the Heart of Jesus*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Confession/Repentance

*See also Forgiveness from God, Guilt*

- 1. Repentance and confession of sin is necessary for freedom from guilt and our total well-being. Sin affects every aspect of our lives.**

**Psalm 32:5** I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

**Psalm 41:4** As for me, I said, “O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you!”

**Psalm 38:18** I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin.

**Ezra 10:11; Psalm 25:11; 51:7**

- 2. Repentance and confession lead to restoration and healing.**

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us

from all unrighteousness.

**Psalms 51:9–12** Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

**Romans 4:7–8** Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.

**2 Corinthians 5:17**

### **3. Confession of sin involves a commitment to turn from that sin. Stop that sin, and be done with it!**

**Proverbs 28:13** Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

**Isaiah 1:16** Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil.

**Ezekiel 18:30–31** Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,

declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?

**Isaiah 55:6–7; Ephesians 4:22–24**

**4. Confession of sin may require restitution or making things right.**

**Proverbs 14:9** Fools mock at making amends for sin, but goodwill is found among the upright. (NIV)

**Luke 19:8** And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”

**5. If we have sinned against someone, confession to them is necessary for the relationship to continue in peace.**

**Matthew 5:23–24** If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

## **Biblical Narratives**

- David, confessing after his sin with Bathsheba, Psalm 51
- Christians at Ephesus, new believers, ridding themselves of sinful objects, Acts 19:18–19
- Israelites under the law, restitution required, Leviticus 6:1–5; Numbers 5:6–7

## **Practical Steps**

- Make a list of what God does with confessed sin. See Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 1:18; 38:17; 44:22; Hebrews 8:12; Micah 7:18–19.
- Write out the difference between “being sorry” for getting caught in a sin and true confession and repentance.
- Write a letter to someone you have wronged, taking responsibility and seeking forgiveness.
- On a card write: *It is for this that Jesus died.* Use it to remind yourself of the healing that confession brings.
- Memorize 1 John 1:9.

## **Resources**

- “The Remedy for Sin” in *Respective Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- *Shame Interrupted*, Ed Welch. New Growth.

## Contentment

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*See also Complaining, Jealousy, Materialism, Purpose for Living*

### **1. Contentment is enjoying God no matter what the circumstances.**

**Psalm 84:10–11** A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked. For the LORD God is our sun and our shield. He gives us grace and glory. The LORD will withhold no good thing from those who do what is right. (NLT)

**Philippians 4:11–13** Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (NLT)

## **2. God expects us to be content with our material possessions.**

**Hebrews 13:5** Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

**1 Timothy 6:6–8** Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

**Proverbs 16:8; 17:1; Ecclesiastes 2:24**

## **3. Contentment is possible, even when others seem to be prosperous and have much.**

**Psalms 73:2–3, 16–17, 25–26** But I had nearly lost confidence; my faith was almost gone because I was jealous of the proud when I saw that things go well for the wicked. . . . I tried to think this problem through, but it was too difficult for me until I went into your Temple. Then I understood what will happen to the wicked. . . . What else do I have in heaven but you? Since I have you, what else could I want on earth? My mind and my body may grow weak, but God is my strength; he is all I ever need. (GNT)

**Psalm 37:7, 16** Be patient and wait for the LORD to act; don't be worried about those who prosper or those who succeed in their evil plans. . . . The little that a good person owns is worth more than the wealth of all the wicked. (GNT)

**Proverbs 15:16–17**

#### **4. Contentment means we will be thankful for what God has given us.**

**Psalm 107:8–9** Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

**Psalm 100:4–5** Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

#### **Biblical Narratives**

- Lot's choices lead to great tragedy, Genesis 13; 18–19
- Paul, content in varying situations, Philippians 4:11–13

## Practical Steps

- Get a small notebook and keep a list of all the things God does for you and has given you. Look beyond the common things.
- Serve meals at a homeless shelter. Volunteer at a hospital.
- Read life stories of great heroes of faith—George Mueller, Brother Andrew, Corrie ten Boom, William Tyndale, and pioneering missionaries.
- Memorize Psalm 37:3–4. Write it out in your own words.
- Give away things you no longer wear or need. Do you hang on to them for security?
- Without expecting to be paid, ask your parents what you can do for them around the house.

## Resources

- *Choosing Gratitude*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *Discontentment: Why Am I So Unhappy?* Lou Priolo. P & R.
- “Discontentment” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

- *Living the Cross Centered Life*, C. J. Mahaney.  
Multnomah.

## Dating

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*See also* **Choices, Disappointment, Sexual Purity, Singleness, Trust**

In biblical times, the selection of a mate involved parents arranging for the marriage. Today most Western cultures include the young adult in the decision.

### **1. Choosing a mate must be accomplished in accordance with God's will.**

**Psalm 37:3–4** Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart. (NASB)

**Ecclesiastes 12:1** Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, “I have no delight in them.” (NASB)

**Genesis 24:14; Proverbs 3:5–6**

### **2. There should be parental involvement and support in this decision.**

**Proverbs 6:20–24** My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; bind them continually on your heart; tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life to keep you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress. (NASB)

**Ephesians 6:2–3** Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. (NASB)

**Proverbs 4:20–22; 5:1–2**

### **3. Dating or courtship for marriage should be with another believer only.**

**2 Corinthians 6:14–15** Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (NASB)

**4. Intermarriage with unbelievers was a major problem in the Old Testament and provides an example of what to avoid today.**

**Judges 3:6–7** They took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods. The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. (NASB)

**Genesis 24:1–4; Nehemiah 13:26–27**

**5. High standards and guidelines for behavior need to be in place for commitment to sexual purity.**

**Job 31:1** I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman. (NIV)

**2 Timothy 2:22** Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. (NIV)

**1 Thessalonians 4:3–4** God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor. (NLT)

## **1 Timothy 4:12**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Rebekah's character qualities, Genesis 24
- Boaz and Ruth, Ruth 1–4

### **Practical Steps**

- Honor the guidelines of your parents. Have an open dialogue with them.
- Enjoy group activities and family fun.
- Don't be anxious to date. Enjoy friendships without dating pressure.
- Make a list of guidelines or standards for dating.
- When you do date, avoid secluded areas—stay in public places; attend church together.
- Define carefully the “lines” that you will not cross, regarding physical expression of affection.
- Focus on being the godly person God wants you to be.
- Talk to a couple at church who have been married for at least twenty-five years, and ask them why they think their marriage lasted so long.

## Resources

- *Boy Meets Girl*, Joshua Harris. Multnomah.
- *We're Just Friends and Other Dating Lies*, Chuck Milian. New Growth.
- *When God Writes Your Love Story*, Eric and Leslie Ludy. Doubleday.
- *Who Should I Date?* (booklet), William Smith. New Growth.

## Death

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*See also Compassion, Fear, Grief, Suffering, Trust, Worry*

### **1. God is sovereign over death; his timing is as he planned.**

**Psalm 39:4–5** LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is. You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath. (NLT)

**Hebrews 9:27** And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment. (NLT)

**Genesis 3:19; Matthew 10:29–31**

### **Fear of Death**

#### **1. Not even death can separate us from God and his love.**

**Psalm 23:4** Even though I walk through the

valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**Romans 8:38–39** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **2. Death for the believer means being in the presence of Christ.**

**Philippians 1:21–23** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

**2 Corinthians 5:6–8** So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For we live by believing and not by seeing. Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. (NLT)

**Isaiah 57:2; John 14:1–3**

**3. Death for the believer means receiving a changed and glorified body.**

**John 11:25–26** Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?” (NLT)

**Philippians 3:21** He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 15:51–52** But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. (NLT)

**John 6:40; 1 John 3:2**

**4. Jesus’s death brings ultimate freedom from fear of death.**

**1 Peter 1:3–5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**Hebrews 2:9–15**

## **Loss by Death**

*See also Disappointment, Grief, Hope*

### **1. David expressed his grief to God.**

**Psalm 31:9–10** Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted from grief; my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away.

**Psalm 56:8** You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?

## **2. God can restore joy.**

**Isaiah 51:11** And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

## **3. God will always be with us and give us strength.**

**Psalms 46:1–3, 7** God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not be afraid, even if the earth is shaken and mountains fall into the ocean depths; even if the seas roar and rage, and the hills are shaken by the violence. . . . The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. (GNT)

**Lamentations 3:21–24** This I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." (NIV)

**Deuteronomy 31:6; Isaiah 26:3; 41:10**

#### **4. We must help bring comfort to those who mourn the loss of someone close.**

**Romans 12:15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

**John 11:33–36** When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

**Matthew 5:4**

#### **5. Death will be conquered in the end.**

**1 Corinthians 15:26** The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

**Isaiah 25:8** He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.

**Revelation 21:4**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Mary and Martha, in the loss of their brother, John 11
- Mary, at her son's death, John 19:26–27

## **Practical Steps**

- Here are psalms to read when you feel fear of death—23; 31; 34; 46; 91.
- Write out specific verses from these psalms on cards and keep close at hand.
- Don't keep fears inside of you. Talk to others—parents, youth pastor, or older friends.
- Memorize John 11:25–26.
- Be sure to have a quiet time with the Lord every day.
- Don't spend too much time alone. Actively seek out others for companionship.
- If someone close has died, make a memory book of that person and their influence in your life.
- If permitted, get a pet to take care of and enjoy.

## **Resources**

- *Facing Death with Hope* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.

- *Heaven for Kids*, Randy Alcorn. Tyndale Kids.
- *One Minute after You Die*, Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *Questions Children and Adults Ask about Death* (booklet), Wally Stephenson. RBP.
- *When a Christian Parent Dies* (booklet), Jay Adams. Guideline Publications

# Depression

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*See also* **Grief, Past Memories, Self-Worth, Suffering, Trust, Worry**

## **1. Depression is a heavy burden and feels insurmountable.**

**Psalm 13:2** How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

**Psalm 88:1–5** O LORD, God of my salvation, I cry out to you by day. I come to you at night. Now hear my prayer; listen to my cry. For my life is full of troubles, and death draws near. I am as good as dead, like a strong man with no strength left. They have left me among the dead, and I lie like a corpse in a grave. I am forgotten, cut off from your care. (NLT)

**Psalm 109:22; Proverbs 18:14**

## **2. God understands despair.**

**Psalm 38:9** O Lord, you know what I long for; you hear all my groans. (GNT)

**Job 23:10** But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold. (NIV)

**Matthew 26:38** Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” (NIV)

**Psalm 18:28**

### **3. God is the answer for a young person in despair.**

**Psalm 43:5** Why am I so sad? Why am I so troubled? I will put my hope in God, and once again I will praise him, my savior and my God. (GNT)

**Psalm 46:1** God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. (GNT)

**Psalm 16:11; John 14:27**

### **4. God is big enough to keep a person from sinking further into depression.**

**Psalm 69:13–15** I keep praying to you, LORD, hoping this time you will show me favor. In your unfailing love, O God, answer my prayer with your

sure salvation. Rescue me from the mud; don't let me sink any deeper! Save me from those who hate me, and pull me from these deep waters. Don't let the floods overwhelm me, or the deep waters swallow me, or the pit of death devour me. (NLT)

**Isaiah 43:1–2** Now, O Jacob, listen to the LORD who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says, “Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.” (NLT)

**Psalms 32:5–8**

## **5. God provides hope and comfort.**

**Psalms 16:8** I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

**2 Corinthians 1:3–4** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the

comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

**Ephesians 1:17–19; Hebrews 12:2**

**6. Is it possible that sin is the cause of this depression? Cain was depressed because of sin in his life.**

**Genesis 4:6–7** The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”

**7. When sin is the cause of depression, confession must take place to begin the healing process.**

**Psalms 32:3–5** When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

**Psalm 25:17–18** The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins.

## **Psalm 51**

### **Biblical Narratives**

Three who were very discouraged:

- Elijah, 1 Kings 19
- Job, Job 19:7–27
- Jeremiah, Jeremiah 20:7–18

### **Practical Steps**

- See a physician (include blood tests for vitamin D and B12, thyroid, and others). Ask about taking omega 3 (fish oil).
- Check sleep and eating patterns.
- Have an exercise plan in place; begin walking at least three days a week for thirty minutes. Run; swim if possible.
- Draw a picture, as detailed as possible, of how depression makes you feel. Be able to explain it

to a counselor.

- Write a list of what you believe would bring hope to your situation.
- Journal prayers to God daily about your feelings.
- Find verses from the Psalms that bring hope. Write them on cards and read often.
- Talk to parents, trusted friends, and counselors who will be objective and speak truth.

## Resources

- “Depression” in *Feelings and Faith*, Brian Borgman. Crossway.
- *Depression: A Stubborn Habit*, Ed Welch. New Growth.
- *Getting Over the Blues*, Leslie Vernick. Harvest House.
- *Hope in God*, Kristie Gant. Focus.
- *Out of the Blues*, Wayne Mack. P & R.
- *When God Seems Unjust* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.

## Disappointment

*See also* **Bitterness, Depression, Suffering, Trust**

### **1. God knows and cares about our broken hearts.**

**Psalms 56:8** You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?

**Isaiah 61:1** The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

**Isaiah 57:15** For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

**John 11:33–36**

## **2. God is in charge of the events of our lives. He knows what is best.**

**Proverbs 19:21** Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.

**Isaiah 25:1** O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you; I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

**Jeremiah 29:11–13** For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

**Psalms 33:11; Romans 8:28**

## **3. God will respond to our needs. Relief is coming.**

**Psalms 34:18** The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

**Psalms 147:3** He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

**Ecclesiastes 3:11** He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

**John 14:1, 27** Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. . . . Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

**Psalm 42:5–6; 116:7–9**

**4. When we are hurting, God can use that hurt and the comfort he gives us to help others who are hurting.**

**2 Corinthians 1:3–4** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

**Biblical Narratives**

- Mary and Martha, in the loss of their brother, John 11
- Hagar, left to her own resources, but God intervened, Genesis 21:14–21

## **Practical Steps**

- Write out and compare negative responses to disappointment and positive responses. Which will you choose?
- Memorize Psalm 34:18. Dwell on the fact that God will never disappoint. Know that he is absolutely faithful!
- To remove yourself from self-pity, focus on gratitude. Make a list of areas in which you can be thankful. As a part of being thankful, listen to praise and worship songs as you get ready for your day.
- Schedule three activities this week that will allow you to enjoy being with Christian friends.
- To better understand God's character, study the biblical concepts of providence and sovereignty.

## **Resources**

- *Dealing with Rejection* (booklet), Jack Miller. New Growth.
- *Fear, Worry and the God of Rest*, Ed Welch. New Growth.
- *When Bad Things Happen* (booklet), William Smith. New Growth.
- *When Your World Falls Apart*, David Jeremiah. Thomas Nelson.

## Divorced Parents

*See also Anger, Forgiving Others, Parents, Suffering, Trust*

### **1. Youth whose parents divorce should seek support from God, Christian friends, and Christian leaders.**

**Isaiah 41:10** Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. (NASB)

**Psalms 42:8** The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; and His song will be with me in the night, a prayer to the God of my life. (NASB)

**Galatians 6:2** Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (NASB)

**Romans 12:15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. (NASB)

**Psalms 27:10; 91:1-2; Isaiah 40:27-31**

**2. Although divorce is not God's choice, it does happen when people harden their hearts against what he wants them to do.**

**Malachi 2:14–16** But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.

**Mark 10:3–5** Jesus answered them with a question: “What did Moses say in the law about divorce?” “Well, he permitted it,” they replied. “He said a man can give his wife a written notice of divorce and send her away.” But Jesus responded, “He wrote this commandment only as a concession to your hard hearts.” (NLT)

**3. God does permit divorce for marital unfaithfulness and for desertion of a Christian by a non-Christian.**

**Matthew 19:9** And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery. (NASB)

**1 Corinthians 7:15** Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace. (NASB)

**4. If sin is involved in the divorce, forgiveness is available.**

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NASB)

**Psalms 130:3–4** If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared. (NASB)

**Daniel 9:9** But the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. (NLT)

**5. The youth must forgive his or her parents for any wrongdoings that brought about the divorce.**

**Colossians 3:13** Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (NLT)

**Matthew 5:23–24; Ephesians 4:32**

### **Practical Steps**

- Divorce happens for a myriad of reasons, but it is not the fault of the child. Be open to talk to your parents about why the divorce occurred.
- During and after a divorce, there are many things that change and are emotionally difficult. Write a list of those changes. How can God, who is unchangeable, help you with each struggle?
- If possible, maintain your relationship with both parents and extended family. Call, write, text—assure them of your love.
- Have a youth pastor or counselor help you find someone older in your church who can mentor you and spend time listening to you during this hard time.

- Find ten verses that talk about how God will always be there to take care of you.
- Create a family journal where you can express your feelings about the divorce and where your parents can respond to the entries. If possible, schedule regular time with your parents for discussion.

## Resources

- *Children and Divorce* (booklet), Amy Baker. New Growth.
- *Help for Step Families* (booklet), Winston Smith. New Growth.
- “Honoring Your Parents” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.

## Eating Struggles

*See also Choices, Fear, Forgiveness from God, Self-Injury, Self-Worth, Temptation, Worry*

### **1. Your body is God's creation, beautiful in his sight.**

**Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**Psalms 139:13–14** For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

**Genesis 2:22–23**

### **2. Your body is God's possession; he bought you with a price.**

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your

own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

**1 Peter 1:18–19** Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

**1 Peter 2:9**

**3. Our trust, security, and success are not in our bodies but in God who made us as we are.**

**Jeremiah 17:5–7** Thus says the LORD: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is in the LORD.”

**Zechariah 4:6**

**4. Taking control of what belongs to God is sin. Focusing on self is idolatry.**

**Ecclesiastes 2:25** For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him? (NASB)

**Matthew 15:11** It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man. (NASB)

**Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

**1 John 1:8–9**

**5. Overeating (or under-eating), self-indulgence, and placing self ahead of God are foolishness in God's eyes.**

**Proverbs 23:20–21** Do not carouse with drunkards or feast with gluttons, for they are on their way to poverty, and too much sleep clothes them in rags. (NLT)

**Philippians 3:19** They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth. (NLT)

**Proverbs 28:7; 30:21–22; Luke 12:19–20**

**6. By an act of the will, we are to give our bodies back to God.**

**Romans 12:1–2** And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God

because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (NLT)

## **7. Changing our thinking is crucial.**

**Isaiah 55:7–9** Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**Philippians 4:8–9** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and

seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

**Psalms 103:1–13; Proverbs 4:20–22**

**8. Pray before you eat and give thanks; enjoy what you eat.**

**Ecclesiastes 5:18** Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot.

**1 Timothy 4:4–5** For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

**Ephesians 5:29; 1 Timothy 6:17**

**Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- The young person should be evaluated by a physician.

For the youth:

- Have someone hold you accountable for your eating habits—someone firm, yet kind. Make sure you are absolutely truthful to this person. Keep a journal to help them know your need.
- Practice honesty. Memorize Proverbs 12:22. No hiding of laxatives, diuretics, or food. No lying about eating.
- Write a paragraph of what God is thinking when you want to throw up or refuse food. See above verses for this topic.
- In a food journal answer the following questions. What is (or seems to be) out of control in my life? Who is in control? Am I trying to control my life by how I eat?

## Resources

- “Anorexia” in *Counseling the Hard Cases*, Stuart Scott. B & H Academic.
- *Eating Disorders* (booklet), Ed Welch. New Growth.
- *Love to Eat, Hate to Eat: Breaking the Bondage of Destructive Eating Habits*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.

- *Redeemed from the Pit: Biblical Repentance and Restoration from the Bondage of Eating Disorders*, Marie Notcheva. Calvary Press.
- *Uncommon Vessels: A Program for Developing Godly Eating Habits*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.

Entertainment/Art  
Movies/TV/Gaming/Music

*See also Choices, Sexual Purity, Temptation, Violence*

**1. God is creative and beautiful and has revealed himself in many ways.**

**1 Chronicles 29:11** Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.  
(NASB)

**Psalms 8:1-4** O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth, who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens! From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; what is

man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? (NASB)

**Psalm 27:4** One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to meditate in His temple. (NASB)

**Psalm 145:5** On the glorious splendor of Your majesty and on Your wonderful works, I will meditate. (NASB)

**Psalm 104; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:3**

- 2. Music, art, literature, theater, and even the games we play are all creative, cultural expressions of the humanity the Creator has given us for our enjoyment and for his glory. As extensions of his image, we reflect his handiwork.**

**Genesis 1:27, 31** So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female. . . . God looked at everything he had made, and he was very pleased. Evening passed and morning came—that was the sixth day. (GNT)

**Revelation 4:11** Our Lord and God! You are worthy to receive glory, honor, and power. For you created all things, and by your will they were given existence and life. (GNT)

**2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Timothy 6:17**

**3. As with everything God has created for good, Satan, through his worldly system, seeks to corrupt and degrade, making counterfeits.**

**Ezekiel 28:17** Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings.

**John 8:44** You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

**1 John 5:19** We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

**2 Corinthians 11:14** And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

**1 Timothy 4:1; 1 John 2:15–16**

**4. As fallen, sinful people, we are naturally selfish and prone to following the pathways of this world.**

**Romans 7:18–20** For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

**James 1:14–15**

**5. With the Spirit's help, the believer must actively determine not to follow Satan's corruptions, rejecting what is vulgar, violent, or immoral.**

**Galatians 5:16** So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (NIV)

**Deuteronomy 7:26** Do not bring a detestable thing into your house or you, like it, will be set apart for destruction. Regard it as vile and utterly detest it, for it is set apart for destruction. (NIV)

**Isaiah 5:20** Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for

darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. (NIV)

**James 1:21** Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. (NASB)

**James 1:27** Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. (NASB)

**John 17:15; Colossians 2:8; 3 John 1:11**

**6. The believer must actively pursue what is right, making careful, godly decisions.**

**Psalm 101:2–3** I will be careful to live a blameless life—when will you come to help me? I will lead a life of integrity in my own home. I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar. I hate all who deal crookedly; I will have nothing to do with them. (NLT)

**2 Timothy 2:22** Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. (NLT)

**Joshua 24:14; Galatians 5:16; Philippians 4:8**

**7. Any entertainment activity can be done excessively. Be wise in the use of your time.**

**Psalm 90:12** So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom.  
(NASB)

**Ephesians 5:15–17** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

**Titus 3:8**

### **Practical Steps**

- Honor and obey parents who have placed limitations and/or passwords on computer sites and games. Be thankful they care.
- Get rid of items that cause you to be tempted—CDs, DVDs, books, violent or suggestive games, and so on.
- Replace bad images. Work on deleting these from the “hard drive” of your mind. Replace them

with thoughts of what is real, right, true, and godly. Use Scripture to do this mind makeover.

- Keep a time chart for one week. Determine the number of hours you spent on entertainment. Would there be better ways to use some of this time, for example, on schoolwork, Bible study, exercise, or serving others?
- List the amount of money spent monthly on entertainment (tickets, gas, food, games, books, and so on).
- One night a week, instead of indulging in negative entertainment options, invite friends over to compete in a baking and cooking competition and choose the best chef.
- Family book club: pick a book everyone in the family is interested in and read a chapter a week to discuss after dinner.

## Resources

- *Hope and Help for Video Game, TV and Internet "Addiction,"* Mark Shaw. Focus.
- "Life in the Real World" in *Age of Opportunity*, Paul Trip. P & R.

- *Raising a Christian Daughter in an MTV World*,  
Mary Ruth Murdock. P & R.

## Failure/Success

*See also Choices, Disappointment, Suffering, Trust, Worry*

### **1. God's view of success is how well we know him.**

**Jeremiah 9:23–24** Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”

**Psalms 73:25–26** Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

### **2. Success is found in knowing and doing God's will.**

**Joshua 1:8–9** This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

**Micah 6:8** He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

### **3. Though we sometimes fail, God will not fail us.**

**Lamentations 3:22–23** Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (NIV)

**Deuteronomy 31:6** Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. (NASB)

**1 Thessalonians 5:24** Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. (NASB)

## **Joshua 21:45**

### **4. Our weakness is God's strength.**

**2 Corinthians 12:9–10** But his answer was: “My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak.” I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, in order to feel the protection of Christ’s power over me. I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (GNT)

## **Isaiah 40:28–31**

### **5. When we feel like a failure, God wants us to keep on working and improving, to keep on running to win!**

**2 Timothy 1:6–7** For this reason I remind you to keep alive the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid; instead, his Spirit fills us with power, love, and self-control. (GNT)

**1 Corinthians 9:24–26** Surely you know that many runners take part in a race, but only one of them wins the prize. Run, then, in such a way as to win the prize. Every athlete in training submits to

strict discipline, in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever. (GNT)

**Philippians 3:12–14** I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep striving to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself. Of course, my friends, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above. (GNT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Peter, who failed, but was restored to service, John 18:15–27; 21:15–19; Acts 2
- John Mark, who got a second chance, Acts 15:36–40; 2 Timothy 4:11
- A burned-out Timothy, 2 Timothy 1–2
- Paul presses on, Philippians 3:8–14

### **Practical Steps**

- When things do not go as desired or planned, make a list of what could be changed next time.
- Think back to other difficult times. How did God help you? Memorize Joshua 1:8–9.
- When success does come, make sure you give God praise and credit. Think of how some professional athletes visually express thanks to God and how some strut, and dance, and point to themselves.
- How does our culture define success and failure? What is God's definition? Which is the truth?

## Resources

- *Dealing with Rejection* (booklet), Jack Miller. New Growth.
- *Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion against Low Expectations*, Alex and Brett Harris. Multnomah.
- *Failure: The Back Door to Success*, Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *God's Unlikely Path to Success: How He Uses Less-than-Perfect People*, Tony Evans. Harvest House.

## Fear/Safety/Terrorism

*See also* **Death, Suffering, Trust, Worry**

### **1. God is the answer for a fearful heart.**

**Psalm 34:4** I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. (NIV)

**1 Peter 5:7** Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (NIV)

**Joshua 1:6–9; Job 23:8–10**

### **2. Focus not on fear but on what is real and true.**

**Psalm 4:8** In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, LORD, make me dwell in safety. (NIV)

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (NIV)

**Philippians 4:13**

### **3. God is present with us in every situation.**

**Deuteronomy 31:8** The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. (NASB)

**Isaiah 41:10** Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. (NASB)

**Psalms 73:23–24**

**4. Not placing ourselves in dangerous situations requires making good choices. See *Choices, Fighting/Violence*.**

**5. We must not fear the past or the future.**

**Isaiah 43:18–19** Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

**Philippians 3:13–14** Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to

what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Proverbs 3:5–6; Lamentations 3:21–23;  
Matthew 6:34**

**6. If there is a fear problem, there is also a love problem.**

**1 John 4:18** There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

**7. God's provision of everyday needs makes fear unnecessary.**

**Philippians 4:19** And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

**Matthew 6:31–33** So don't worry about these things, saying, "What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?" These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live

righteously, and he will give you everything you need. (NLT)

## **8. God is more powerful than our enemies.**

**Romans 8:31** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (NASB)

**Psalm 27:1–3** The LORD is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The LORD is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble? When evil people come to devour me, when my enemies and foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident. (NLT)

**Psalm 56:11; 91:4**

## **9. We must trust God completely, even though bad things happen.**

**Habakkuk 3:16–19** I hear all this, and I tremble; my lips quiver with fear. My body goes limp, and my feet stumble beneath me. I will quietly wait for the time to come when God will punish those who attack us. Even though the fig trees have no fruit and no grapes grow on the

vines, even though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no grain, even though the sheep all die and the cattle stalls are empty, I will still be joyful and glad, because the LORD God is my savior. The Sovereign LORD gives me strength. He makes me sure-footed as a deer and keeps me safe on the mountains. (GNT)

**10. God triumphs over evil in the end, and believers will be safe with the Father in heaven.**

**2 Thessalonians 1:6–8** In his justice he will pay back those who persecute you. And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. (NLT)

**Jude 1:14–15; Revelation 19:11–16**

**Biblical Narratives**

- Servant of Elisha, who needed to know of God's presence, 2 Kings 6:15–17

- Hezekiah, a great moment of faith, 2 Chronicles 32:7–8
- David, who had cause for great concern, 1 Samuel 27; Psalm 27
- Psalms that express hope in spite of fear, 34; 37; 46; 91
- Disciples in the storm, Mark 4:35–41

### **Practical Steps**

- Keep a flashlight close by your bed and use it in the night to read Bible verses that will comfort you with your fears.
- Sharing your fear with a trusted, mature Christian friend is essential.
- Monitor your thinking. Keep Philippians 4:8 in your mind. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into his truth from Scripture.
- Create a flip book (3 x 5 cards fastened or clipped together) full of Scripture that deals with fear and God's protection.

### **Resources**

- *The Brave: Conquering the Fears That Hold You Back*, Hayley and Michael DiMarco. Revell.
- *Breaking the Bonds of Fear*, Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *Fear: Breaking Its Grip*, Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *Living in a Dangerous World* (booklet), William Smith. New Growth.
- “Overcoming Fear” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.
- “Paralyzing Fear” in *Counseling the Hard Cases*, Stuart Scott. B & H Academic.

## Fighting/Violence

*See also Anger, Choices, Gangs, Peer Pressure*

### **1. Violence is not pleasing to God.**

**Proverbs 20:3** It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling.

**Psalms 7:15–16** They dig a deep pit to trap others, then fall into it themselves. The trouble they make for others backfires on them. The violence they plan falls on their own heads. (NLT)

**Psalms 11:5** The LORD examines both the righteous and the wicked. He hates those who love violence. (NLT)

### **2. Stay away from people who pick fights.**

**Proverbs 16:29** A man of violence entices his neighbor and leads him in a way that is not good. (NASB)

**Proverbs 24:1–2** Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them; for their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble. (NASB)

**Titus 3:10–11** As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

**2 Timothy 2:22–24** Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged.  
(NASB)

### **Proverbs 3:31**

- 3. Defend yourself only if you face bodily harm or if your life is in danger. Jesus used the concept of a man defending his household, and Paul, that of a soldier on duty.**

**Matthew 5:38–41** You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as

well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

**Luke 11:21–22** When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.

**Luke 12:39; 2 Timothy 2:3–4**

#### **4. Seek help and support from those in authority (parents, school officials, government authorities).**

**Acts 23:16–17** Now the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, so he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him."

**Romans 13:3–4** For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

## **Acts 23; Titus 3:1–2**

### **5. If possible, help people in trouble.**

**Jeremiah 22:3** Thus says the LORD: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.

**Proverbs 31:9** Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

**Isaiah 1:17** Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

### **6. Remember that God is the ultimate defender.**

**Psalms 35:1** Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me. (NIV)

**Isaiah 25:4** You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall. (NIV)

## **Psalm 37:7; 59:16**

### **7. Paying back someone who has insulted you or hurt you is wrong. If someone has truly sinned against you, trust God to take care of it.**

**Romans 12:17–21** If someone has done you wrong, do not repay him with a wrong. Try to do what everyone considers to be good. Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody. Never take revenge, my friends, but instead let God's anger do it. For the scripture says, "I will take revenge, I will pay back, says the Lord." Instead, as the scripture says: "If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them a drink; for by doing this you will make them burn with shame." Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good. (GNT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Jesus at his trial, 1 Peter 2:21–22
- Paul's nephew, who took action to save the apostle, Acts 23:12–35

### **Practical Steps**

- If events in a situation move toward physical violence, get away quickly. Removing yourself from the area is wise.
- Avoid friends who have anger problems or a tendency toward fighting.

## **Resources**

- *Conflict: A Redemptive Opportunity*, Timothy Lane. CCEF.
- *The Young Peacemaker*, Corlette Sande. Shepherd.

## Flirting

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*See also* **Clothes, Lust, Manipulation, Self-Worth, Sexual Purity**

**1. Flirtatious and seductive speech are to be avoided.**

**Proverbs 2:16–17** So you will be delivered [by wisdom] from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words, who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God.

**2 Peter 2:18** They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception. (NLT)

**Romans 16:17–18; Ephesians 4:29–30; 5:4**

**2. Flirtatious or seductive body language is not pleasing to God and could bring his discipline.**

**Proverbs 10:10** Whoever winks the eye causes trouble, but a babbling fool will come to ruin.

**Isaiah 3:16–17** Moreover, the LORD said, “Because the daughters of Zion are proud and walk with heads held high and seductive eyes, and go along with mincing steps and tinkle the bangles on their feet, therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion with scabs, and the LORD will make their foreheads bare.” (NASB)

### **3. Dressing in a sensual and flirtatious manner is to be avoided because it could lead to great sin.**

**1 Timothy 2:9–10** And I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do. (NLT)

**Ezekiel 16:15–17**

### **4. Flirting may cause others to choose sin.**

**Matthew 18:7** Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things

must come, but woe to the person through whom they come! (NIV)

**Romans 14:13, 21** Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. . . . It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall. (NIV)

**2 Corinthians 6:3** We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. (NIV)

**Luke 17:1**

**5. Flirtatious behavior could open our lives to Satan's schemes and enhance his desire to make us fall.**

**Proverbs 9:13–18** The woman Folly is loud; she is seductive and knows nothing. She sits at the door of her house; she takes a seat on the highest places of the town, calling to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way, “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” And to him who lacks sense she says, “Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” But he does not know

that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

**1 Peter 5:8** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

**2 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 6:11–13**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Women to avoid, Proverbs 5:1–14; 7:10–27
- Daughters of Zion flirting, Isaiah 3:16–26

### **Practical Steps**

- Ask a Christian young woman or man or your mom or dad to help you go through your closet to evaluate your clothes.
- Ask the same person to evaluate your physical walk. Get advice on how not to walk seductively.
- Set boundaries for not using your voice, eyes, body, actions, or clothes to seek attention. Have someone view you objectively.
- Read Proverbs 5 and in your own words describe flirting from God's point of view.

- List flirtatious actions on one side of a paper; on the other side list opposite actions. Compare and contrast. Commit to non-flirtatious behavior.

## **Resources**

- *Not Even a Hint: Guarding Your Heart*, Shannon and Joshua Harris. Multnomah.
- *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- *Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty*, Dannah Gresh. Moody.

## Forgiveness from God

*See also Confession, Guilt, Hope, Past Memories*

### **1. There is no sin that God will not forgive.**

**Daniel 9:9** But the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. (NLT)

**Psalms 86:5** O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help. (NLT)

**Romans 8:1–2** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (NASB)

**Psalms 130:3–4; Isaiah 44:22; Lamentations 3:22; Colossians 1:13**

### **2. Forgiveness provided by our heavenly Father is complete.**

**Psalm 38:17–18** For I am ready to fall, and my pain is ever before me. I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin.

**Isaiah 43:25** I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.

**Psalm 103:12** As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

**Micah 7:18–19**

### **3. Asking God to forgive us is required.**

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NASB)

**Psalm 66:18** If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear. (NASB)

### **4. God will supply complete restoration.**

**Psalm 25:7** Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed

away; behold, the new has come.

**5. Nowhere in Scripture is it taught that we are to forgive ourselves. We must accept what we have done and take steps to make it right, but our sin was against God. Christ paid the price for all our sins and offers forgiveness.**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- David, who sinned greatly, 2 Samuel 12; Psalm 51
- Christ's crucifixion—he paid it all and says, “I forgive!” Luke 23:26–46

### **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- Give the teen a small cross to wear or carry in their pocket to remind them of God's forgiveness when they feel overcome with guilt.
- Give the teen a compass they can keep with them to remind them of the truth of Psalm 103:12. Write the reference for the verse on the

back of the compass with a permanent marker.  
Know that God's forgiveness has no limits.

For the youth:

- Don't allow your mind to dwell on past sins. Ask God's Spirit to help you focus on God's truth.
- Study and memorize the texts above that show you what God thinks about your sins once they are forgiven.
- Make a list of what the Bible says God does with sin when he forgives us (throws it behind his back, separates us from it as far as the east is from the west, makes us white as snow, throws sin into the sea, and so on).
- Find some praise songs or hymns that rejoice in forgiveness. Sing them; listen to them on your media sources.

## Resources

- *Accepting God's Forgiveness* (booklet), C. John Miller. New Growth.
- *After You've Blown It: Reconnecting with God and Others*, Erwin Lutzer. Multnomah.

- “The Faithfulness of God” in *God: As He Longs for You to See Him*, Chip Ingram. Baker.
- *Free at Last: Experiencing True Freedom through Your Identity in Christ*, Tony Evans. Moody.
- *Redeeming Your Painful Past* (booklet), Stephen Viars. New Growth.

## Forgiving Others

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*See also* **Bitterness, Confession, Disappointment, Forgiveness from God, Guilt, Past Memories**

### **1. Forgiving others is not an option; it is a command of Scripture.**

**Colossians 3:12–13** Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

**Matthew 6:9–15** Pray, then, in this way: “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. . . .” For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not

forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. (NASB)

**Matthew 5:23–24; Ephesians 4:32**

**2. There is no limit to the number of times we are to forgive someone.**

**Luke 17:3–4** Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, “I repent,” forgive him. (NASB)

**Matthew 18:21–22** Peter came and said to Him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” (NASB)

**3. God’s offer of forgiveness to anyone who asks is a great example to us.**

**Psalms 130:3–4** LORD, if you kept a record of our sins, who, O Lord, could ever survive? But you offer forgiveness, that we might learn to fear you. (NLT)

**Romans 8:1–2** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

**Micah 7:18–19** Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (NASB)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Parable of the unforgiving servant, Matthew 18:23–35
- Jesus on the cross, Luke 23:34
- Stephen, who forgave his attackers, Acts 7:60
- Philemon, whom Paul instructed to forgive, Philemon 1

### **Practical Steps**

- Ask God if there are people in your life you need to forgive. Make a list and spend time working through the forgiveness process.

- Ask this question: Does forgiveness mean the other person was right? The answer is not necessarily. It simply brings freedom to you as you obey God.
- Read Genesis 50:19–21. How did Joseph forgive?
- Get a helium balloon and write on it all the reasons you are bitter, struggling to forgive. Release the balloon as a symbol of releasing the bitterness.

## Resources

- *Choosing Forgiveness*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *Forgiving Others* (booklet), Timothy Lane. New Growth.
- “Unforgiveness and Bitterness” in *Feelings and Faith*, Brian Borgman. Crossway.

## Friends

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*See also* **Boundaries, Choices, Peer Pressure, Selfishness**

### **1. Quality friends will help and encourage us.**

**Proverbs 17:17** A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity. (NIV)

**Proverbs 27:17** As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. (NIV)

**Ecclesiastes 4:9–12** Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart. (NASB)

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. (NASB)

**Ephesians 4:2** Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. (NLT)

**Proverbs 27:6; Romans 12:10; Galatians 6:2; Hebrews 10:24–25**

## **2. Discretion as we choose friends is important.**

**Psalms 119:63** I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts. (NIV)

**Proverbs 12:26** The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. (NIV)

**Proverbs 22:24–25** Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn their ways and get yourself ensnared. (NIV)

**Exodus 23:2** You must not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you are called to testify in a dispute, do not be swayed by the crowd to twist justice. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 15:33–34** Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character." Think carefully about what is right, and stop sinning. For to your shame

I say that some of you don't know God at all.  
(NLT)

**Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 1:10; 2:11–15; 13:20;  
18:24; 23:20**

### **3. A good friend is willing to experience loss for the other person.**

**John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. (NIV)

**Philippians 2:3–8** 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. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

### **4. Ways to restore a friendship.**

**Proverbs 19:11** A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

**Romans 12:18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

**1 Thessalonians 5:15** See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

**Matthew 5:23–24; Romans 15:7**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Job's friends/critics, Job 2:11; 12:4; 16:20; 19:14
- God and Abraham, 2 Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23
- David and Jonathan (use concordance and Bible dictionary)
- Paul and Timothy (use concordance and Bible dictionary)

## **Practical Steps**

- What is involved in being a good friend? Make a list of qualities you desire in a friend. Now, look at your list and evaluate yourself. What type of a friend are you?
- Have an awareness of others around you who are hurting and needing friends. Will you take the risk to initiate a conversation, to encourage someone like this?

## Resources

- *Frenemies: What to Do When Friends Turn Mean*, Hayley DiMarco. Revell.
- “Friendly—Everyone Needs a Friend” in *A Young Woman Who Reflects the Heart of Jesus*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.
- *The Young Peacemaker*, Corlette Sande. Shepherd.

## Future Plans

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*See also Career, Choices, Fear, Purpose for Living, Worry*

### **1. When we acknowledge God in all of our plans, his guidance is guaranteed.**

**Psalm 143:8** Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

**Proverbs 3:5–6** Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

### **2. We must seek his will in all our plans for the future.**

**Psalm 143:10** Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!

**James 4:13–15** Look here, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do

business there and make a profit.” How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone. What you ought to say is, “If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that.” (NLT)

**Romans 15:32** So that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company. (NASB)

**1 Corinthians 16:7**

### **3. God has promised to see us through to the end.**

**Philippians 1:6** Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (NIV)

**Jeremiah 32:17** Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. (NIV)

### **4. Worrying about tomorrow is unnecessary for those who seek God first.**

**Matthew 6:33–34** Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. So don’t worry about

tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 2:9** But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him."

## **5. God's plans are the best plans.**

**Jeremiah 29:11–12** "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you." (NIV)

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Abraham's servant who trusted God for the future, Genesis 24
- Paul said, "If God wills," Acts 18:21

## **Practical Steps**

- It is good to have goals, plans, and dreams. List what you long for in life and pray that God will give guidance to that end, to know how to proceed.
- God is the ultimate planner/organizer. Make sure your plans do not go against God's Word. Memorize Jeremiah 29:11–12.
- Make a list of milestones and your plans to reach them. Prepare according to your plans. Set time frames to arrive at your desired goals.

## Resources

- *Fast Forward to the Future* (for younger children), Kay Arthur. Harvest House.
- *Guidance: Have I Missed God's Best?* (booklet), James Petty. P & R.
- "Lies about the Future" in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.

# Gambling

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*See also Contentment, Materialism, Money*

## **1. Gambling is deceitful and can be a trap.**

**Psalm 64:2, 5–6** Protect me from the plots of the wicked, from mobs of evil people. . . . They encourage each other in their evil plots; they talk about where they will place their traps. “No one can see them,” they say. They make evil plans and say, “We have planned a perfect crime.” The human heart and mind are a mystery. (GNT)

**Romans 16:18** Such people are not serving Christ our Lord; they are serving their own personal interests. By smooth talk and glowing words they deceive innocent people. (NLT)

## **2. Getting rich should never be anyone’s goal.**

**Proverbs 30:7–9** Two things I ask of you, LORD; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily

bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, “Who is the Lord?” Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God. (NIV)

**1 Timothy 6:9–12** But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows. But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. (NLT)

**Ephesians 4:22**

### **3. Gambling is not good stewardship.**

**Luke 12:42–44** The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 4:1–2** This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. (NIV)

**1 Peter 4:10** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. (NIV)

#### **4. God can and will supply all our financial needs.**

**Philippians 4:19** And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

**Matthew 6:33–34** Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today. (NLT)

**Jeremiah 32:17**

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Paul's contentment, Philippians 4

## Practical Steps

- Practice giving back to God. Use the Old Testament tithe as a standard.
- Make a list of the reasons you gamble, for example, how it makes you feel. Realizing that this behavior leads to addictions and lack of control, what positive healthy outlets can replace each of the feelings you listed?
- Make better choices for places of entertainment. Stop going to places of temptation. Replace gambling with positive activities. Think: Christian associations.

## Resources

- *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power*; Timothy Keller. Dutton.
- "Gambling: Is It a Good Bet?" in *Seven Snares of the Enemy*, Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *Tony Evans Speaks Out on Gambling and the Lottery*, Tony Evans. Moody.

## Gangs/Bullies

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*See also* **Boundaries, Fighting, Peer Pressure, Selfishness**

### **1. Gangs that are violent in nature are on a pathway to destruction.**

**1 Corinthians 15:33** Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”

**Proverbs 4:14–17** Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on. For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble. For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.

**Psalms 64:5–6** They hold fast to their evil purpose; they talk of laying snares secretly, thinking, who can see them? They search out injustice, saying, “We have accomplished a diligent search.” For the inward mind and heart of a man are deep!

**Psalm 55:9–11** Confuse them, Lord, and frustrate their plans, for I see violence and conflict in the city. Its walls are patrolled day and night against invaders, but the real danger is wickedness within the city. Everything is falling apart; threats and cheating are rampant in the streets. (NLT)

**Psalm 37:12–13**

## **2. Those who face bullies can depend on God's presence and help.**

**Psalm 10:12–14** Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted. Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, “You will not call to account”? But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation, that you may take it into your hands; to you the helpless commits himself; you have been the helper of the fatherless.

**Psalm 12:7–8** You, O LORD, will keep them; you will guard us from this generation forever. On every side the wicked prowl, as vileness is exalted among the children of man.

**Psalm 31:4** You take me out of the net they have hidden for me, for you are my refuge.

**Psalm 31:15; Proverbs 16:6**

### **3. Guidelines from Proverbs.**

**Proverbs 1:10** My son, if sinful men entice you, do not give in to them. (NIV)

**Proverbs 2:12–15** Wisdom will save you from evil people, from those whose words are twisted. These men turn from the right way to walk down dark paths. They take pleasure in doing wrong, and they enjoy the twisted ways of evil. Their actions are crooked, and their ways are wrong. (NLT)

**Proverbs 14:15–16** Only simpletons believe everything they're told! The prudent carefully consider their steps. The wise are cautious and avoid danger; fools plunge ahead with reckless confidence. (NLT)

**Proverbs 15:1**

### **4. Do what you can do to defuse the situation; let God handle the result.**

**Romans 12:17–21** Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is

hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**5. Seek help and support from those in authority (parents, school authorities, government officials).**

**Acts 23:16–17** But the son of Paul’s sister heard of their ambush, and he came and entered the barracks and told Paul. Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, “Lead this young man to the commander, for he has something to report to him.” (NASB)

**Romans 13:3–4** For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. (NASB)

**6. Christians can expect persecution.**

**Matthew 5:10–12** Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (NASB)

**1 John 3:13** Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. (NASB)

**1 Peter 3:14–16** But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.

**1 Peter 2:20**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Lot attacked, Genesis 14:1–12
- David faces his adversaries, Psalm 59
- Elisha set upon, 2 Kings 2:23–24

## Practical Steps

For the counselor:

- Bullying should be taken seriously, and parents, school authorities, and other adults should become involved in stopping it. A youth should not feel silenced and must be free to seek help.
- If a youth has bullied others, he or she needs to unpack why they are driven to put others down or hurt them (possibly it results from a need to control, fear, or lack of awareness).

For the youth:

- Those who bully need to evaluate their behavior. They should think back and make a list of times they have done this. They need to ask how they would feel if someone treated them this way.
- Memorize and apply Luke 6:31.

## Resources

- “Bullying” in *CCEF Now*, 2012, Julie Lowe. CCEF.
- *Learning the Rules* (Alec London series), Stephanie P. Moore. Moody.
- *Mean Girls*, Hayley DiMarco. Revell.

## Grief

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*See also* **Death, Disappointment, Fear, Hope, Past Memories, Trust**

### **1. We are not alone in our grief. God always understands.**

**Psalm 28:7** The LORD protects and defends me; I trust in him. He gives me help and makes me glad; I praise him with joyful songs. (GNT)

**Psalm 55:22** Leave your troubles with the LORD, and he will defend you; he never lets honest people be defeated. (GNT)

**Psalm 30:5** His anger lasts only a moment, his goodness for a lifetime. Tears may flow in the night, but joy comes in the morning. (GNT)

**Isaiah 43:2** When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire, you will not be burned; the hard trials that come will not hurt you. (GNT)

## **2. We can run to God as a refuge for our grief.**

**Psalm 31:1–3** I come to you, LORD, for protection; never let me be defeated. You are a righteous God; save me, I pray! Hear me! Save me now! Be my refuge to protect me; my defense to save me. You are my refuge and defense; guide me and lead me as you have promised. (GNT)

**Psalm 31:9** Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am in trouble; my eyes are tired from so much crying; I am completely worn out. (GNT)

**Psalm 31:19** How wonderful are the good things you keep for those who honor you! Everyone knows how good you are, how securely you protect those who trust you. (GNT)

**Nehemiah 8:10** Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength. (NASB)

## **3. We can be comforted in our loss because God has control of all events.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:13, 18** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. . . . Therefore encourage one another with these words.

**Psalm 116:15** Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

#### **4. God understands our tears and gives strength.**

**Psalm 6:8** For the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.

**Psalm 56:8** You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?

**Psalm 119:28** My soul weeps because of grief; strengthen me according to Your word. (NASB)

**Psalm 126:5–6** Let those who wept as they planted their crops, gather the harvest with joy! Those who wept as they went out carrying the seed will come back singing for joy, as they bring in the harvest. (GNT)

**Isaiah 25:8** The Sovereign LORD will destroy death forever! He will wipe away the tears from everyone's eyes and take away the disgrace his people have suffered throughout the world. The LORD himself has spoken. (GNT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Isaac and Rebekah, grief over Esau, Genesis 26:34–35
- Builders of the second temple, Ezra 3:12–13; Haggai 2
- Parents, Proverbs 10:1; 17:25
- Mary and Martha, when their brother died, John 11
- Disciples, over Jesus’s departure, John 16:16–22

### **Practical Steps**

- Talk, talk, talk with those you trust! Share your grief over a broken relationship, death of a loved one, or other loss. Ask for their godly advice and help.
- Force yourself to be consistent in daily Bible reading. Spend time in the Psalms, especially 32; 34; 37; 42; 46; 91; 145.
- Got a backpack? Every kid has a backpack. Claim God’s power and control by writing some of the above verses on cards. Carry them in your backpack to review often.
- Exercise daily; practice healthy eating. Meet with godly adults for encouragement.

- Write about your grief in a journal. Get on your knees with the writing before you, pleading for God's help and strength.

## **Resources**

- *Grief: Learning to Live with Loss* (booklet), Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *Grieving with Hope*, Kathy Leonard. Baker.
- "How to Help a Grieving Child" in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Winter 1998, Judy Blore.
- *What Grievers Can Expect* (booklet), Wally Stephenson. RBP.

## Guilt

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*See also Confession, Forgiveness from God, Gospel (The)*

- 1. Guilt is the result of sin. As Christians, we need to agree with God: sin is sin.**

**Psalm 32:3–5** When I did not confess my sins, I was worn out from crying all day long. Day and night you punished me, LORD; my strength was completely drained, as moisture is dried up by the summer heat. Then I confessed my sins to you; I did not conceal my wrongdoings. I decided to confess them to you, and you forgave all my sins. (GNT)

**Psalm 69:5** My sins, O God, are not hidden from you; you know how foolish I have been. (GNT)

- 2. We need to admit our sin and seek forgiveness, turning and going in the opposite direction of that sin.**

**1 John 1:8–10** If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. (NIV)

**Hebrews 10:22–23**

**3. The feelings of guilt should no longer be a problem with Christ as our Savior, our righteousness, and our intercessor.**

**Romans 8:33–35** Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? (see context for answer to Paul's questions) (NLT)

**Hebrews 9:24**

**4. Even though we regret our sins, we must rely not on feelings but on the fact that, once forgiven, our sins have been thoroughly discarded.**

**Micah 7:18–19** Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people? You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love. Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean! (NLT)

**Isaiah 43:25** I—yes, I alone—will blot out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again. (NLT)

**Isaiah 38:17** Behold, it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness; but in love you have delivered my life from the pit of destruction, for you have cast all my sins behind your back.

**Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 1:18; Romans 4:7–8**

**5. Guilt feelings need to be replaced with freedom thinking.**

**Philippians 4:6–8** Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you

need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (NLT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- David, needing forgiveness, 2 Samuel 12; Psalm 32; 51
- Peter, who blew it and was restored, Matthew 26:69–75; John 21:15–17

### **Practical Steps**

- To give a picture of what God has done with sin once it is forgiven, write your sin on a paper and burn it (outside and with adult supervision, of course).
- Memorize Psalm 32:1–5.

- If guilt is still felt after confession to God, know that the guilt does not come from God! See Psalm 103:10–12.

## **Resources**

- *Free at Last: Experiencing True Freedom through Your Identity in Christ*, Tony Evans. Moody.
- *Freedom from Guilt* (booklet), Timothy Lane. New Growth.

## Health/Illness

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*See also* **Eating Struggles, Fear, Natural Disasters, Special Needs, Suffering, Trust**

### **1. Health problems can be expected in this life.**

**Psalm 103:15–16** The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. (NIV)

**2 Corinthians 5:4** For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (NIV)

### **2. God's presence in all trying situations is guaranteed. We are not alone.**

**Deuteronomy 31:6** Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. (NIV)

**Isaiah 43:1–2** But now, this is what the LORD says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.” (NIV)

**Isaiah 41:10, 13**

### **3. Our all-powerful God gives strength.**

**Psalms 73:26** My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (NASB)

**Psalms 91:4** He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 4:7–9** But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. (NASB)

**2 Corinthians 4:16** Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.  
(NASB)

**2 Samuel 22:33; Psalm 31:24; Philippians 4:13**

#### **4. Health advice from Proverbs.**

**Proverbs 3:7–8** Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body and refreshment to your bones. (NASB)

**Proverbs 14:30** A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones. (NLT)

**Proverbs 18:14** The human spirit can endure a sick body, but who can bear a crushed spirit?  
(NLT)

**Proverbs 17:22**

#### **5. Whatever the final outcome of our health problems is, God will be glorified.**

**2 Corinthians 12:9–10** But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the

more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

**1 Peter 1:6–7** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**6. God can and does heal, in his time, according to his will. God is the one who does the healing.**

**Psalms 30:2–3** O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you restored my health. You brought me up from the grave, O LORD. You kept me from falling into the pit of death. (NLT)

**James 5:14–16** Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

**2 Kings 20:1–11; Psalm 103:2–5**

## **7. Health problems can help us grow as Christians.**

**James 1:2–4** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**Psalm 119:71** It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.

**Job 23:8–10**

## **8. Ultimately, heaven awaits us with its freedom from pain and illness.**

**Revelation 21:4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

**Philippians 3:20–21** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a

Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.  
(NASB)

**Romans 8:18–19, 22–23**

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Paul's thorn in the flesh, 2 Corinthians 12:9–10

### **Practical Steps**

- Have regular appointments with your physician.
- Enlist many to pray for you as you struggle with health issues.
- If confined to home or bed, write notes to encourage others. Memorize Scripture; pray for missionaries; invite visitors.
- Research the Joni Eareckson Tada story (or other stories like hers). Read her testimony. See below for two of her pamphlets.

### **Resources**

- *Chronic Pain: Living by Faith When Your Body Hurts* (booklet), Michael Emlet. New Growth.
- *Making Sense of Suffering* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *Pain and Providence* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *Uncommon Vessels: A Program for Developing Godly Eating Habits*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.

## Heroes

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### **1. Remember, it is the inside of people, not the outside, that should be admired.**

**1 Samuel 16:7** But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

**Proverbs 31:30** Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

### **2. Proud and boastful people do not make good heroes.**

**Jeremiah 9:23–24** Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and

righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”

**Isaiah 3:16–17** Moreover, the LORD said, “Because the daughters of Zion are proud and walk with heads held high and seductive eyes, and go along with mincing steps and tinkle the bangles on their feet, therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion. . . .” (NASB)

### **1 Peter 5:5**

### **3. Admiration of heroes must not become idolatry.**

**Exodus 20:3–4** You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. (NIV)

**1 John 5:21** Dear children, keep yourselves from idols. (NIV)

### **4. We must choose our heroes wisely.**

**Proverbs 2:11–15** Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, who have left the straight paths to walk in dark ways, who delight in

doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways. (NIV)

**Psalm 1:1**

**5. The ungodly are quickly gone and must not be looked up to or imitated.**

**Psalm 1:4–6** The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

**Ephesians 5:3–5, 7** Since you are God's people, it is not right that any matters of sexual immorality or indecency or greed should even be mentioned among you. Nor is it fitting for you to use language which is obscene, profane, or vulgar. Rather you should give thanks to God. You may be sure that no one who is immoral, indecent, or greedy (for greed is a form of idolatry) will ever receive a share in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. . . . So have nothing at all to do with such people. (GNT)

**6. Jesus Christ is the greatest hero to admire, our best example to follow.**

**1 Peter 2:21** For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

**Philippians 2:5–7** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

## **Biblical Narrative**

- Men and women of Hebrews 11

## **Practical Steps**

- Read biographies of great people, leaders of the past, Reformation giants, and pioneer missionaries.
- Make a list of qualities necessary to be a hero.
- What do heroes in the Bible look like? Think Joseph, David, Daniel, Jeremiah, Paul, and others.
- Who in your life has meant the most to you? Why?

- Question: Are you anyone's hero? Why? What makes you a hero? How can you be developing the qualities of a hero?

## **Resources**

- *God's Smuggler*, Brother Andrew. Chosen.
- *Great Escape: 40 Faith Building Lessons from History*, Christine Farenhorst. P & R.
- *Joseph: God's Super Hero* (for younger children), Kay Arthur. Harvest House.
- *Twelve Extraordinary Women*, John MacArthur. Thomas Nelson.
- *Twelve Unlikely Heroes*, John MacArthur. Thomas Nelson.

## Homosexuality

*See also Choices, Forgiveness from God, Temptation*

- 1. At creation, God created male and female; sex was God's idea. A woman was created to be with a man; a man was created to be with a woman. God has established these natural boundaries for sexual expression. Any other expression is sin.**

**Genesis 1:27** God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (NASB)

**Genesis 2:21–24** Then the LORD God made the man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, he took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh. He formed a woman out of the rib and brought her to him. Then the man said, "At last, here is one of my own kind—bone taken from my bone, and flesh from my flesh. 'Woman' is her name because she was taken out of man." That is

why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife, and they become one. (GNT)

**1 Corinthians 7:2–3** But because there is so much immorality, every man should have his own wife, and every woman should have her own husband. A man should fulfill his duty as a husband, and a woman should fulfill her duty as a wife, and each should satisfy the other's needs. (GNT)

## **2. Homosexual acts or fantasy is sinful and sexually impure.**

**Romans 1:24–27** Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. (NASB)

**Leviticus 20:13** If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act. (NASB)

**Leviticus 18:22; Romans 8:5–8; Galatians 5:19–21; Jude 1:7**

- 3. As with any sexual sin, homosexuality does not satisfy the cravings of the human heart (love, joy, peace, contentment, wellness of body and soul)—only God does.**

**Jeremiah 2:13** For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (NASB)

**Isaiah 55:1–2** Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

**John 10:10**

**4. The Christian must recognize that his or her body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that he or she must flee from immorality.**

**1 Corinthians 6:18–20** Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

**Ephesians 5:11–12** Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.

**5. As with any sin, complete forgiveness is available.**

**1 Corinthians 6:9–11** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you.

But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**Micah 7:18–19** Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (NASB)

**Isaiah 43:25; 1 John 1:9**

## **6. With God's help, the potential for the homosexual to change is very real.**

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**John 8:36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also

provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

**Galatians 5:16–17** So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. (NLT)

**Romans 7:23–25**

## **7. Moral choices must be made.**

**Psalm 141:4** Don't let me drift toward evil or take part in acts of wickedness. Don't let me share in the delicacies of those who do wrong. (NLT)

**Romans 6:6, 11–14, 19** For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. . . . In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace. . . . I am using an

example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. (NIV) Note that the “know” (v. 6), “count” (v. 11), and “offer” (v. 13) sequence are action steps to take.

**2 Timothy 2:22** Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. (NLT)

**Ephesians 4:17–24; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–7**

## **8. Use wisdom in avoiding evil situations.**

**Proverbs 1:10** My child, if sinners entice you, turn your back on them! (NLT)

**Proverbs 2:11–15** Wise choices will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe. Wisdom will save you from evil people, from those whose words are twisted. These men turn from the right way to walk down dark paths. They take pleasure in doing wrong, and they enjoy the twisted ways of evil. Their actions are crooked, and their ways are wrong. (NLT)

**Proverbs 4:25–27** Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path. Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil. (NLT)

**Proverbs 4:14–16**

## **9. Showing kindness and God's love to those who struggle is our responsibility.**

**Galatians 6:1–2** Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**Colossians 3:12** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

**Matthew 9:36** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

## **Biblical Narrative**

- Events in Sodom, Genesis 19:1–13

## Practical Steps

- Remove things from your life that tie you to this struggle—style of dress, mannerisms, places where temptation will be, games, music, and others.
- Stay away from Internet sites, movies, or TV shows that promote the homosexual agenda.

## Resources

- *Help, My Teen Is Gay* (booklet), Ben Marshall. Day One.
- *Homosexuality* (booklet), Ed Welch. P & R.
- “Homosexuality” in *Counseling the Hard Cases*, Stuart Scott. B & H Academic.
- *Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends*, Mark Yarhouse. Bethany.
- *Leaving Homosexuality: A Practical Guide for Men and Women Looking for a Way Out*, Alan Chambers. Harvest House.
- *When Homosexuality Hits Home*, Joe Dallas. Harvest House.

# Hope

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*See also Depression, Purpose for Living, Suffering, Trust*

**1. Hope is the anticipation that our needs will be met.**

**Psalm 39:7** What, then, can I hope for, Lord? I put my hope in you. (GNT)

**Romans 15:13** May God, the source of hope, fill you with all joy and peace by means of your faith in him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit. (GNT)

**2. Going through difficult times does not mean that God has forsaken us or that we have no hope.**

**1 Peter 4:12–13** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

**Psalm 43:5** Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

**Job 13:15** Though he slay me, I will hope in him.

### **3. Hope does not come from what people can do or our own strength.**

**Zechariah 4:6** Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.” (NASB)

**2 Chronicles 32:7–8** “Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria nor because of all the horde that is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him. With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah. (NASB)

### **4. Our heavenly Father is our only trustworthy source of hope.**

**Psalm 62:5–6** For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

**Psalm 71:5–6** For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth. Upon you I have leaned from before my birth; you are he who took me from my mother's womb. My praise is continually of you.

**Lamentations 3:21–23** This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. (NASB)

## **5. Hope develops as we know and understand God's presence and promises.**

**Haggai 2:4–5** But now don't be discouraged, any of you. Do the work, for I am with you. When you came out of Egypt, I promised that I would always be with you. I am still with you, so do not be afraid. (GNT)

**Psalm 25:5** Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. (NIV)

## **Psalm 33:13–15**

### **6. Hope is a result of walking closely with the Lord.**

**John 15:4–5** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. (NASB)

**Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

### **7. As believers in Jesus, we have a guaranteed hope that our future in heaven is secure.**

**Titus 3:5–7** He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (NASB)

**1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great

mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

**1 Corinthians 15:12–19**

## **8. Benefits of hope.**

Renewed strength, **Isaiah 57:10**

Confidence, **Philippians 1:20**

Joy through testing, **Romans 12:12; 1**

**Thessalonians 4:13**

Greater faith and love, **Colossians 1:4–5**

Perseverance, **Romans 8:24–25**

Steadfastness, **1 Thessalonians 1:3**

Increased energy and passion, **1 Timothy 4:10**

Purity of life, **1 John 3:3**

Closer relationship with the Father, **Hebrews 7:19**

Security, **Hebrews 6:19**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Israelites sinned, but are not without hope, **Ezra 10:2**
- Sons of Korah, musicians, **Psalm 42**

## Practical Steps

- Make a list of God's blessings and faithfulness to you. As you write each, say, "Will he not continue to be faithful in the future?"
- Get a ring or bracelet that can be a special reminder that there is hope in every situation.
- Make two lists—one of what hope from Scripture looks like and one of what hope in people, things, and situations looks like. Compare the two lists. Which will not fail you?
- Memorize Psalm 62:5–6. Use it as your screen saver or post it on your mirror.

## Resources

- *From Despair to Hope*, Peter Williams. Day One.
- *Gaining a Hopeful Spirit*, Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *God: As He Longs for You to See Him*, Chip Ingram. Baker.
- *Hope in God*, Kristie Gant. Focus.

## Incest

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*See also Abuse, Boundaries, Past Memories, Sexual Purity*

- 1. Sexual intimacy between family members, including adults and children, brothers and sisters, or others in the family, is clearly forbidden.**

**Leviticus 18:8–9** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born outside, their nakedness you shall not uncover. (NASB)

**1 Corinthians 5:1–2** It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife. You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst. (NASB)

**Leviticus 18:29–30; Galatians 5:19**

## **2. God sees hidden sin.**

**Luke 8:17** For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. (NASB)

**Psalm 139:1–5** O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O LORD, You know it all. You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. (NASB)

**Matthew 10:26**

## **3. Steps need to be taken to end the sinful situation.**

**Matthew 18:15–17** If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the

church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

**Galatians 6:1–2** Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**Ephesians 4:17–19** Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

**Proverbs 8:12–13**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Lot and his daughters, Genesis 19:30–38
- Problem in Corinthian church, 1 Corinthians 5

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- It would be beneficial to have the youth consult with a physician, pastor, or trained biblical counselor.
- Report this situation to the proper church and civil authorities.

For the youth:

- If possible, seek shelter with a trusted family or friend.

## **Resources**

- *Domestic Abuse and How to Help* (booklet), David Powlison. Faith Resources.
- *Recovering from Child Abuse: Healing and Hope for Victims* (booklet), David Powlison. CCEF.
- *Rid of My Disgrace*, Justin and Lindsey Holcomb. Crossway.

# Integrity

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*See also Lying, Stealing*

## **1. Integrity is standing for what is right no matter what.**

**Psalm 15:1–4** Who may worship in your sanctuary, LORD? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the LORD, and keep their promises even when it hurts. (NLT)

**Micah 6:8** No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (NLT)

**Matthew 5:8**

## **2. Integrity put into practice brings blessing.**

**Proverbs 2:7–10** He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of the just and protects those who are faithful to him. Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair, and you will find the right way to go. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will fill you with joy. (NLT)

**Proverbs 10:9** People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will slip and fall. (NLT)

**Psalms 25:21** May integrity and honesty protect me, for I put my hope in you. (NLT)

**Psalms 37:18; 119:1**

### **3. Integrity put into practice can bring persecution.**

**Proverbs 29:10** The bloodthirsty hate a person of integrity and seek to kill the upright. (NIV)

**Amos 5:10** How you hate honest judges! How you despise people who tell the truth! (NLT)

**1 Peter 3:13–15** Who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but

in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

**Matthew 5:10–11**

**4. Keeping our integrity takes commitment to doing what is right.**

**Proverbs 28:6** Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.

**Titus 2:6–8** In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely. And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us. (NLT)

**Philippians 1:9–11** I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. May you always be filled with

the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God. (NLT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Joseph, who resisted great temptation, Genesis 39:8–10
- Paul, a model of integrity, 2 Thessalonians 3:7–9

### **Practical Steps**

- Honor God with your heart, mind, soul, and body. Think about doing everything for Jesus and visualize him smiling at you.
- Use a concordance (in the back of many Bibles) to do a word study of *integrity*. The New American Standard Bible (NASB) has twenty-four entries for the word. Note lack of integrity in some instances, as well as positive examples.

### **Resources**

- *A Man after God's Own Heart: Devoting Your Life to What Really Matters*, Jim George.

Harvest House.

- *Real Men Have Integrity*, Terry Zebulske. RBP.
- “Walking Your Talk” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.

## Internet/Facebook

*See also Choices, Entertainment, Laziness, Spiritual Warfare, Work Ethic*

- 1. As with anything that is fun and an attraction, wasting time on the Internet is a danger.**

**Psalm 90:12** So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

**Ephesians 5:15–17** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

- 2. Our enemy, Satan, loves to corrupt a good thing, turning it into an opportunity for sin. We must pay attention to the dangers he would throw at us.**

**Ephesians 6:10–12** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand

firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. (NASB)

**1 Peter 5:8–9** Be alert, be on watch! Your enemy, the Devil, roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Be firm in your faith and resist him. (GNT)

**2 Corinthians 11:3** But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

**Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

**James 4:7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**John 8:44** You [Pharisees] are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (NASB)

### **3. We must resist the temptations that come, choosing instead to be obedient to God.**

**Joshua 24:14–15** “Now then,” Joshua continued, “honor the LORD and serve him sincerely and faithfully. Get rid of the gods which your ancestors used to worship in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, and serve only the LORD. If you are not willing to serve him, decide today whom you will serve. . . . As for my family and me, we will serve the LORD.” (GNT)

**Psalms 37:27** Turn away from evil and do good; so shall you dwell forever.

**1 John 5:21** Little children, guard yourselves from idols. (NASB)

**Ephesians 4:17–32**

#### **Practical Steps**

- Use the Internet to serve you; don't let it obsess you. Guard your time by setting limits.
- Keep track of how much time you spend daily on Facebook; multiply by seven for a weekly total. Ask your authorities (parents, youth pastor) if this is too much.

- Are there responsibilities in your life you are not fulfilling because of the Internet? Are you neglecting time with God, homework, time with family, church, face-to-face time with friends, looking for a job?
- If pop-ups distract you or you struggle with inappropriate sites, find protective software to use. Write out all the IDs and passwords so your parents can check your Facebook page and other sites. Place your computer in a public room for accountability.
- Never begin a relationship with someone you haven't met face-to-face, and then always with parental permission. Get advice from godly adults.

## Resources

- *Hope and Help for Video Game, TV, and Internet "Addiction,"* Mark Shaw. Focus.
- "Lies about Media" in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *Snooping on Your Kid: Parenting in an Internet World* (booklet), R. Nicholas Black. New Growth.

- *Who's in Your Social Network?* Pam Stenzel. Regal.

## Jealousy/Envy

*See also* **Bitterness, Complaining, Contentment**

- 1. Jealousy is sinful, is displeasing to God, and leads to the sin of wanting what someone else has (envying or coveting).**

**James 3:14–16** But if in your heart you are jealous, bitter, and selfish, don't sin against the truth by boasting of your wisdom. Such wisdom does not come down from heaven; it belongs to the world, it is unspiritual and demonic. Where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is also disorder and every kind of evil. (GNT)

**1 Corinthians 3:3** You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? (NIV)

**Galatians 5:26** Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. (NIV)

**Exodus 20:17** You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your

neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. (NIV)

## **2. Jealousy must be confessed and removed from your life.**

**1 Peter 2:1** Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. (NIV)

**1 John 1:8–10**

## **3. Loving others and putting them first is key to overcoming this sin.**

**John 13:34** So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 13:4** Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud. (NLT)

**Romans 13:9–10** For the commandments say, “You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet.” These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to

others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law. (NLT)

**Philippians 2:3–4; 1 Peter 1:22**

#### **4. God is all we need, and he will satisfy us.**

**Proverbs 23:17** Do not let your heart envy sinners, but live in the fear of the LORD always. (NASB)

**Hebrews 13:5** Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

**Philippians 4:11–13, 19** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength. . . . And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. (NIV)

**Psalms 37:1, 7; 73:25–26**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Ahab and Jezebel, who stole from Naboth, 1 Kings 21
- Asaph, who felt he didn't have enough money, Psalm 73
- David, who brings his needs to God, Psalm 37

### **Practical Steps**

- Do a careful heart search as to why you are jealous. List the reasons. Ask God's forgiveness, praying over each item for God to change your mind and heart.
- Monitor your thinking according to Philippians 4:8. Be positive toward others and their accomplishments and possessions. Ask someone close to you to hold you accountable.

### **Resource**

- "Envy, Jealousy" in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

# Laziness

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*See also Choices, Failure, Purpose for Living, Time Management, Work Ethic*

## **1. Laziness is an excuse.**

**Proverbs 26:13–16** The sluggard says, “There is a lion in the road! A lion is in the open square!” As the door turns on its hinges, so does the sluggard on his bed. The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is weary of bringing it to his mouth again. The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give a discreet answer.  
(NASB)

**Proverbs 22:13**

## **2. Laziness can result in poverty.**

**Proverbs 24:30–34** I passed by the field of the sluggard and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense, and behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles; its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. When I saw,

I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,” then your poverty will come as a robber and your want like an armed man. (NASB)

**Proverbs 19:15** Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger.

**Ecclesiastes 10:18** Laziness leads to a sagging roof; idleness leads to a leaky house. (NLT)

**Proverbs 6:6–11; 13:4; 20:4**

### **3. Hard work was commanded by God even before the fall; a life of ease is not in his plan.**

**Genesis 2:15** Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (NASB)

**Ecclesiastes 9:10** Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom. (NLT)

**2 Thessalonians 3:10–12** For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. Now such persons we

command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.  
(NASB)

**Hebrews 6:12**

**4. Time is a gift from God to be used wisely.**

**Psalm 39:4** O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am!

**Job 16:22** For when a few years have come I shall go the way from which I shall not return.

**Ephesians 5:15–17** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

**Psalm 90:12; Proverbs 10:5**

**5. Self-discipline is a quality of life that gets things accomplished.**

**1 Corinthians 9:24–27** Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we

an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

**6. God is our standard, our judge, in every matter —work (or lack of it) included.**

**Ecclesiastes 12:13–14** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Israel not rebuilding the temple, Haggai 1
- Paul's model for work, 2 Thessalonians 3:6–9
- Jacob's work (for Rachel), Genesis 29:20

### **Practical Steps**

- Make a chart for days of the week, with hourly time slots from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Record your activity in the box for each hour. At the end

of the week, evaluate your use of time. Was your time used wisely or wasted?

- Write out your goals for life (college, career, marriage). What needs to change for you to reach these goals?
- If lack of energy is a component, a physician's visit could be helpful.
- When you have a task assigned to you, just get started. Overcoming initial inertia is your first hurdle.

## Resources

- *A Checklist for Parents*, Pam Forster. Faith Resources.
- "Counseling Angry, Unmotivated, Self-Centered, and Spiritually Indifferent Teens" in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Summer 2005, Rick Horn.
- *Do Hard Things*, Alex and Brett Harris. Multnomah.
- *Procrastination: First Steps to Change* (booklet), Walter Henegar. P & R.

# Loneliness

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*See also Fear, Singleness*

## **1. The reality of loneliness can be devastating.**

**Job 19:13–14** He has put my brothers far from me, and those who knew me are wholly estranged from me. My relatives have failed me, my close friends have forgotten me.

**Psalms 38:9–11** O Lord, all my longing is before you; my sighing is not hidden from you. My heart throbs; my strength fails me, and the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me. My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague, and my nearest kin stand far off.

**Psalms 102:7–11** I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop. My enemies have reproached me all day long; those who deride me have used my name as a curse. For I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping because of Your indignation and Your wrath, for You have lifted me up and cast me

away. My days are like a lengthened shadow, and I wither away like grass. (NASB)

**2. At times we feel separated from God, as if he has left us.**

**Job 23:8–9** Behold, I go forward but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; when He acts on the left, I cannot behold Him; He turns on the right, I cannot see Him. (NASB)

**Psalms 13:1** How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? (NASB)

**3. God is always there and does respond with comfort and help.**

**Psalms 25:16** Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. (NASB)

**Psalms 73:25–26** Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

**Psalms 13:5–6; 62:1–2; 142:1–4**

#### **4. God will provide for our emotional and spiritual needs when we feel alone.**

**Psalm 68:5–6** Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

**Joshua 1:9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

**Romans 8:38–39**

#### **5. Paul’s solution to loneliness.**

**2 Timothy 4:16–18** At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## **6. God provided for Elijah's needs when he felt alone.**

**1 Kings 19:10** He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

*See 1 Kings 19:1–18*

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Adam in the garden before Eve, Genesis 2:18, 21–23
- Jesus on the cross, Matthew 27:46

### **Practical Steps**

- Find opportunities for volunteer service in your church or community. Get out and help others!
- Use a journal as a book of encouragement. Read through the Psalms, and copy verses that bring comfort for loneliness.
- Spend much less time on social media. Get out and meet others face-to-face. Seek out relational

activities; determine to get more involved.

- Join a class—art, exercise, community college. This brings you in contact with people of similar interests and can provide a sense of belonging. This will stimulate creativity and help stave off loneliness.

## Resources

- *Alone: Finding Connection in a Lonely World*, Andy Braner. NavPress.
- *Finding Your Way through Loneliness*, Elisabeth Elliot. Spire.
- *God, Do You Really Care? Finding Strength When He Seems Distant*, Tony Evans. Multnomah.
- *No Longer Alone* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.

## Lust

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*See also* **Masturbation, Pornography, Sexual Purity, Temptation, Thought Life**

Lust, in a sinful sense, is craving for that which is prohibited or restricted by God, a desire for gratification of needs outside the will of God.

### **1. Lust begins in the mind and is a desire for that which God has forbidden.**

**Exodus 20:17** You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. (NIV)

**Matthew 5:28** But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (NIV)

**1 Peter 2:11** Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. (NIV)

## **2. Lust is serious because it begins a downward spiral of evil, with serious consequences.**

**Joshua 7:20–21** And Achan answered Joshua, “Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I did: when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”

**James 1:14–15** Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

## **3. Each young person must guard against individual areas of temptation.**

**Proverbs 4:23** Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. (NIV)

**Job 31:1** I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman. (NIV)

**1 Thessalonians 4:3–4** God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor. (NLT)

#### **4. With God's help in making good choices, it is possible to put aside lustful thoughts.**

**Titus 2:11–12** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (NLT)

#### **Biblical Narratives**

- Lot, who moved closer and closer to sin, Genesis 13; 18–19
- Achan's confession, Joshua 7:20–21

#### **Practical Steps**

- Since lusting begins with thinking, ask God to control your mind. Pray, “Lord, please remove

that thought from me,” or “Lord, through your Spirit, I reject that thought!”

- Study the Biblical Narratives just above. Note Lot’s poor decision making. Consider the verbs in Achan’s confession—*looked, coveted, took, concealed*—a classic movement toward sin.

## **Resources**

- *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is)*, Joshua Harris. Multnomah.
- *Who Moved the Goal Post?* Bob and Dannah Gresh. Moody.

## Lying/Truthfulness

*See also Integrity, Stealing, Words That Hurt*

### **1. Lying is forbidden by God; it is always wrong.**

**Leviticus 19:11–12** Do not steal or cheat or lie. Do not make a promise in my name if you do not intend to keep it; that brings disgrace on my name. I am the LORD your God. (GNT)

**Psalms 34:13** Then keep from speaking evil and from telling lies. (GNT)

**Colossians 3:9** Do not lie to one another, for you have put off the old self with its habits. (GNT)

**Exodus 20:16; 23:1**

### **2. God views lying as detestable.**

**Proverbs 6:16–19** There are seven things that the LORD hates and cannot tolerate: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that kill innocent people, a mind that thinks up wicked plans, feet that hurry off to do evil, a witness who tells one lie after

another, and someone who stirs up trouble among friends. (GNT)

**Proverbs 12:22** The LORD hates liars, but is pleased with those who keep their word. (GNT)

**Psalm 5:6**

### **3. Lying is a sin, and we struggle with it from birth.**

**Psalm 58:3** Evildoers go wrong all their lives; they tell lies from the day they are born. (GNT)

**Psalm 51:5** I have been evil from the day I was born; from the time I was conceived, I have been sinful. (GNT)

**Matthew 15:19; Romans 3:13**

### **4. Telling the complete truth is the only choice for the believer.**

**Ephesians 4:25** No more lying, then! Each of you must tell the truth to the other believer, because we are all members together in the body of Christ. (GNT)

**Psalm 15:1–3** LORD, who may enter your Temple? Who may worship on Zion, your sacred hill? Those who obey God in everything and always do what is right, whose words are true and

sincere, and who do not slander others. They do no wrong to their friends nor spread rumors about their neighbors. (GNT)

**James 1:26** Do any of you think you are religious? If you do not control your tongue, your religion is worthless and you deceive yourself. (GNT)

## **5. Not telling the truth has consequences.**

**Psalms 63:11** Those who make promises in God's name will praise him, but the mouths of liars will be shut. (GNT)

**Psalms 24:3–4** Who has the right to go up the LORD's hill? Who may enter his holy Temple? Those who are pure in act and in thought, who do not worship idols or make false promises. (GNT)

**Proverbs 12:13** The wicked are trapped by their own words, but honest people get themselves out of trouble. (GNT)

**Proverbs 19:5** If you tell lies in court, you will be punished—there will be no escape. (GNT)

**Psalms 12:2–4; 17:1; 101:7**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Abraham, who lied to Abimelech about Sarah, Genesis 20:1–18
- Jacob, who lied to his father, Genesis 27:1–29
- Potiphar’s wife, Genesis 39:14–18
- Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to God, the Spirit, Acts 5:1–11

## **Practical Steps**

- Since lying is a spiritual battle, study carefully and apply Ephesians 6:10–18.
- Keep a daily journal. Record when you lie. Write down your reasons for lying. Determining what causes you to lie in the first place may help you change your behavior. Remember, it is a spiritual battle!
- List people you have lied to, and then contact them to ask forgiveness.
- Write down why you feel you must lie. Write down why the Bible says you should not lie.
- Make a list of your feelings when people lie to you; write down how you feel when people are truthful to you.

## **Resources**

- *Deception: Letting Go of Lying* (booklet), Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- “Truthful—to Be Honest with You” in *A Young Woman Who Reflects the Heart of Jesus*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Manipulation

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*See also* **Boundaries, Integrity, Lying, Self-Worth, Speech**

### **1. Arranging situations or manipulating people for one's personal advancement or benefit is wrong in God's sight.**

**Psalm 101:7** I will not allow deceivers to serve in my house, and liars will not stay in my presence. (NLT)

**Proverbs 12:2** The LORD approves of those who are good, but he condemns those who plan wickedness. (NLT)

**Proverbs 6:16–19** There are six things the LORD hates—no, seven things he detests: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord in a family. (NLT)

**Proverbs 24:28**

## **2. Manipulation leads to major problems and God's displeasure.**

**Job 32:21–22** I will not show partiality to any man or use flattery toward any person. For I do not know how to flatter, else my Maker would soon take me away.

**Psalms 7:15–16** He makes a pit, digging it out, and falls into the hole that he has made. His mischief returns upon his own head, and on his own skull his violence descends.

**Proverbs 10:9** Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.

**Psalms 32:2**

## **3. Manipulation often begins with the wrong use of one's speech.**

**Proverbs 16:30** Whoever winks his eyes plans dishonest things; he who purses his lips brings evil to pass.

**Psalms 50:19** You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit.

**Psalms 34:13; 52:4**

#### **4. Watch out for those who use flattery for manipulation.**

**Romans 16:18** For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

**Proverbs 26:28** A lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

**Psalms 12:2–4** Everyone utters lies to his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak. May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that makes great boasts, those who say, “With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us; who is master over us?”

**1 Thessalonians 2:5**

#### **5. Stay away from those who devise schemes—don’t get caught up with them.**

**Proverbs 14:7** Stay away from fools, for you won’t find knowledge on their lips. (NLT)

**Psalms 56:5–6** All day long they distort my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil. They attack, they lurk, they watch my steps, as they have waited to take my life. (NASB)

**Psalm 64:5–6** They encourage each other to do evil and plan how to set their traps in secret. “Who will ever notice?” they ask. As they plot their crimes, they say, “We have devised the perfect plan!” Yes, the human heart and mind are cunning. (NLT)

**Proverbs 27:6; Ephesians 5:6**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Laban manipulates Jacob, Genesis 29:15–27
- Rebekah and Jacob, against Isaac, Genesis 27:1–29
- Herodias’s influence on her daughter, Matthew 14:1–12

### **Practical Steps**

- If someone is putting pressure on you, tell them you need time to think and seek counsel. Say no if necessary. Write down priorities and stick with them.
- Define *manipulation*, and then write down in your own words what manipulation is to you.

- If you are a manipulator, identify behaviors you use and take steps to make corrections. Confess and shun this sin.
- Determine why you manipulate. Is it lack of self-worth? Jealousy? A power grab?

## **Resources**

- *Manipulation: Knowing How to Respond* (booklet), Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *Selfishness* (booklet), Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, Ed Welch. P & R.

# Marriage

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*See also* **Future Plans, Sexual Purity**

**1. From the beginning, marriage was a part of God's design for us—one man, one woman.**

**Genesis 2:22–25** Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’” This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame. (NLT)

**2. Marriage is a permanent covenant for life. Living together without that marriage covenant is immoral.**

**Malachi 2:14** You cry out, “Why doesn’t the LORD accept my worship?” I’ll tell you why! Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and

your wife made when you were young. But you have been unfaithful to her, though she remained your faithful partner, the wife of your marriage vows. (NLT)

**Hebrews 13:4** Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 7:2** But because there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband. (NLT)

**Proverbs 2:17; Mark 10:7–9**

### **3. Believers should marry only other believers.**

**2 Corinthians 6:14** Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

## **Roles in Marriage**

### **1. Husband—loving leader.**

**Ephesians 5:23–28** For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the

church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

**1 Peter 3:7** Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. (NIV)

**Colossians 3:19**

## **2. Wife—respectful completer.**

**Genesis 2:18, 20–22** Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” . . . He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him. So the LORD God caused

the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the opening. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. (NLT)

**Ephesians 5:22–23** Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. (NASB)

**Proverbs 14:1** The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands. (NASB)

**Proverbs 19:13–14** A foolish son is destruction to his father, and the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping. House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD. (NASB)

**Proverbs 12:4; Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1**

## Practical Steps

- Determine to follow God's standards no matter what. You will not marry someone who is not a

believer. You will not cross God's lines for physical expression before marriage.

- Get others praying for you as you move toward the all-important decision of choosing the one you will marry.
- Commit early on that divorce will never be an option for you. Commit for life to that one man/woman God gives you.
- When you think you are close to finding that one God has for you, spend time with your future in-laws to observe how they treat each other. That could be an indicator of how your future spouse will treat you.

## Resources

- *Pre-Engagement: Five Questions to Ask Yourself* (booklet), David Powlison. P & R.
- *Should We Get Married?* (booklet), William Smith. New Growth.

# Masturbation

*See also Lust, Pornography, Sexual Purity, Temptation, Thought Life*

**1. While there is no direct mention of this in Scripture, certain principles do apply.**

**SELFISHNESS**

**Romans 13:14** Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires. (NLT)

**Colossians 3:5** So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshipping the things of this world. (NLT)

**James 1:14–15** Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. (NLT)

## **Exodus 20:3–4**

### MENTAL IMAGES

**2 Corinthians 10:5** We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

**Ephesians 5:3** But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

**Matthew 5:28** I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

### HEART ISSUES

**Psalms 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

**Mark 7:20–23** He said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

**Psalms 19:14; Jeremiah 17:9–10**

## **2. Secret actions and isolation must be avoided.**

**Ephesians 5:11–12** Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13–14** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

**Proverbs 28:13**

## **3. God offers escape from this sin and gives blessing for obedience.**

**2 Corinthians 7:1** Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

**Psalms 24:3–5**

**4. One reason that God designed marriage was to alleviate problems of lust. Save your body for the mate whom God will give you.**

**1 Corinthians 7:1–4** Now regarding the questions you asked in your letter. Yes, it is good to live a celibate life. But because there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband. The husband should fulfill his wife's sexual needs, and the wife should fulfill her husband's needs. The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband gives authority over his body to his wife. (NLT)

**Genesis 2:21–24**

### **Practical Steps**

- Find an older, trustworthy person with whom you can discuss this issue openly and who can help with accountability.
- Study these passages for instruction—Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 6:13; Galatians 5:16; Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 1:13–15; 1 John 2:15–17.

- Study Galatians 5:22–25 on the fruit of the Spirit. What does it mean to be self-controlled?

## **Resources**

- *It's All About Me* (booklet), Winston Smith. New Growth.
- *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is)*, Joshua Harris. Multnomah.

## Materialism

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*See also Contentment, Jealousy, Money*

### **1. Riches in heaven are better than riches on earth.**

**Matthew 6:19–21** Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (NASB)

**1 Corinthians 3:11–15** For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a

reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (NASB)

**1 Timothy 6:17–19**

**2. The desire for more possessions can lead to a trap of ruin.**

**1 Timothy 6:6–9** Godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. (NASB)

**Psalms 73:2–3** As for me, my feet came close to stumbling, my steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant as I saw the prosperity of the wicked. (NASB)

**Proverbs 11:28** He who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like the green leaf. (NASB)

**Proverbs 28:25–26; James 5:1–3**

### **3. Desire for riches can sidetrack individuals from their beliefs.**

**Matthew 6:24** No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. (NASB)

**1 Timothy 6:10** For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (NASB)

**Proverbs 30:8–9; 1 John 2:15**

### **4. Security is not found in possessions.**

**Psalms 49:16–17** Do not be overawed when others grow rich, when the splendor of their houses increases; for they will take nothing with them when they die, their splendor will not descend with them. (NIV)

**Isaiah 58:11** The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. (NIV)

**Luke 12:15** Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life

does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”  
(NIV)

**1 Timothy 6:17** Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.  
(NASB)

**Proverbs 23:4–5; 28:6; Hebrews 13:5**

## **5. Solutions for avoiding materialism.**

**Colossians 3:1–3** Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (NASB)

**Philippians 3:7–8**

## **6. Giving willingly to God’s work or to those less fortunate is a blessing for those giving as well as for those receiving.**

**2 Corinthians 9:6–8** Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have

decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (NIV)

**1 Timothy 6:18–19** Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. (NASB)

**Proverbs 31:8–9** Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice. (NLT)

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Achan, who coveted and took forbidden things, Joshua 7
- Gehazi, who lied to receive a gift, 2 Kings 5:15–27

## **Practical Steps**

- Make lists! Whether you are shopping for clothes or other items, making a list and sticking to it, with your limits in mind, will help keep you on track.
- Memorize and study Matthew 6:33 and 1 Timothy 6:6–8.
- Don't cruise shopping malls. Get in; get out. Have a purpose and budget in mind when you go.

## Resources

- *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power*, Timothy Keller. Dutton.
- *George Muller: Children's Champion*, Irene Howat. Christian Focus (biography of a man who trusted God for all things material).
- *Real Prosperity: Biblical Principles of Material Possessions*, Gene Getz. Moody.

# Money

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*See also Contentment, Jealousy, Materialism*

## **Handling the Green Stuff—Some of the Basics**

- 1. Part of what we earn should be given back to God. Grace giving can include the tithing standard of the Old Testament.**

**Malachi 3:8** Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! But you ask, “What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?” You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. (NLT)

**Proverbs 3:9–10** Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 9:6–7** Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart

how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." (NLT)

**2. Never be late in paying your bills, and do not borrow more than you can pay back.**

**Romans 13:8** Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. (NIV)

**3. Work for what you get.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:11–12** Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. Then people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others. (NLT)

**2 Thessalonians 3:10** Even while we were with you, we gave you this command: "Those unwilling to work will not get to eat." (NLT)

**4. Be careful of taking on someone else's debt.**

**Proverbs 6:1–3** My child, if you have put up security for a friend's debt or agreed to guarantee the debt of a stranger—if you have trapped

yourself by your agreement and are caught by what you said—follow my advice and save yourself, for you have placed yourself at your friend’s mercy. Now swallow your pride; go and beg to have your name erased. (NLT)

**Proverbs 11:15; 22:26**

## **5. Recognize your responsibility for paying taxes.**

**Romans 13:1, 6–7** Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. . . . This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. (NIV)

**Matthew 22:15–22**

## **6. Planning for future needs (saving) is a wise course of action.**

**Proverbs 6:6–8** Take a lesson from the ants, you lazybones. Learn from their ways and become wise! Though they have no prince or governor or

ruler to make them work, they labor hard all summer, gathering food for the winter. (NLT)

**Proverbs 10:5** A wise youth harvests in the summer, but one who sleeps during harvest is a disgrace. (NLT)

## **7. Maintain a good reputation, financially and otherwise.**

**1 Timothy 3:7** Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the devil's trap. (NLT)

## **8. Asking for wisdom is important in every area of life, including financial.**

**James 1:5** If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. (NLT)

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Ananias and Sapphira, who loved money, Acts 5:1–11
- Paul's contentment, Philippians 4:10–13

## **Practical Steps**

- Young people should learn early about giving back to the Lord. Begin now to do so.
- Use three small boxes. Label them “God,” “Save,” “Spend.” Divide the money you have into each.
- Select five Scripture texts in which God promises to provide your needs. Write them on cards and carry them with you to review throughout your day.

## Resources

- *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power*, Timothy Keller. Dutton.
- *Idols of the Heart*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. P & R.
- *Living in Financial Victory*, Tony Evans. Moody.
- *Money Matters for Teens* (book and workbook), Larry Burkett. Moody.

# Moving

## New Residence

*See also Fear, Loneliness, Trust, Worry*

**1. God has promised to be with us in every situation—even moving to a new place.**

**Exodus 33:14** The LORD replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” (NIV)

**Psalms 34:18** The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (NIV)

**Hebrews 13:5** Be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” (NIV)

**Deuteronomy 31:8; Psalm 73:23**

**2. God will provide for all our needs in our new setting.**

**Deuteronomy 31:6** Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for

the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. (NIV)

**Psalm 34:4** I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. (NIV)

**Psalm 103:2, 4–5** Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits . . . who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. (NIV)

**Isaiah 41:10** So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (NIV)

### **3. Honor and respect for parents must be maintained, even though moving to a new location can be upsetting.**

**Exodus 20:12** Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. (NIV)

**Ephesians 6:1** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. (NIV)

**Psalm 84:11** For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good

thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. (NIV)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Abraham, who moved far away to receive great blessing, Genesis 12:1–9
- The Israelites, who moved out of Egypt to a new land of blessing, Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua

### **Practical Steps**

- Make a master list of all addresses and phone numbers of friends you are leaving behind.
- Take photos of your old home, school, and friends before you move. Make a memory book.
- Have your parents ask the pastors in your new church for help in making contacts with other teens your age. This could help you begin to get acquainted even before you arrive in your new location.

### **Resources**

- “Praying for Courage” and “Overcoming Fear” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.
- *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

## Natural Disasters/Disease

*See also* **Fear, Health, Suffering, Trust**

- 1. Because of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden, every aspect of creation has been brought to a state of change and decay.**

**Genesis 3:17–18** And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.”

**Romans 8:20–22** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has

been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

**2. Yet God has given us hope in his promise, as a part of his complete redemptive plan, to remove this curse of decay from all of creation.**

**Revelation 21:4–5** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

**Revelation 22:3** No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

**Romans 8:21** That the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

**Isaiah 25:8**

**3. God remains sovereign over all his creation.**

**Psalm 33:11** But the LORD's plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken. (NLT)

**Jeremiah 10:12–13** But God made the earth by his power, and he preserves it by his wisdom. With his own understanding he stretched out the heavens. When he speaks in the thunder, the heavens roar with rain. He causes the clouds to rise over the earth. He sends the lightning with the rain and releases the wind from his storehouses. (NLT)

**Job 9:5–10**

#### **4. Scripture shows that the blessings of heaven and eternity far outweigh the present frustrations of physical suffering.**

**2 Corinthians 4:16–18** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

**2 Corinthians 5:1–4** For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with

hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

### **John 16:33**

## **Biblical Narrative**

- Locusts, Joel 1

## **Practical Steps**

- If you know people who have been through a natural disaster, reach out to them and help them physically or financially. Show compassion.
- Take time to listen to their stories. If you have had a similar experience, identify with them and express to them how God has helped you.
- Study Psalm 46 and memorize 46:1.
- Memorize and keep in mind Isaiah 43:1–2.

## **Resources**

- *An Act of God? Answers to Tough Questions about God's Role in Natural Disasters*, Erwin Lutzer. Tyndale.
- *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, New Testament Edition, pp. 471–72 for explanation as to nature being cursed and renewed in the future (begins at the Romans 8:18–27 section). Roy Zuck, editor. Victor.
- “God’s Power over Nature” in *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- *Ultimate Questions*, John Blanchard. Faith Resources.
- *When Bad Things Happen* (booklet), William Smith. CCEF.

## Orphan

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*See also Adoption, Death, Grief, Loneliness, Purpose for Living, Self-Worth*

- 1. Even if human parents are not able to be part of their child's life, our heavenly Father is very much involved.**

**Psalm 27:10** Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 6:18** “And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters,” says the LORD Almighty. (NLT)

**Isaiah 49:15–16** Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.

**Isaiah 66:13; Jeremiah 31:3**

**2. God has a deep concern for those without parents and instructs others to defend and care for them.**

**Proverbs 23:10–11** Don't cheat your neighbor by moving the ancient boundary markers; don't take the land of defenseless orphans. For their Redeemer is strong; he himself will bring their charges against you. (NLT)

**Psalms 82:3–4** Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people. (NLT)

**Psalms 10:14, 17–18** But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to you; you are the helper of the fatherless. . . . You, LORD, hear the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the oppressed, so that mere earthly mortals will never again strike terror. (NIV)

**James 1:27** Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. (NLT)

## **Psalm 146:9; Jeremiah 22:3**

### **3. A personal relationship with our heavenly Father through Jesus is the ultimate family relationship.**

**1 John 3:1** See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him. (NLT)

**Ephesians 1:4–6** Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. (NLT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Ishmael, who was fatherless, Genesis 21:9–10
- Naaman's servant girl, 2 Kings 5:1–14
- Esther, an orphan, Esther 2:5–7, 15; 4:14

## **Practical Steps**

- Make a time line of your life. Highlight the difficult times along with the good times. Thank and praise God for his faithfulness through it all.
- Find a special place in your house, outside, or somewhere else (safe) that you can dedicate to the Lord, where you can go to be alone and talk with God.

## **Resources**

- *The Path of Loneliness*, Elizabeth Elliot. Revell.
- *Trusting God*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

## Parents

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*See also Authority, Choices, Complaining*

**1. Most parents love their children and do their best to provide for their needs.**

**Matthew 7:9–11** Which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

**2. Parents should impart godly wisdom; it is their responsibility.**

**Deuteronomy 6:6–7** These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. (NASB)

**Psalm 78:5–7** For He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should teach them to their children, that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children, that they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments. (NASB)

**1 Thessalonians 2:11–12** Just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NASB)

**Joshua 4:21–22; Psalm 44:1; Proverbs 4:3–4**

### **3. Pay attention to parental wisdom and instruction.**

**Proverbs 1:8** Hear, my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. (NASB)

**Proverbs 13:1** A wise son accepts his father's discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke. (NASB)

## **Proverbs 23:24**

### **4. Parents can be exasperating. Children should realize that parents will make mistakes.**

**Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (NASB)

**Colossians 3:21** Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart. (NASB)

**Colossians 3:13** Bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. (NASB)

### **5. You must honor and obey your parents. It is what God commands.**

**Deuteronomy 5:16** Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you. (NASB)

**Ephesians 6:1–2** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise).

**6. Disobedience to parents is included in lists of serious sinful behavior.**

**2 Timothy 3:1–4** But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

**Romans 1:29–31**

**7. The sins of a young person will bring disgrace to parents.**

**Proverbs 15:20** A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother. (NASB)

**Proverbs 17:25** A foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her who bore him. (NASB)

**Proverbs 29:3; 30:11**

**8. Discipline is difficult but necessary for the youth's proper training.**

**Proverbs 3:11–12** My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD or loathe His reproof, for whom the LORD loves He reproofs, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights. (NASB)

**Hebrews 12:9–11** Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. (NASB)

**Proverbs 15:5**

**9. Entering into marriage requires that you leave (not forsake or dishonor) your parents. You are to move out and become independent.**

**Matthew 19:4–5** He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh’?”

**10. When God calls adult children to vocational Christian service, he will sometimes expect them to leave (not forsake or dishonor) their parents for that work. This principle would apply to other careers as well.**

**Luke 18:29–30** And He said to them, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.” (NASB)

**Mark 1:19–20** Going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. Immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him. (NASB)

**11. Children should continue to honor their parents and make sure they are provided for in later years.**

**Proverbs 23:22** Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old. (NASB)

**Leviticus 19:32** Stand up in the presence of the elderly, and show respect for the aged. Fear your God. I am the LORD. (NLT)

**1 Timothy 5:4** But if she [a widow] has children or grandchildren, their first responsibility is to show godliness at home and repay their parents by taking care of them. This is something that pleases God. (NLT)

**1 Timothy 5:1**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Hophni and Phinehas, who rebelled against God and their father, 1 Samuel 2:22–25
- David, caring for his parents, 1 Samuel 16:11; 17:14–18; 22:3

## **Practical Steps**

- Write a letter of thanks to your parents. This will be a great encouragement to them.
- Make a list of questions to ask your parents. In a journal, write one question at the top of each page. When you have asked them a question, fill in their answer in the journal.

- Ask your parents if you could have one night a week for family time—for games, sports, eating out, and other things your family enjoys doing together.

## **Resources**

- “Honoring Your Parents” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.
- *Life Beyond Your Parents’ Mistakes* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.
- “What If Your Father Didn’t Love You” in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Fall 1993, David Powlison.

## Past Memories

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*See also* **Bitterness, Forgiveness from God, Forgiving Others, Guilt, Worry**

- 1. Constantly going over past accomplishments, failures, and losses can become a trap. God does not want us trapped by the past.**

**Isaiah 43:18–19** Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. (NASB)

**Philippians 3:13–16** No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Let all who are spiritually mature agree on these things. If you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you. But we must hold on to the progress we have already made. (NLT)

## **Luke 9:62**

### **2. You must focus on God's provision for the past.**

**Psalm 25:6–7** Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good. (NIV)

**Psalm 77:11** I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. (NIV)

**Joshua 21:45; Psalm 68:19; Micah 7:19;  
Colossians 1:21–23**

### **3. There is a battle being fought for control of our minds.**

**Psalm 13:2** How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? (NIV)

**2 Corinthians 10:3–5** For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and

every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (NIV)

#### **4. We change our lives by changing how we think.**

**Psalm 34:4** I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. (NIV)

**Romans 12:2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:22–24** You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (NIV)

**Philippians 4:6–8**

#### **5. Concentrate on what God is doing right now and will do in the future.**

**Isaiah 42:10** Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down

to the sea, and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (NLT)

**Isaiah 26:3**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Ruth and Naomi, as God helps them move past their grief, Ruth 1–4
- Joseph, able to forget, Genesis 41:51

### **Practical Steps**

- Make a time line of twenty-five significant events in your life (good and bad). Include pictures or a few statements about each event. Use the time line to remind yourself of God's goodness and grace to you and to bring closure to difficult times on the list.
- Share memories with strong, mature believers who can mentor you and encourage you to focus on the present and future.

## Resources

- *God Is Up to Something Great: Turning Your Yesterday's into Better Tomorrows*, Tony Evans. Multnomah.
- *PTSD: Healing for Bad Memories* (booklet), Timothy Land. New Growth.
- *Putting the Past in Its Place*, Stephen Viars. Harvest House.
- “Redeeming the Bad Memories of Your Past Sins” in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Fall 2003, Robert Jones.

## Peer Pressure

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*See also* **Boundaries, Choices, Friends, Temptation**

### **1. Doing what is wrong to please others is foolish.**

**Proverbs 1:10–16** My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason; like Sheol let us swallow them alive, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse”—my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.

**Proverbs 24:1–2** Be not envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them, for their hearts devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble.

**2 Peter 2:18–19** For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live

in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.

**2. If peers are influencing you toward what is wrong, stand for what is right.**

**Ephesians 5:7–11** Therefore do not associate with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

**1 Corinthians 15:33** Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”

**1 Timothy 4:12** Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

**Ephesians 6:10–11**

**3. Moving away from what is wrong is a good start, but we must also move toward what is right.**

**2 Timothy 2:22** So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along

with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Herod Antipas, pressured to kill John the Baptist, Matthew 14:1–12
- Peter, pressured to compromise, Galatians 2:11–14

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- Give the young person an egg, balloon, or ball. Ask him or her to apply pressure to each until it breaks, bursts, or pops. Have the person explain how this display relates to peer pressure. Anything with enough pressure applied can crack, unless our “outer shell” is solid and strong. The person must develop this strong shell to be able, with God’s help, to say no to pressure.

For the youth:

- If someone is pressuring you to do something you know you should not do, be firm in your no. Or if they won’t accept that, tell them you need

time to think things through (which is true, that is you are trying to think of how better to say no).

## Resources

- “Building a Good Reputation” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.
- *Peer Pressure* (booklet), Paul Tripp. New Growth.
- *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, Ed Welch. P & R.

# Pornography

*See also* **Hope, Lust, Selfishness, Sexual Purity, Temptation, Thought Life**

## **1. Scripture clearly states that our eyes are to be kept from viewing sinful images.**

**Psalms 101:3** I will not look with approval on anything that is vile. (NIV)

**Job 31:1** I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman. (NIV)

**Isaiah 1:16** Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. (NIV)

**Matthew 5:28** But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (NIV)

## **2. Pornography affects one's entire life.**

**Luke 11:34–36** Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are

unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you. (NIV)

**James 1:14–15** But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (NIV)

**Proverbs 2:12–15**

### **3. God sees everything; nothing is hidden from him.**

**Psalm 90:8** You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. (NIV)

**Psalm 139:7–12** Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me. If I say, “Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the

light around me will be night,” Even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You. (NASB)

**Proverbs 5:21** For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He watches all his paths. (NASB)

**Proverbs 15:3** The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good. (NASB)

**Proverbs 15:11**

#### **4. It is vital to turn from this sin and remove pornography entirely from one's life.**

**Psalms 32:3–5** For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

**Psalms 119:37** Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.

**Romans 13:14** But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to

gratify its desires.

**Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.  
(NASB)

**Psalm 139:23–24; Romans 6:1–13; 1 Peter 2:24**

**5. Seek accountability with those who have maturity in this area.**

**2 Timothy 2:21–22** Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (NASB)

**Galatians 6:1–2** Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (NASB)

**2 Chronicles 16:9** For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may

strongly support those whose heart is completely His. (NASB)

## **Practical Steps**

- Write Philippians 4:8 on a card and read it before you go to bed and when you wake up.
- If you must work or study on a computer, have worship music playing in the background. Keep your Bible close at hand.
- When possible, take a fast from all electronic devices.
- Find someone trustworthy to whom you could confess and with whom you could pray when you struggle.

## **Resources**

- *Breaking Pornography Addiction* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.
- *Pornography: Slaying the Dragon*, David Powlison. P & R.
- *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is)*, Joshua Harris. Multnomah.

- *What's Wrong with a Little Porn When You're Single*, R. Nicholas Black. New Growth.

## Pride/Humility

*See also Complaining*

### **1. Humility is pleasing to God; he hates sinful pride.**

**Proverbs 8:13** The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

**James 4:6** But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

**Psalm 138:6; Proverbs 3:34**

### **2. Sinful pride brings only negative results.**

**Proverbs 13:10** Pride leads to conflict; those who take advice are wise. (NLT)

**Proverbs 16:18** Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall. (NLT)

**Isaiah 2:11** Human pride will be brought down, and human arrogance will be humbled. Only the

LORD will be exalted on that day of judgment.  
(NLT)

**Psalm 18:27; Mark 7:20–23**

### **3. There is a type of boasting that pleases God.**

**Jeremiah 9:23–24** Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”

**Psalm 44:8** In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to your name forever.

**Galatians 6:14** But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

### **4. We must recognize that God is the source of whatever we possess and all of our abilities.**

**John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that

bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

**1 Timothy 6:17** As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

## **5. Pride must be replaced by humility.**

**Philippians 2:3** Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves. (NASB)

**Romans 12:3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

**1 Peter 5:5** Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

**Matthew 20:26–28; 1 John 2:15–17**

## **Biblical Narratives**

## Negative

- Joseph, revealing his dreams to parents and brothers, Genesis 37:5–8
- Nebuchadnezzar, in his accomplishments, Daniel 4:28–37
- Satan, in his pride, Isaiah 14:13–14
- Edomites, in their might, Obadiah 1:3–4
- James and John, wanting to rule in the coming kingdom, Mark 10:35–45

## Positive

- Jesus, in his humility, John 13; Philippians 2:5–8
- Paul's good attitude, 2 Corinthians 12:1–10; Philippians 3:4–8

## **Practical Steps**

- Make a list of accomplishments and/or possessions of which you could be proud. Then, going through each item, write down why each of these comes from the hand of God. Turn this list into one of praise and thanksgiving for his grace to you!
- Memorize Proverbs 16:18. Write it on a card, and keep it handy for a reminder.

- Memorize Philippians 2:3–4. Review these verses often when you are tempted to feel you are always right or better than others.

## **Resources**

- *From Pride to Humility*, Stuart Scott. Focus.
- *Humility: The Forgotten Virtue* (booklet), Wayne and Joshua Mack.
- “Pride” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

## Profanity

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*See also Speech*

- 1. Since the name of God represents who he is in his holy character and perfection, we must be careful not to speak that name in a profane (or common) manner. We must not cheapen his holy name.**

**Exodus 20:7** You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

**Psalms 74:18** Remember this, O LORD, how the enemy scoffs, and a foolish people reviles your name.

**Psalms 8:1** O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

**Leviticus 19:12**

- 2. Proper respect is due the name of God, never the flippant “Oh my God” or “By God.”**

**Luke 11:2** He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.’” (NIV)

**Jeremiah 10:6–7** There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is great in might. Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? For this is your due; for among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is none like you.

**Psalm 138:2**

### **3. God is not pleased with coarse and perverted speech.**

**Proverbs 12:13–14** Evildoers are trapped by their sinful talk, and so the innocent escape trouble. From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things, and the work of their hands brings them reward. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:29–30** Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (NASB)

**Proverbs 8:13; Matthew 15:18–19**

**4. Christians should be separated from speech that is foul and perverted.**

**Psalm 1:1–2** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

**Psalm 39:1** I said, “I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue; I will guard my mouth with a muzzle, so long as the wicked are in my presence.”

**Psalm 17:3** You have tested my thoughts and examined my heart in the night. You have scrutinized me and found nothing wrong. I am determined not to sin in what I say. (NLT)

**Proverbs 10:31–32; James 3:8–11**

**Practical Steps**

- Study the Old Testament word *holy* as it relates to making God’s name common, less than holy, or profane.

- Have someone keep you accountable to place one dollar in a jar for every profane word you speak. Give the money to missions or the poor.
- As a reminder, write parts of James 3:1–12 on the palm of your hand.
- Instead of cursing people, speak ten encouraging or positive words to different individuals each day.
- Keep a record of your inappropriate language. Confess to God. Keep track of your progress.

## Resource

- “Avoiding Foul Language” in *The Measure of a Young Man*. Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.

## Prostitution

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*See also Confession, Forgiveness from God, Lust, Sexual Purity*

### **1. Being involved in or soliciting prostitution is immoral and a desecration of the body.**

**1 Corinthians 6:15–20** Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never! And don't you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one." But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (NLT)

## **2. Prostitution is never an option.**

**Proverbs 6:24–25** [For these commands and this teaching] will keep you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of a promiscuous woman. Don't lust for her beauty. Don't let her coy glances seduce you. (NLT)

**Proverbs 2:16–19**

## **3. God is ready to forgive any sin, including prostitution.**

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 6:9–11** Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (NLT)

**Micah 7:18–19** Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people? You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love. Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean! (NLT)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Rahab, received mercy, Joshua 2
- Parable of two sisters, Ezekiel 23
- Gomer, wife who becomes a prostitute, is forgiven and restored, Hosea 1:1–3:5
- Admonition to sons, Proverbs 5–7
- Prodigal son, Luke 15:13, 30

### **Practical Steps**

- Study Rahab and her mention in Scripture beyond Joshua 2.
- Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- Reflect on God's grace in Hosea 1:1–3:5 and dwell on God's everlasting grace.

- “Breathe grace” to those who have been caught up in this sin. Encourage them in their new walk with the Lord.

## Resources

- “Counseling Women Involved in Sexual Sins” in *Women Helping Women*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.
- “Predator, Prey, and Protector: Helping Victims Think and Act from Psalm 10” in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, vol. 16, David Powlison.
- *Sexual Addiction* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.

## Puberty/Growing Up

*See also Self-Control, Self-Worth*

- 1. God made us as we are—male and female. Differences in the sexes were his idea. The changes that come are good, according to his design.**

**Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**Genesis 2:21–23** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

- 2. Jesus developed from a youth to an adult.**

**Luke 2:52** And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. (NIV)

### **3. With maturity comes new responsibility.**

**1 Corinthians 13:11** When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. (NIV)

**1 Timothy 4:12** Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. (NASB)

**Psalms 71:5** For You are my hope; O Lord GOD, You are my confidence from my youth. (NASB)

**Jeremiah 1:7** But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ because everywhere I send you, you shall go, and all that I command you, you shall speak.” (NASB)

### **Biblical Narratives**

Each shows the person coming to maturity.

- Rebekah, Genesis 24
- David, 1 Samuel 17

- Daniel, Daniel 1
- Jeremiah, Jeremiah 1

## **Practical Steps**

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:11. Are you ready to put aside childishness and grow up?
- Talk to your grandmother or grandfather, getting their thoughts on your maturity level. Respectfully quiz them as to their struggles, even mistakes as they grew up.
- Accept the thought that adulthood and responsibility are God's will for you.

## **Resources**

- *Boyhood and Beyond: Practical Wisdom for Becoming a Man*, Bob Schultz. Great Expectations Book Company.
- “The Changes of Puberty” in *What's the Big Deal*, Brenna and Stan Jones. NavPress.
- *Facing the Facts*, Brenna and Stan Jones. NavPress (series of four books for different ages).

- *God's Design for Sex*, Carolyn Nystrom. NavPress (series of four books for different ages).
- "Parents, Meet Your Teenager" in *Age of Opportunity*, Paul Tripp. P & R.

## Purpose for Living

*See also Self-Worth, Spiritual Gifts*

Every youth must understand the biblical answer to *why* we are here on earth.

### **1. Our purpose for being on this earth is to bring glory to God.**

**Isaiah 43:6–7** Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made. (NASB)

**1 Thessalonians 4:1** Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. (NASB)

**2 Corinthians 5:9** So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

**Hebrews 13:20–21**

**2. When we are conformed to the image of Jesus, we bring glory to God.**

**Romans 8:29–30** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

**Hebrews 13:20–21** Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

**3. We bring glory to God by serving him with our life.**

**Haggai 1:8** Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the LORD.

**Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

**Ephesians 5:7–8; 6:5–7; 2 Corinthians 5:9; Hebrews 13:15–16**

#### **4. God is best honored when we serve others.**

**Philippians 2:3–4** Don't do anything from selfish ambition or from a cheap desire to boast, but be humble toward one another, always considering others better than ourselves. And look out for one another's interests, not just for your own. (GNT)

**Romans 12:10, 13** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; . . . contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. (NASB)

**Galatians 5:13–14** Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

**5. God is honored when we obey and walk closely with him.**

**Micah 6:8** He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (NASB)

**Colossians 1:9–10** For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. (NASB)

**John 15:4–5** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. (NASB)

**Ephesians 5:10**

**6. God is honored when we enjoy the blessings he provides.**

**Ecclesiastes 2:24–26** The best thing we can do is eat and drink and enjoy what we have earned. And yet, I realized that even this comes from God. How else could you have anything to eat or enjoy yourself at all? God gives wisdom, knowledge, and happiness to those who please him. (GNT)

**1 Timothy 6:17** Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God, who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment. (GNT)

**John 10:9–10**

**7. Whatever circumstances we endure in this life, it is good to know that God will be glorified through them.**

**Ephesians 3:20–21** Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

**2 Timothy 4:18** The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Romans 16:27** To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

**Romans 11:36; Philippians 4:19–20;**  
**1 Timothy 1:17; Jude 24–25**

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Paul, whose purpose was to live for Jesus, Philippians 1:21; Galatians 2:20

### **Practical Steps**

- Set the alarm on your phone or watch to remind you several times a day to ask yourself, “Am I bringing glory to God right now?”
- Pray each morning before you rise—offering thanksgiving for the new day, asking God to help you in honoring him through the day.
- Evaluate at the end of each day, looking back over the day. Look for areas that need improvement. What steps can you take to be more honoring to him—in word, attitude, thinking, actions?
- Write a general purpose statement for your life based on the Scripture texts above. Frame it, and

hang it in your room.

## Resources

- “A Heart for God” in *Age of Opportunity*, Paul Tripp. P & R.
- *A Man after God’s Own Heart: Devoting Your Life to What Really Matters*, Jim George. Harvest House.
- *A Quest for More: Living for Something Bigger than You*, Paul Tripp. New Growth.
- *Ultimate Questions* (booklet), John Blanchard. Faith Resources.

## Rape

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*See also* **Bitterness, Fear, Forgiving Others, Grief, Past Memories**

- 1. When rape happens, God does not place blame on the person raped.**

**Deuteronomy 22:26** Do nothing to the woman; she has committed no sin deserving death. (NIV)

- 2. God hates the violent actions of wicked people.**

**Proverbs 6:16–18** There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil.

- 3. When such evil happens, courts and laws may not always be able to provide justice, but ultimately God will.**

**Deuteronomy 32:35** It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of

disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them.  
(NIV)

**Luke 18:6–8**

**4. Seek God’s justice, not revenge.**

**Romans 12:19** Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. (NIV)

**Romans 13:3–4** For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. (NIV)

**5. Cling to your heavenly Father for relief.**

**Psalms 10:17–18** O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.

**Isaiah 25:4** For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall.

**Isaiah 43:1–2** But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”

**Deuteronomy 31:6; Psalm 34:18–19; Isaiah 41:9–10**

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- Medical attention is essential.
- Counselors must report rape as required by law.
- In time, counselors should open up a discussion concerning the myths and facts about rape.
- If necessary, the youth should seek legal protection.

- Encourage the person to journal their thoughts, struggles, and feelings. Writing down what happened can be much easier than saying it out loud. Encourage discussion of fears, the future, and God's care.
- Set up support that remains in place as long as necessary.

## Resources

- “Predator, Prey, and Protector: Helping Victims Think and Act from Psalm 10” in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, vol. 16, David Powlison.
- *Sexual Assault: Healing Steps for Victims* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.

## Runaways

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*See also Abuse, Authority, Bitterness, Depression, Loneliness*

- 1. If you are tempted to run away from home, seek out trusted friends or mature Christians for help in finding a better solution. If parents themselves are the source of the problem, Christian leaders can assist in improving your relationship with them.**

**Deuteronomy 5:16** Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

**Proverbs 1:8–9** Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

**Proverbs 15:22** Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.

**Hebrews 13:7** Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.

**2. God can handle any problem that comes your way. He is always with you.**

**Psalm 61:1–4** Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. Let me dwell in your tent forever! Let me take refuge under the shelter of your wings!

**Proverbs 2:6** For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

**Isaiah 43:1–2**

**3. God's love is never ending.**

**Lamentations 3:21–23** Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. (NLT)

**Romans 8:38–39** And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love.

Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NLT)

**Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4–5**

**4. No matter what sins you have committed, God is gracious to forgive. You can come back to God and home.**

**Isaiah 1:18** “Come now, let’s settle this,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool.” (NLT)

**Psalms 103:12** He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. (NLT)

**Micah 7:18–19** Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people? You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love. Once again you

will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean! (NLT)

**5. Most parents will gladly welcome their child back home.**

**Luke 15:20, 32** So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. . . . “But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” (NIV)

**Luke 15:4–6** Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.” (NIV)

**Biblical Narratives**

- Lost sheep, Matthew 18

- Prodigal son, Luke 15

## Practical Steps

- If you are thinking about running away, try improving one thing in your room each day (clean it, for example). Enjoying where you live could be helpful.
- List ten positive qualities of where you live right now.
- Get busy serving others. Build relationships. Stop focusing on yourself.
- Write and place this statement where it can be seen: *Sometimes God doesn't change your circumstances because he is trying to change your heart.*

## Resources

- *Come Back, Barbara*, 2nd ed, C. John Miller and Barbara Miller Juliani. P & R.
- *Parents with Broken Hearts*, William L. Coleman. Focus on the Family.
- *When Good Kids Make Bad Choices*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.

- *When Your Kid's in Trouble* (booklet), William Smith. New Growth.

## Self-Control

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*See also Anger, Choices, Materialism, Money, Peer Pressure, Sexual Purity, Temptation*

### **1. Lack of self-control leads to attacks from Satan and to broken lives.**

**1 Peter 5:8** Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. (NLT)

**Proverbs 25:28** A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls. (NLT)

### **2. Lack of self-control is included in lists of sins to avoid.**

**2 Timothy 3:1–5** You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred.

They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that! (NLT)

**Galatians 5:19–21** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### **3. Know that self-control begins with depending on the Holy Spirit and accepting his control in your life.**

**Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by [depend on] the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

**Ephesians 5:18** Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled

with the Holy Spirit. (NLT) (The issue is: what controls us, the things of this world, or God?)

#### **4. Having self-control is included in lists of positive Christian qualities.**

**Galatians 5:22–23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

**2 Peter 1:5–6** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness.

#### **5. The lifestyle of mature Christians includes self-control.**

**1 Peter 1:13, 15–16** So think clearly and exercise self-control. . . . But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, “You must be holy for I am holy.” (NLT)

**Titus 2:2, 6** Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love,

and in steadfastness. . . . Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Paul, illustration about athletes, 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

### **Practical Steps**

- Determine your times of weakness (late at night, when you are stressed, and so on) and find alternatives like exercising or memorizing Scripture.
- Write Proverbs 6:23 on cards and place them in various places where you will see the verse throughout the day.
- Study the topic Purpose for Living in this book.

### **Resources**

- “Lack of Self-Control” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- *Motives: Why Do I Do the Things I Do?* (booklet), Ed Welch. P & R.

## Self-Injury

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*See also* **Guilt, Past Memories, Self-Worth, Temptation, Worry**

- 1. When life seems out of control, going to God is the answer, not doing something that gives a temporary feeling of control followed by guilt.**

**Deuteronomy 13:4** It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. (NIV)

**Titus 2:11–12** For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. (NIV)

**Colossians 3:2–3** Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (NIV)

**Philippians 3:8**

**2. God does not want us to hurt or damage our bodies. Scripture describes the Christian's body as God's temple.**

**Leviticus 19:28** Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the LORD. (NIV)

**Leviticus 20:23** You must not live according to the customs of the nations I am going to drive out before you. Because they did all these things, I abhorred them. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20** Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:17–20**

**3. Self-injury is a trap Satan uses to cause us to lose confidence in God and give up his blessing.**

**2 Corinthians 11:3** But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. (NIV)

**Ephesians 6:11–13**

**4. The false peace that comes from self-injury is short-lived. True peace is lasting and genuine.**

**John 14:27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (NIV)

**Colossians 3:15–17** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (NIV)

**Psalm 34:18; Romans 5:1**

**5. Change will occur when we choose to think as God thinks about self-injury.**

**Galatians 5:24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Romans 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your

mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

## **6. Submission to God and what he requires is the key to overcoming this problem.**

**Ecclesiastes 12:1** Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, “I find no pleasure in them.” (NIV)

**Ecclesiastes 12:14** For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. (NIV)

**James 4:7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**Ephesians 4:30**

## **7. The power of God is greater than the temptation.**

**1 Corinthians 10:13** The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the

temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (NLT)

**Philippians 1:6** And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. (NLT)

**1 John 4:4** Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

## **Biblical Narrative**

- The prophets of Baal, 1 Kings 18

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- The young person should see a physician. Sessions with a pastor or biblical counselor are also recommended.

For the youth:

- Rid yourself of possible weapons you could use to harm yourself. As much as possible, keep out

of reach anything you could use to feed your habit.

- Harming one's self is a warning sign that something in life has not been handled biblically. Time must be spent analyzing these heart issues.
- Find positive, constructive, godly ways to replace the self-harm and reduce tension and anxiety, for example, find someone to whom you can be accountable, memorize Scripture, build godly relationships, get physical exercise.
- Write on a card: *It is for this that Jesus died.* Review it daily whenever temptation comes. Picture yourself placing your pain in Jesus's hands, knowing that he has already dealt with it.

## Resources

- *Cutting: A Healing Response* (booklet), Jeremy Lelek. P & R.
- *Hope and Help for Self-Injurers and Cutters*, Mark Shaw. Focus.
- *Relief without Cutting* (booklet), Amy Baker. Faith Resources.
- *Self-Injury* (booklet), Ed Welch. P & R.

## Selfishness/Subjectivity

*See also Compassion, Pride*

### **1. Selfishness is a sin and beneficial to no one.**

**James 3:14–16** But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. (NLT)

**Romans 2:8** But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness. (NLT)

### **2. God expects us to place him first.**

**Matthew 22:37–38** Jesus replied, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all

your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” (NLT)

**Luke 9:23–24** Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.” (NLT)

**Matthew 6:33**

### **3. God expects us to place others ahead of ourselves.**

**Philippians 2:3–4** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 10:24** No one should seek their own good, but the good of others. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 13:4–5** Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. (NIV)

**Romans 15:1–3** We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.” (NIV)

**Romans 12:10; Ephesians 5:21**

## **Biblical Narratives**

### Negative

- Lot, who chose the best land for himself, Genesis 13
- Jacob, who stole the birthright, Genesis 27
- Shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves, not the flock, Ezekiel 34
- James and John, who wanted to be first, Mark 10:35–45

### Positive

- Jonathan, who was selfless for David, 1 Samuel 19–20
- Paul, who was willing to be lost if kinsmen would come to Christ, Romans 9:1–3

- Jesus, who gave up much to come to earth, Philippians 2:5–8
- Dorcas, who served others, Acts 9:36

## **Practical Steps**

- Keep track of how often you talk about yourself. Be aware, and reduce that self-focus. Direct your conversations with others to the person you're talking to, their interests and needs. Focus on them.
- To help get your mind off yourself, practice acts of random kindness. Ask God to help you remember: Others first!
- Make prayer lists of the needs of others. Pray accordingly, often.
- Copy verses from above and post them where you will see them.

## **Resources**

- “Counseling Angry, Unmotivated, Self-centered, Spiritually Indifferent Teens” in *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Summer 2005, Rick Horn.
- *Selfishness* (booklet), Lou Priolo. P & R.

- “Selfishness” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- “A Servant—May I Help You” in *A Young Woman Who Reflects the Heart of Jesus*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.
- *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, Ed Welch. P & R.

## Self-Worth

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*See also Purpose for Living, Selfishness*

### **1. Every human being is made in the image of God, according to his design.**

**Genesis 1:27** God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (NASB)

**Genesis 2:21–22** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. (NASB)

**Luke 12:7** Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. (NASB)

**Genesis 2:7; Psalm 139:13–16**

### **2. God sending his Son to die for us shows his view of our self-worth.**

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.  
(NASB)

**Romans 5:8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (NASB)

**1 Peter 2:9**

### **3. Christians must find significance in their relationship to God, not in themselves or in others.**

**John 15:15** No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

**Ephesians 1:18–19** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.  
(NASB)

**Ephesians 2:6–7** And [God] raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (NASB)

**Isaiah 41:9; Jeremiah 31:3; Micah 6:8**

#### **4. Knowing God is what makes life truly meaningful.**

**Jeremiah 9:23–24** Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD. (NASB)

**Ephesians 3:14–20; Philippians 3:8–10**

#### **5. Relying on self can be a dangerous trap.**

**Romans 12:3** For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. (NASB)

**2 Corinthians 1:8–9** For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead. (NASB)

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Elijah, who was deeply discouraged, 1 Kings 19:4, 10
- Job, feeling worthless, Job 3:11–13; 9:21
- David's struggles, Psalm 22:6; 31:11

### **Practical Steps**

- Review and meditate on Psalm 139:14 and Genesis 1:27.
- Find someone to pour into (invest in) spiritually. When you are giving out, it becomes less about you and more about others.
- Identify some lies you believe about yourself, and find Scripture that specifically tells you the truth in response to that lie.

## Resources

- *How Do I Look? Important Questions in Every Girl's Life* (booklet), Susan Lutz. New Growth.
- "Lies about Myself" in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *The Search for Significance*, student edition, Robert McGee. Thomas Nelson.
- *Self-Image* (booklet), Lou Priolo. P & R.
- *Shame Interrupted*, Ed Welch. CCEF.
- *Social Anxiety: Being Comfortable in Your Own Skin* (booklet), Amy Baker. New Growth.

## Sexual Purity

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*See also Choices, Confession, Entertainment, Lust, Peer Pressure, Pornography, Temptation, Thought Life*

### **1. Our bodies belong to God; he requires purity.**

**1 Corinthians 6:18–20** Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. (NIV)

**Romans 6:13** Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. (NIV)

**1 Peter 1:16** For it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” (NIV)

## **Matthew 5:8**

### **2. Guard purity of the mind as well as the body.**

**Matthew 5:28** But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

**Job 31:1** I made a covenant with my eyes not to look with lust at a young woman. (NLT)

**Psalms 101:3** I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar. I hate all who deal crookedly; I will have nothing to do with them. (NLT)

## **Philippians 4:8**

### **3. Each person must make good choices to stay pure.**

**1 Peter 2:11** Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners” to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. (NLT)

**James 1:14** Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. (NLT)

### **4. Treat others with respect and purity. They will likely be someone’s husband or someone’s wife one day.**

**1 Timothy 5:1–2** Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as you would to your own father. Talk to younger men as you would to your own brothers. Treat older women as you would your mother, and treat younger women with all purity as you would your own sisters. (NLT)

**5. Be determined and committed, with God's help, to stand strong. Jesus will provide the strength.**

**Isaiah 50:7** Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, I have set my face like a stone, determined to do his will. And I know that I will not be put to shame. (NLT)

**Hebrews 4:15–16** Our High Priest [Jesus] is not one who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. On the contrary, we have a High Priest who was tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin. Let us have confidence, then, and approach God's throne, where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it. (GNT)

**Hebrews 2:18** And now he can help those who are tempted, because he himself was tempted and suffered. (GNT)

## **6. Protecting purity in marriage begins long before the wedding.**

**Hebrews 13:4** Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. (NIV)

## **7. Sexual immorality is wrong and needs to be avoided. It is sinful, period.**

**Galatians 5:19–21** When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. (NLT)

**1 Thessalonians 4:3–4** God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor. (NLT)

**Romans 13:13–14** Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, clothe

yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires. (NLT)

**8. Do not even get close to sexual impurity.**

**Ephesians 5:3** Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. (NLT)

**Proverbs 6:27** Can a man scoop a flame into his lap and not have his clothes catch on fire? (NLT)

**9. Do not submit to pressure sexually or in any other area.**

**Isaiah 51:7** Listen to me, you who know right from wrong you who cherish my law in your hearts. Do not be afraid of people's scorn, nor fear their insults. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 10:13** The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (NLT)

**10. Avoid immorality by pursuing what is pure.**

**2 Timothy 2:22** Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. (NLT)

**Proverbs 4; 5; 7; 9; Romans 8:5–6**

## **11. There is no sin that God will not forgive completely.**

**Psalms 86:5** For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

**Romans 8:1–2** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

**Isaiah 38:17** Yes, this anguish was good for me, for you have rescued me from death and forgiven all my sins. (NLT)

**Isaiah 43:25** I—yes, I alone—will blot out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again. (NLT)

**Psalms 130:3–4; Isaiah 44:22; Lamentations 3:22; Micah 7:18–19; Colossians 1:14**

## **Biblical Narrative**

- Joseph, a fantastic example of restraint and integrity, Genesis 39:1–23

## **Practical Steps**

- Write down physical and emotional boundaries before you begin dating. Stick to them!
- Remember Proverbs 31:12, “She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.” Keep your future husband/wife in mind.
- Tell a trustworthy someone where your boundaries lie, and ask them to keep you accountable.
- If you are dating, avoid being alone for any length of time. Be out in public, keep doors open, or have people with the two of you.

## **Resources**

- *Before I Was Born: God’s Design for Sex*, Carolyn Nystrom. NavPress (four-book series for different ages).

- *And the Bride Wore White*, Dannah Gresh. Moody.
- *Every Young Man's Battle*, Stephen Arterburn. WaterBrook.
- *Every Young Woman's Battle*, Shannon Ethridge. WaterBrook.
- "Lies about Guys" in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- "Purity—What Is Your Standard?" in *A Young Woman Who Reflects the Heart of Jesus*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.
- "Sexual Temptation" in *The Unguide to Dating*, Camerin Courtney. Revell (for older teens).
- *Teens and Sex: How Should We Teach Them?* (booklet), Paul Tripp. P & R.
- *Who Moved the Goal Post?* Bob and Dannah Gresh. Moody.

## Sibling Rivalry

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*See also Anger, Forgiving Others, Selfishness*

### **1. The model of love in the body of Christ should be the pattern for families.**

**Romans 12:10** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor. (NASB)

**1 Peter 1:22** Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart. (NASB)

**2 Peter 1:5–7** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

**Hebrews 13:1; 1 John 4:19–21**

## **2. Family life should reflect the Christian life.**

**Proverbs 19:11** Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

**Matthew 7:3–5** Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

**1 Thessalonians 5:15** See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

**1 Peter 3:8–9** Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

**Romans 12:21**

## **3. "Others first" is a rule of life, especially in the family.**

**Philippians 2:3–4** 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.

**Matthew 5:38–42; Ephesians 5:21**

#### **4. Peacemaking should always be a priority.**

**Matthew 5:9** Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

**Romans 14:19** So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

**Romans 12:18**

#### **5. Wise use of our speech helps keep peace with brothers and sisters.**

**Proverbs 15:1** A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

**Proverbs 15:4** Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. (NLT)

**James 5:9** Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.

**Proverbs 6:16–19; James 4:11**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Jacob and Esau, Genesis 27
- Joseph and his brothers, Genesis 37; 50

## **Practical Steps**

- Spend time praying for your siblings every day. It is hard to be angry with someone you are praying for.
- Maintain self-control when conflict happens by going to separate rooms. Chill out before coming back together to discuss the issue.
- Every time you insult your sibling, say five things you appreciate about them.

## **Resources**

- *Family Feuds* (booklet), Timothy Lane. New Growth.
- *The Young Peacemaker*, Corlette Sande. Shepherd (12 lessons and CD-ROM).

## Singleness

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*See also* **Dating, Friends, Loneliness, Sexual Purity**

### **1. Paul presents the single life as a viable option.**

**1 Corinthians 7:1, 8–9** Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman. . . . Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (NIV)

### **2. Singleness is the gift of living undivided hearts and lives for the Lord.**

**Matthew 19:11–12** But He said to them, “Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother’s womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the

kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it.” (NASB)

**1 Corinthians 7:25–28, 32–35** Now, concerning what you wrote about unmarried people: I do not have a command from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord’s mercy is worthy of trust. Considering the present distress, I think it is better for a man to stay as he is. Do you have a wife? Then don’t try to get rid of her. Are you unmarried? Then don’t look for a wife. But if you do marry, you haven’t committed a sin; and if an unmarried woman marries, she hasn’t committed a sin. But I would rather spare you the everyday troubles that married people will have. . . . I would like you to be free from worry. An unmarried man concerns himself with the Lord’s work, because he is trying to please the Lord. But a married man concerns himself with worldly matters, because he wants to please his wife; and so he is pulled in two directions. An unmarried woman or a virgin concerns herself with the Lord’s work, because she wants to be dedicated both in body and spirit; but a married woman concerns herself with worldly matters, because she wants to please her husband. I am saying this because I want to help you. I am not

trying to put restrictions on you. Instead, I want you to do what is right and proper, and to give yourselves completely to the Lord's service without any reservation. (GNT)

## **Being Content with the Single Life**

### **1. God always has our best interests at heart.**

**Jeremiah 29:11** “For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.” (NASB)

**Jeremiah 31:3** The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.” (NASB)

### **Isaiah 41:9–10**

### **2. God's care and concern for his children are constant.**

**Deuteronomy 31:8** The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. (NASB)

**Psalm 84:11** For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD gives grace and glory; no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. (NASB)

**Isaiah 40:28–31; Romans 8:38–39**

### **3. We can enjoy contentment with self and with our situation.**

**Psalm 139:13–14** For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (NIV)

**Philippians 4:12–13** I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. (NASB)

### **4. Contentment is found in a close walk with God and enhanced through Christian friends.**

**Psalm 17:15** As for me, I will be vindicated and will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied

with seeing your likeness. (NIV)

**Psalm 103:2–5** Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. (NIV)

**Psalm 62:5–8; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Hebrews 10:24–25**

## **Biblical Narratives**

Singles in the Bible:

- Jeremiah, Jeremiah 16:1–2
- Anna, Luke 2:36–38
- Paul, 1 Corinthians 7
- Philip’s daughters, Acts 21:8–9

## **Practical Steps**

- Pick a ministry in your local church and get involved.
- Cultivate friendships with people of the same gender. Encouraging one another is a great

blessing.

- Keep lists of current blessings—revise every week.
- Find a passion and pursue it, perhaps rock climbing, cooking, or bicycling. Keeping physically active is therapeutic.

## Resources

- *Being Single and Satisfied* (booklet), Tony Evans. Moody.
- *Believing God for His Best: How to Marry Contentment and Singleness*, William Thrasher. Moody.
- *Single and Lonely* (booklet), Jayne Clark. New Growth.
- *Singleness Redefined*, Carolyn Leutwiler. P & R.
- *Thrive: The Single Life as God Intended*, Lina Abujamra. Moody.

## Sleep Struggles

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*See also Fear, Trust, Worry*

### **1. Making godly choices during the day will help give us sweet sleep at night.**

**Proverbs 3:21–24** My son, let them not vanish from your sight; keep sound wisdom and discretion, so they will be life to your soul and adornment to your neck. Then you will walk in your way securely and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. (NASB)

**Proverbs 6:20–22** My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; bind them continually on our heart; tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you. (NASB)

**Proverbs 19:23** The fear of the LORD leads to life, so that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by

evil. (NASB)

## **2. God, who made the night, guards the night, so why should we not sleep?**

**Psalm 74:16** Yours is the day, yours also the night; you have established the heavenly lights and the sun.

**Psalm 121:3–4** He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. (NASB)

**Psalm 4:8** In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety. (NASB)

**Genesis 1:3–5; Psalm 91:5; 139:11–12**

## **3. Prayer, coupled with carefully monitored thinking, will assist getting to sleep.**

**Philippians 4:6–8** Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing.

Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (NLT)

**4. Even though we face a variety of struggles, resting in God's sovereignty will help us sleep.**

**Psalm 3:1–6** O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me. Many are saying of my soul, “There is no deliverance for him in God.” But You, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the One who lifts my head. I was crying to the LORD with my voice, and He answered me from His holy mountain. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me round about. (NASB)

**Psalm 18:28; 92:1–2; 127:1–2; Matthew 6:33–34**

**5. God can teach and instruct, even at night amid insomnia.**

**Psalm 16:7–9** I will bless the LORD who has counseled me; Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night. I have set the LORD continually before me;

because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will dwell securely. (NASB)

**Isaiah 26:9** At night my soul longs for You, indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently; for when the earth experiences Your judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. (NASB)

**6. When sleep will not come, spend time praying and giving thanks, quoting Scripture, and singing.**

**Psalms 42:8** The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; and His song will be with me in the night, a prayer to the God of my life. (NASB)

**Psalms 1:2** But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. (NASB)

**Psalms 63:6-8** When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches, for You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me. (NASB)

**Psalm 77:6** I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart, and my spirit ponders. (NASB)

**Psalm 149:5**

**7. When sleep does not come because of worry or stress, trust in the Holy Spirit's intercession to the Father for you.**

**Romans 8:26–27** Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

### **Biblical Narrative**

- God uses an insomniac king to help save the Jews from destruction, Esther 6:1–3 (turning point in the book; see complete story)

### **Practical Steps**

- Consulting with a physician would be beneficial.

- After 9:00 p.m. “go primitive”—no electronics, music, movies, and so on. Shut it all down!
- An adolescent needs 9 3/4 hours of sleep a night to function well. Evaluate if you are sleep deprived. Keep track of nightly sleep amounts for two weeks.
- When you wake up in the night, pray and review verses you have memorized.
- Make sleep the only thing allowed in bed. No homework, reading, watching TV.

## Resources

- *Can God Be Trusted in Our Trials?* Tony Evans. Moody.
- *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

## Special Needs

*See also Compassion, Health, Self-Worth, Suffering*

### **1. God takes special interest in anyone with special needs.**

**Psalm 82:3** Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. (NIV)

**Isaiah 42:16** I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 1:27–29** But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. (NASB)

## **2. We are all God's special creation, made-to-order in his image.**

**Psalm 139:13–16** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (NLT)

**Psalm 40:5** O LORD my God, you have performed many wonders for us. Your plans for us are too numerous to list. You have no equal. If I tried to recite all your wonderful deeds, I would never come to the end of them. (NLT)

**Isaiah 44:24** Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself and spreading out the earth all alone." (NASB)

**Psalm 119:73; 2 Corinthians 4:7**

- 3. For purposes unknown to us, God sometimes allows accidents to happen, resulting in permanent physical or mental injury. We must trust him to help us through such difficult events, and we can find security in his love.**

**Ephesians 1:11–12** In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (NIV)

**1 Peter 4:12–13** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

**Psalms 138:8** The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

**Psalms 48:14** For such is God, our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death. (NASB)

**Psalms 18:28; 25:4–5; Jeremiah 31:3**

#### **4. Everyone must be treated with compassion and kindness.**

**Proverbs 31:9** Open your mouth, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and needy. (NASB)

**Psalms 82:3–4** Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. (NASB)

**Psalms 41:1; Proverbs 14:21**

#### **5. Provision should be made for the special needs of the handicapped.**

**Leviticus 19:14** You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall revere your God; I am the LORD. (NASB)

**Luke 14:13–14** But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. (NASB)

#### **6. God sees us as we truly are inside.**

**1 Samuel 16:7** But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I

have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”  
(NIV)

**2 Chronicles 16:9** For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. (NIV)

## **7. The day is coming when every believer will have a body just like Jesus.**

**Philippians 3:20–21** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

**2 Corinthians 5:1–4** For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

## 1 John 3:2

### Biblical Narrative

- Mephibosheth, 2 Samuel 9

### Practical Steps

- Look for someone who has a different disability than yours. How can you help and encourage them? See Psalm 82:3–4.
- Thank your caregivers often for their sacrifices for you.
- Write out how you see yourself. Think of positive events in your life. Study Scripture to understand how God thinks of you. Focus on the Psalms.
- Read about the events in Joni Eareckson Tada's life and how she coped with personal tragedy and permanent disability.

### Resources

- *ADD: Wandering Minds and Wired Bodies*, Ed Welch. P & R.

- *Asperger Syndrome* (booklet), Michel Emlet. New Growth.
- *Finding Your Child's Way on the Autism Spectrum*, Laura Hendrickson. Moody.
- *Parenting Your ADHD Child* (booklet), Rita Jamison. New Growth.
- *Your Special Needs Child* (booklet), Stephen Viars. New Growth.

# Speech

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*See also Complaining, Lying, Profanity, Words That Hurt*

## 1. Positive qualities to develop in speech.

### BUILDING UP

**Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

### GENTLENESS

**Proverbs 16:24** Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. (NASB)

**Proverbs 25:15** With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break a bone.

### SPEAKING TRUTH

**Ephesians 4:25** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

## SPEAKING AFTER LISTENING

**James 1:19–20** This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. (NASB)

**Proverbs 15:28** The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things. (NASB)

## COMMUNICATING KNOWLEDGE

**Proverbs 20:15** Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel. (NIV)

## APPROPRIATE WORDS

**Proverbs 25:11** An idea well-expressed is like a design of gold, set in silver. (GNT)

**Proverbs 15:23** A person finds joy in giving an apt reply—and how good is a timely word! (NIV)

## KINDNESS

**Proverbs 12:25** Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (NIV)

## 2. Negative qualities to avoid in speech.

OBSCENE, FOOLISH, RAW JOKES

**Ephesians 5:4** Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

**Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

FALSEHOOD, LYING

**Ephesians 4:25** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

ANSWERING BEFORE LISTENING

**Proverbs 18:13** To answer before listening—that is folly and shame. (NIV)

FOOLISH, STUPID ARGUMENTS

**2 Timothy 2:23–24** But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged. (NASB)

#### SLANDER

**Titus 3:1–2** Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. (NASB)

#### LACK OF CONTROL

**James 1:26** If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless. (NASB)

### **3. Speech can both grieve and please the Holy Spirit.**

**Ephesians 4:29–31** Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the

Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

#### **4. Summary of the tongue's power potential.**

**Proverbs 18:21** The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. (NIV)

**James 3:5–8** So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

**James 3:9–12**

#### **5. Many contrasts are provided in Proverbs.**

**Proverbs 12:18** The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise

brings healing. (NIV)

**Proverbs 15:1** A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (NIV)

**Proverbs 15:4** The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit. (NIV)

**Proverbs 10:20–21**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Abigail, who calms down David, 1 Samuel 25
- Ananias and Sapphira, who lie, Acts 5:1–11

## **Practical Steps**

- Read James 3:1–12 and draw pictures based on the illustrations there about the effects of the tongue.
- Where are you currently on the admonition from James 1:19—“quick to hear, slow to speak” (NASB)? Think of incidents where you didn’t do this and take steps to correct your errors.
- Know that in challenging situations God will give you the right words to speak, just as he did for Jeremiah. See Jeremiah 1:6–9.

## Resources

- *Can We Talk? The Art of Relationship Building* (booklet), Rob Green. New Growth.
- “Communicating God’s Way” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.
- “Sins of the Tongue” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- *War of Words*, Paul Tripp. P & R.

## Spiritual Disciplines/Quiet Time

*See also Church Life, Money, Purpose for Living, Spiritual Gifts, Time Management*

### **Time Alone with God**

#### **1. Meeting with God alone each day is important.**

**Ecclesiastes 12:1** So remember your Creator while you are still young, before those dismal days and years come when you will say, “I don’t enjoy life.” (GNT)

**Deuteronomy 32:47** These teachings are not empty words; they are your very life. Obey them and you will live long in that land across the Jordan that you are about to occupy.” (GNT)

**Psalms 42:1–2** As a deer longs for a stream of cool water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for you, the living God. When can I go and worship in your presence? (GNT)

**Psalms 63:1**

## 2. Examples in Scripture.

**Ezra 7:10** For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel. (NASB)

**Daniel 6:10** Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. (NIV)

**Matthew 14:23** After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. (NASB)

**Mark 1:35** In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there. (NASB)

**Habakkuk 2:1; Luke 5:16**

## Time in the Word

1. Spending time in God's Word—reading, studying, and memorizing—gives guidance for the issues of life.

**Joshua 1:8** Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will

be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. (NLT)

**Psalm 119:9–11** How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word. I have tried hard to find you—don't let me wander from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. (NLT)

**Psalm 1:2–3; 19:9–11; 119:105, 129–30;  
Isaiah 55:11; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Hebrews 4:12**

## **Time Talking to God**

### **1. Spending time daily in prayer is essential.**

**Psalm 88:13** But I, O LORD, cry to you; in the morning my prayer comes before you.

**Ps 119:147–48** I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words. My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise.

**Ephesians 6:18; Psalm 5:2–3; Jeremiah 33:3;  
Hebrews 4:16**

### **2. Prayer is the Christian's lifeline. We must pray—consistently and constantly!**

**Psalm 55:17** Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice. (NIV)

**Psalm 86:3–7** Have mercy on me, Lord, for I call to you all day long. Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you. You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you. Hear my prayer, LORD; listen to my cry for mercy. When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me. (NIV)

**1 Thessalonians 5:17** Pray continually. (NIV)

**Matthew 7:7; Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18**

**3. We must pray in Jesus's name, that is, according to his holy character and will. Not selfishly.**

**John 14:13** You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. (NLT)

**1 John 5:14–15** This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. (NIV)

**John 15:16**

#### **4. Sin can hinder our prayers.**

**Isaiah 59:1–2** Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

**Psalm 66:18**

#### **5. We can pray about anything that concerns us.**

**Philippians 4:6–7** Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

**Matthew 7:7–11**

### **Biblical Narratives**

#### **Prayer**

- Abraham’s servant, Genesis 24
- Nehemiah, Nehemiah 1
- Hezekiah, Isaiah 37:14–20

- Book of Acts, where prayer is exercised in almost every chapter

## **Time with God's People**

### **1. Everyone needs to attend church. This is not an option.**

**Hebrews 10:24–25** Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another all the more, since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer. (GNT)

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** And so encourage one another and help one another, just as you are now doing. (GNT)

**Psalms 122:1** I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the LORD’s house.” (GNT)

## **Time to Give Back to Him**

### **1. Giving financially to the Lord's work is a principle strongly supported in Scripture.**

**2 Corinthians 9:6–8** The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and

whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

**Proverbs 3:9** Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce.

- 2. While Old Testament tithing is not the law for God's people under the New Covenant, the laws for tithing do help us understand God's mind and heart about the question of giving. It represents his thinking on the issue.**

**Leviticus 27:30–33; Malachi 3:8; Romans 6:14–15**

## **Time to Share Your Faith**

- 1. Witnessing for Jesus is a commanded spiritual discipline.**

**Acts 1:8** But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be

witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (GNT)

**1 Peter 3:15–16** But have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and honor him as Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, but do it with gentleness and respect. (GNT)

**Isaiah 43:10; John 20:21; Matthew 28:19–20**

## Practical Steps

- Find a time daily that will work for you to be alone with God—in his Word and in prayer.
- Have a plan for Bible reading—to read through the Bible in a year or to study a specific Bible topic or life of a biblical character. Find devotional books for youth.
- Partner with another youth to read the same passages and then discuss them together.
- Pick a month to read one chapter of Proverbs a day.
- Scripture memory. Do it! Review the verses with someone; type them on your computer; do self-checks. Ask your pastor for a memorization plan.

- Get organized with a prayer list—in your planner, with a card in your Bible, on your cell phone, or wherever the list will be easily accessible. Journal your prayers to help in concentration.
- Begin giving money to God’s work now when you are young. It will become a normal part of life all of your life.
- Keep a list of people you would like to see come to faith. Pray for them. Pray that God would give you opportunities to share your faith with them.

## Resources

- *The Bare Bones Bible Handbook*, Jim George. Harvest House.
- *Basics for Believers*, William Thrasher. Moody.
- *Scripture by Heart: Devotional Practices for Memorizing God’s Word*, Joshua C. Kang. IVP.
- *Speaking God’s Language* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *Training Hearts, Teaching Minds: Family Devotions*, Starr Meade. P & R.
- *A Young Woman’s Guide to Prayer*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Spiritual Gifts

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*See also Church Life*

### **1. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.**

**1 Corinthians 12:4–7, 11** There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. . . . All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:7–8** But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.” (NIV)

### **2. We need to know what spiritual gifts are listed in Scripture and how to use them to be able to**

### **effectively serve in the body of Christ.**

**1 Peter 4:10–11** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (NIV)

**Romans 12:6–8** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. (NIV)

### **3. Loving others takes priority over gifts.**

#### **1 Corinthians 13**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Lists of gifts, Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, 28–30; Ephesians 4:11
- Love has priority over gifts, 1 Corinthians 13

## **Practical Steps**

- Begin serving in different areas of ministry in which you have interest. Use what you already love to do to reach out to someone else (technology, cooking, art, writing, organizing, caregiving).
- Take a spiritual inventory test that will identify strengths. For possible inventories, ask your counselor or youth pastor.
- Talk to youth workers who can provide guidance to enable you to discover and use individual spiritual gifts.
- Ask five mature Christians about their gifts, how they recognized them, and how they developed them.

## **Resources**

- “Encouraging One Another” in *The Measure of a Young Man*, Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.

- “The Holy Spirit’s Gifts” in *Theology You Can Count On*, Tony Evans. Moody.
- *The Promise: Experiencing God’s Greatest Gift*, Tony Evans. Moody.
- “The Spirit Gives Gifts” in *The Holy Spirit*, Charles Ryrie. Moody.

## Spiritual Warfare

*See also Choices, Temptation*

### **1. Satan is a liar and murderer, our enemy who seeks our destruction.**

**John 8:44** You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

**1 Peter 5:8** Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. (NLT)

### **2. Satan attempts to deceive us with his counterfeits.**

**Isaiah 14:13–14** For you said to yourself, "I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's stars. I will preside on the mountain of the

gods far away in the north. I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.” (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 11:14** But I am not surprised! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (NLT)

**1 John 4:1** Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world. (NLT)

**Deuteronomy 13:1–3; 1 Timothy 4:1**

### **3. Satan uses demons in his schemes to defeat Christians and to keep people from coming to Christ.**

**Ephesians 6:11–12** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

**Revelation 12:9** And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole

world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

**Ephesians 2:1–2**

- 4. God forbids any involvement with satanic practices, occult mediums, or beliefs, including games, movies, and reading materials that have pro-satanic content.**

**Deuteronomy 18:10–12** There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a wizard or a necromancer, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD.

**Isaiah 8:19** And when they say to you, “Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter,” should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living?

**Galatians 5:19–21**

- 5. God, not astrology, is in control of the events of our lives.**

**Jeremiah 10:2** Thus says the LORD: “Learn not the way of the nations, nor be dismayed at the signs of the heavens because the nations are dismayed at them.”

**Isaiah 47:13–14** You are wearied with your many counsels; let them stand forth and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at the new moons make known what shall come upon you. Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame. No coal for warming oneself is this, no fire to sit before!

**Daniel 4:35** All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”

**Deuteronomy 4:19; Job 42:1–2**

- 6. The heavenly bodies (stars, planets, sun, and moon) were created by God to light the world and express God’s glory, not to reveal or guide us to our destiny.**

**Genesis 1:16–18** God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser

light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. (NASB)

**Isaiah 40:26** Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, not one of them is missing. (NASB)

**Psalm 19:1; 108:4-5**

## **7. Reincarnation is not taught in Scripture.**

**Genesis 3:19** By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (NASB)

**Hebrews 9:27** And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment. (NASB)

## **8. Be on guard and depend on God's power to stand strong against Satan.**

**2 Thessalonians 3:3** But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. (NASB)

**James 4:7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**Ephesians 4:27** And give no opportunity to the devil.

**Ephesians 6:10–18; 1 Peter 5:8**

## **9. Destroy all items related to the occult and its practices.**

**Acts 19:18–20** Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.

**James 1:21** Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

**2 Corinthians 6:14–17**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Jesus and demonic activity, Mark 5:1–20 (among many other Scriptures)
- Simon, the magician, Acts 8:9–24
- Slave girl, Acts 16:16–18

## **Practical Steps**

- Study each piece of the armor of God from Ephesians 6:13–17. Thank God every day for his protection, and ask him to make that armor effective in your life.
- Make sure there are no occult items in your house. Stay away from such Internet sites. Destroy ungodly DVDs and CDs.
- Ask God to help you obey each of the four commands in the New Testament regarding the Holy Spirit. See Ephesians 4:30; 5:18; Galatians 5:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

## **Resources**

- “Lies about Satan” in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.

- “Occultism: Superstition or Deception” in *Seven Snares of the Enemy*, Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *Overcoming the Adversary*, Mark Bubeck. Moody.
- *Victory in Spiritual Warfare*, Tony Evans. Harvest House.

## Sports/Exercise

*See also Cheating, Integrity, Pride*

### **1. Taking care of our physical bodies is one way to honor the Holy Spirit, who lives inside of us.**

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20** Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (NLT)

**Psalms 139:13–16** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (NLT)

**2. Cheating is stealing if you take a prize that belongs to another.**

**2 Timothy 2:5** And athletes cannot win the prize unless they follow the rules. (NLT)

**Exodus 20:15** You must not steal. (NLT)

**Ephesians 4:28** If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. (NLT)

**Ephesians 4:25**

**3. It takes great effort and sacrifice to win the prize.**

**1 Corinthians 9:24–25** Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 9:26–27**

**4. Doing what God wants is much more valuable than winning an earthly prize or having a buff body.**

**1 Timothy 4:8** Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising

benefits in this life and in the life to come. (NLT)

**Philippians 3:14** I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. (NLT)

**1 Timothy 6:12** Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have confessed so well before many witnesses. (NLT)

**Hebrews 12:1–2; James 1:12**

## **Biblical Narrative**

- Paul, illustrations from competition, 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

## **Practical Steps**

- Dedicate every game and competition to God before you begin. Surrender and commit to playing for an audience of one.
- When success does come, make sure you give God praise and credit. Think of how some professional athletes visually express thanks to God and how some strut and dance and point to themselves.

- Thank God often for the ability to move and play that he has given you. While stretching, thank God for your body. Don't take it for granted.
- Whatever the end result of a competition, remember Philippians 4:13 and Paul's resolve to live contentedly in whatever circumstance God placed him.
- Memorize and quote Isaiah 40:31 as a prayer while training and competing.

## **Resources**

- *Get in the Game: A Spiritual Workout for Athletes*, Tony and Jonathan Evans. Moody.
- *Stories from the Game of Life*, Bob Welch. Harvest House.

## Stealing/Cheating

*See also Choices, Integrity, Lying*

- 1. Taking something that does not belong to you is always wrong.**

**Exodus 20:15** You must not steal. (NLT)

**Proverbs 28:24** Whoever robs his father or his mother and says, “That is no transgression,” is a companion to a man who destroys.

- 2. It is cheating and stealing when you take a prize, an award, or a grade that belongs to someone else. It is lying when you say that what you have done is your own accomplishment when it is not.**

**Leviticus 19:11–12** Do not steal. Do not deceive or cheat one another. Do not bring shame on the name of your God by using it to swear falsely. I am the LORD. (NLT)

### **3. As with any sin, God requires repentance and confession.**

**1 John 1:6–10** So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts. (NLT)

### **4. A change in thinking and lifestyle is needed.**

**Romans 13:9** For the commandments say, “You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet.” These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (NLT)

**Ephesians 4:28** If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and

then give generously to others in need. (NLT)

## **5. Restitution is required.**

**Leviticus 6:2–5** If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving a neighbor about something entrusted to them or left in their care or about something stolen, or if they cheat their neighbor, or if they find lost property and lie about it, or if they swear falsely about any such sin that people may commit—when they sin in any of these ways and realize their guilt, they must return what they have stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to them, or the lost property they found, or whatever it was they swore falsely about. They must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day they present their guilt offering. (NIV)

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Achan, who stole when he took what was forbidden, Joshua 7

### **Practical Steps**

- If you have cheated on a test, you should go to the teacher, confess, and accept the consequences. Perhaps a retake would be possible.
- Write 2 Chronicles 16:9 on a card. Keep it in your pocket while you are taking a test to remind you that God is watching.
- Consider the long-term effect of stealing or cheating. Every occurrence is a sin against God and has consequences. Patterns established when you are young are difficult to break when you are older.
- Keep track of the times you were tempted and resisted. How were you able to do the right thing? Did your thoughts of God and Scripture help? Memorize and apply 1 Corinthians 10:13.
- Consider Achan (Joshua 7:21). If he had just *stopped looking*, how much better off he would have been!
- Memorize and use James 4:7–8.

## Resource

- “Walking Worthy” in *The Measure of a Young Man*. Gene Getz and Kenton Getz. Regal.

## Substance Abuse

*See also Choices, Temptation*

- 1. A Christian's body, as a temple of the Holy Spirit, should not be subjected to the harmful effects of drug and alcohol abuse.**

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20** Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. (NIV)

**Ephesians 5:18** Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. (NIV)

**Romans 13:14**

- 2. Negative effects from drunkenness are evident.**

**Proverbs 29:30–35** Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause?

Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long over wine, those who go to taste mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things and your mind will utter perverse things. And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. “They struck me, but I did not become ill; they beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink.” (NASB)

**Isaiah 28:7–8**

- 3. Note these associations with drunkenness that are unattractive and lead to further sin. (The same would apply to drug use.)**

**Genesis 9:21**—exposure, nakedness

**Job 12:25**—staggering

**Psalms 107:27**—reeling, staggering, at wits’ end

**Proverbs 23:21**—poverty, drowsiness

**Isaiah 19:14**—staggering in vomit

**Isaiah 24:20**—reeling, swaying, and falling

**Jeremiah 25:27**—vomiting

**Lamentations 4:21**—stripped naked

**Ezekiel 23:33**—ruin, desolation

**Romans 13:13**—indecent behavior

**Ephesians 5:18**—debauchery

#### **4. Drunken behavior is sinful and evidence of a deep spiritual problem.**

**Galatians 5:19–21** When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 6:9–11**

#### **5. Drunken behavior is not acceptable behavior for the child of God.**

**Isaiah 5:11–12, 22** Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine. They have harps and lyres at their banquets, pipes and timbrels and wine. . . . Woe to those who are

heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks. (NIV)

**Habakkuk 2:15–16** What sorrow awaits you who make your neighbors drunk! You force your cup on them so you can gloat over their shameful nakedness. But soon it will be your turn to be disgraced. Come, drink and be exposed! Drink from the cup of the LORD's judgment, and all your glory will be turned to shame. (NLT)

**Proverbs 20:1; Romans 13:13–14; 1 Peter 4:1–3**

**6. It is God's will for people to be released from these habits.**

**1 Corinthians 10:13** The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (NLT)

**Romans 12:1–2**

**7. Our part is to know that Christ's death included provision for victory over sin.**

**Romans 6:6, 11–13** For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. . . . In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. (NIV) Note the “know,” “count,” “offer” sequence for action steps.

**John 8:36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (NIV)

## **8. God’s strength is available to those in great need.**

**Isaiah 41:10** Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. (NASB)

**Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. (NASB)

**Isaiah 40:31**

## **Should a Christian Drink at All?**

### **1. Consider the stumbling block principle of Scripture.**

**Romans 14:21** It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall. (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 8:13** Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall. (NIV)

**Matthew 18:6–7**

### **2. In light of present-day statistics of tragedies resulting from the use of alcohol, asking for wisdom is essential.**

**James 1:5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

### **3. Consideration of what the authorities in your life (parents, church leaders) think about this is crucial.**

**Ephesians 6:1–2** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise).

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Noah, Genesis 9:20–27
- Lot, Genesis 19:30–38
- Drunkards of Israel, Isaiah 5:11–12, 22

### **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- The youth should see a physician.
- Counselors should provide opportunities for youth to see the long-term effects in people who

are dying from alcohol, tobacco, or drug use.

For the youth:

- Seek help in finding solutions for your problems other than in drugs or drinking. Parents, other mature believers, church leaders, school authorities are all willing to help.
- List life goals and how these will not be achieved if you become addicted to substances. Want to be a loser? Get addicted!

## Resources

- “Alcoholism: Quitting Tomorrow” in *Seven Snares of the Enemy*, Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *Breaking the Addictive Cycle* (booklet), David Powlison. New Growth.
- *Divine Intervention: Hope and Help for Families of Addicts*, Mark Shaw. Focus.
- *Freedom from Addiction* (booklet), Ed Welch. New Growth.

## Suffering/Adversity

*See also* **Fear, Health, Hope, Natural Disasters, Purpose for Living, Trust, Worry**

### **1. Because we live in a fallen world, going through difficult times is inevitable.**

**Job 5:7** For man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward. (NASB)

**John 16:33** These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. (NASB)

**Romans 8:18–23; 1 Peter 4:12**

### **Purpose for Adversity**

#### **1. It makes our faith stronger.**

**1 Peter 1:6–7** In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold

which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (NASB)

**2. It helps us grow into the kind of people God wants us to be.**

**Job 23:8–10** Behold, I go forward but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; when He acts on the left, I cannot behold Him; He turns on the right, I cannot see Him. But He knows the way I take; when He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold. (NASB)

**Philippians 3:7–8; James 1:2–4**

**3. It causes us to think more about heaven and eternity.**

**2 Corinthians 4:16–18** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

#### **4. It disciplines us for our sins.**

**Hebrews 12:10–11** For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. (NLT)

**Proverbs 3:11–12**

### **What Our Response Should Be**

#### **1. Realize God’s grace is sufficient.**

**Psalms 55:22** Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

**2 Corinthians 12:9** But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

#### **2. Remember God is sovereign even in adversity.**

**Psalm 71:20–21** You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again. You will increase my greatness and comfort me again.

**Psalm 33:13–15; Isaiah 43:1–2**

### **3. Know that God is there to listen and respond.**

**Psalm 9:9–10** The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.

**Psalm 31:9–10** Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted from grief; my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away.

**Psalm 61:2** From the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

**Psalm 3:4; 86:3**

### **4. Use the help God gives us to help others.**

**2 Corinthians 1:3–4** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

### **5. Know that adversity results in God's reward.**

**James 1:12** Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

**1 Peter 5:10** And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

### **Biblical Narratives**

Consider the response of each to suffering.

- Job
- Joseph, Genesis 37–50
- Stephen, Acts 7
- Paul and Silas, Acts 16

- Paul, 2 Corinthians 11:25–33; 12:7–10

## **Practical Steps**

- Read the first three chapters of Job three times in one week. Write down observations as to Job's response to the horrible events in his life. The next week read the last three chapters. Make observations as to God's reply to Job and the results.
- Read Psalm 69 and use colored pencils to highlight verses based on the feelings of the author. Match the color with the feeling expressed.
- Remember Romans 8:28 and write out a past event in your life that God has used for good.
- Draw pictures of the statements in Romans 8:35–39 (distress, persecutions, famine, peril, sword, and so on). What is Paul's solution or answer to these trials?

## **Resources**

- *Can God Be Trusted in Our Trials?* Tony Evans. Moody.

- *It's Not Fair: Finding Hope When Times Are Tough*, Wayne Mack. P & R.
- *Making Sense of Suffering* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *Pain and Providence* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- *A Shelter in the Time of Storm*, Paul Tripp. Crossway.
- *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.

## Suicide

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*See also Depression, Fear, Hope, Loneliness, Purpose for Living, Self-Worth*

### **1. We belong to God; we are his. Therefore, ending our life is not an option.**

**Psalm 139:13–16** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20** Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (NLT)

**2. God sending his Son to die for us shows how much he loves us.**

**Romans 5:8** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (NIV)

**Ephesians 2:4–5** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. (NIV)

**John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:9**

**3. If someone is contemplating suicide because of committing some terrible sin, he or she needs to realize that there is no sin too great for God to forgive.**

**Micah 7:18–19** Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (NASB)

**Isaiah 43:25** I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins. (NASB)

**Psalm 145:8; 1 John 1:9**

#### **4. God is with us even in the darkest of times.**

**Psalm 139:7–12** I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night—but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you. (NLT)

#### **5. There is no problem too difficult for God to handle.**

**Jeremiah 32:17** Ah Lord GOD! Behold, you have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You. (NASB)

**Isaiah 43:18–19** Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. (NASB)

**Isaiah 41:10; Jeremiah 33:3**

## **6. Our future is secure with God on our side.**

**Jeremiah 29:11–13** I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for. Then you will call to me. You will come and pray to me, and I will answer you. You will seek me, and you will find me because you will seek me with all your heart. (GNT)

**Romans 8:38–39** For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord. (GNT)

## **7. God will never leave us.**

**Deuteronomy 31:8** The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. (NASB)

**Joshua 1:9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. (NASB)

**8. We must immerse ourselves in the Word of God, letting it saturate our very being.**

**Joshua 1:8** This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. (NASB)

**Psalms 119:105** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (NASB)

**Hebrews 4:12**

**9. If suicide does occur, God's grace extends even to that sin. A Christian who takes his or her own life will still go to heaven.**

**John 10:27–29** My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. (NIV)

**Romans 8:38–39** For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NIV)

**Hebrews 7:25**

## **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- This struggling young person must consult with a physician, pastor, or biblical counselor.

For the youth:

- John 10:10—write it down, think on it with deep concentration, remembering that Jesus is the source of abundant and true life.

- Write down how you are feeling and how Jesus feels about you. Know that you are totally valuable and precious in his sight.
- Pray Psalm 139:23–24 every time you are feeling helpless.
- Remember that one of the best helps for feelings of hopelessness is heavy physical exercise. Get started now!

## Resources

- *Grieving a Suicide* (booklet), David Powlison. CCEF.
- *I Just Want to Die: Replacing Suicidal Thoughts with Hope* (booklet), David Powlison. CCEF.
- *Suicide: How God Sustained a Family*, Dale Byers. P & R.

# Temptation

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*See also Choices, Spiritual Warfare, Thought Life*

**1. Temptation is not sin but comes as a result of our sinful nature.**

**James 1:14** Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. (NLT)

**Romans 7:18** And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. (NLT)

**1 Corinthians 10:13**

**2. Though Christ never sinned, he understands our temptations and is able to help us in them.**

**Hebrews 2:18** Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested. (NLT)

**Hebrews 4:15** This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. (NLT)

**3. Asking God for help to avoid and handle temptation is vital.**

**Psalm 19:13**

**Luke 11:4; Hebrews 4:16**

**4. Seeking out other strong believers for accountability and support is necessary.**

**Galatians 6:2** Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (NIV)

**Romans 15:1** We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. (NIV)

**James 5:16** Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. (NIV)

**5. Choosing to serve God rather than sin is crucial in resisting temptation.**

**Joshua 24:14–15** Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD,

choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. (NASB)

**Psalm 37:27** Turn from evil and do good, and you will live in the land forever. (NLT)

## **6. Christ's death included provision for victory over sin.**

**Romans 6:6, 11–13** For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. . . . In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. (NIV) Note the “know,” “count,” “offer” sequence for action steps.

**2 Peter 1:3** By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. (NLT)

**7. It takes courage and God's help to stand up against temptation.**

**Ephesians 6:10–11** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (NASB)

**Hebrews 12:1–2** Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (NASB)

**1 John 4:4** You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (NASB)

**Proverbs 4:14–15; Ephesians 6:12–18; James 1:12**

**8. Saying no to temptation may require paying a high price, but doing so is worth the cost.**

**Matthew 5:10–12** Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven. (NIV)

**1 Peter 4:14** If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. (NIV)

**Hebrews 11:24–25**

**9. Be careful in helping others flee temptation; do not be caught yourself.**

**Galatians 6:1** Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. (NLT)

**1 Peter 5:8–9** Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. (NLT)

**1 Timothy 6:9–10**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Joseph, Genesis 39:7–10
- Achan (did not resist, note the progress of sin), Joshua 7:21

### **Practical Steps**

- Remove items from your room or home that could trigger temptation—games, DVDs, CDs, and so on.
- Avoid situations that have the potential for causing you to stumble. Recognize and acknowledge your weaknesses and steer clear!
- Find a friend to confide in and tell them when temptation comes. Have them pray with you.

- Don't wait until you are in the middle of, or faced with, the temptation. Build a lifestyle of faithfulness beforehand, as well as a plan for when temptation comes. Don't get caught off guard!
- Ask an older, godly adult to be your mentor. Give them permission to ask the hard questions, even when it's uncomfortable. Be totally honest with them.

## Resources

- *A Fight to the Death*, Wayne and Joshua Macki. P & R.
- *Just One More: When Desires Don't Take No for an Answer* (booklet), Ed Welch. P & R.
- "Lies about Sin" in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *Temptation: Fighting the Urge* (booklet), Timothy Lane. New Growth.

## Thought Life/Fantasizing

*See also Attitude, Lust, Pornography, Sexual Purity*

### **1. We must discipline ourselves to have right thinking.**

**1 Peter 1:13** Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. (NIV)

**Philippians 4:8** And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 10:5** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (NIV)

### **2. No thought or secret place is hidden from God.**

**Psalm 139:1–4** O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD. (NLT)

**Jeremiah 23:23–24** “Am I a God who is only close at hand?” says the LORD. “No, I am far away at the same time. Can anyone hide from me in a secret place? Am I not everywhere in all the heavens and earth?” says the LORD. (NLT)

**Hebrews 4:13** Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable. (NLT)

### **2 Chronicles 16:9**

## **3. Thinking as God thinks should be our standard. Put evil thoughts aside.**

**Isaiah 55:7–8** Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. “For my

thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:22–24** You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (NIV)

**Romans 12:2**

#### **4. Lustful thoughts are sinful and must be removed.**

**Matthew 5:28** But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (NIV)

**Job 31:1** I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman. (NIV)

**1 Thessalonians 4:3–5**

### **Practical Steps**

- Study *sanctification* in Scripture. Center on renewing your mind. Choose key verses to memorize, such as Philippians 4:8 and Romans 12:2.

- When tempting thoughts come, ask God to control your mind. Pray, “Lord, please remove that thought from me,” or “Lord, through your Spirit, I reject that thought.”
- Use hymns and praise songs to replace bad thoughts. Memorize a favorite to always have in your mind.
- A key aid to spiritual and emotional health is hard physical exercise. Get out there and do it!

## **Resources**

- *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- *Loving God with All Your Mind*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.
- *Obsessed: Breaking Free*, Hayley DiMarco. Revell.
- *Silent Seduction of Self-Talk*, Shelly Beach. Moody.

# Time Management

*See also Laziness, Work Ethic*

## **1. Skills for personal time management must be developed early in life.**

**Psalm 39:4–5** Show me, LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure. (NIV)

**Psalm 90:12** Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. (NIV)

**Ephesians 5:15–17** Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. (NIV)

## **2. With all of our plans, we need to depend on God.**

**Psalm 90:17** May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands. (NIV)

**Proverbs 3:5–6** Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the LORD in everything you do, and he will show you the right way. (GNT)

**James 4:13–15** Now listen to me, you that say, “Today or tomorrow we will travel to a certain city, where we will stay a year and go into business and make a lot of money.” You don’t even know what your life tomorrow will be! You are like a puff of smoke, which appears for a moment and then disappears. What you should say is this: “If the Lord is willing, we will live and do this or that.” (GNT)

### **3. We need to pray for wisdom regarding all our plans.**

**James 1:5** But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all. (GNT)

**Proverbs 2:6–9** It is the LORD who gives wisdom; from him come knowledge and

understanding. He provides help and protection for those who are righteous and honest. He protects those who treat others fairly, and guards those who are devoted to him. If you listen to me, you will know what is right, just, and fair. You will know what you should do. (GNT)

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Moses, who took Jethro's advice, Exodus 18:13–24

### **Practical Steps**

- Get a weekly planner or add an app to your cell phone to keep track of your time and “to do” list. Review often and stick to it.
- Have your parents or youth leader review your schedule for advice on wise use of time to help in being more faithful to your responsibilities.
- Keep track for one week of how much time you spend on activities, such as TV, games, phone, computer, work, and study.

### **Resource**

- *Priorities: Mastering Time Management* (booklet), James Petty. P & R.

## Trust/Faith

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*See also* **Fear, Suffering, Worry**

**1. Faith brings certainty and reality to that which is otherwise unknown.**

**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (NIV)

**2. Faith is necessary to please God.**

**Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (NIV)

**3. Trusting God for the unknown is an indication of faith.**

**Hebrews 11:8–9** By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made

his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. (NIV)

**Matthew 17:20** “You don’t have enough faith,” Jesus told them. “I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.” (NLT)

#### **2 Corinthians 5:7**

#### **4. We are to place our trust ultimately in God alone (although God does use other people for our benefit).**

**Psalms 118:8–9** It is better to trust in the LORD than to depend on people. It is better to trust in the LORD than to depend on human leaders. (GNT)

**Psalms 20:7** Some trust in their war chariots and others in their horses, but we trust in the power of the LORD our God. (GNT)

**Psalms 40:4** Happy are those who trust the LORD, who do not turn to idols or join those who worship false gods. (GNT)

#### **Jeremiah 17:5–8**

## **5. Faith can overcome physical limitations.**

**Hebrews 11:11–12** And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. (NIV)

## **6. Through faith we depend on God in difficult times.**

**Job 23:8–10** Behold, I go forward but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; when He acts on the left, I cannot behold Him; He turns on the right, I cannot see Him. But He knows the way I take; when He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold. (NASB)

**Habakkuk 3:17–18** Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. (NASB)

**Job 2:10**

## **7. Trusting God shows confidence that his timing is perfect.**

**Habakkuk 2:3–4** For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay. Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith. (NASB)

**Psalm 130:5–6**

## **8. Results of trusting God.**

PROTECTION

**Psalm 5:11** But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. (NIV)

**Psalm 36:7** How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings. (NIV)

**Proverbs 30:5**

GLADNESS

**Psalm 64:10** The righteous will rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him; all the upright in heart

will glory in him! (NIV)

**Psalm 94:19**

PEACE

**Isaiah 26:3–4** You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock. (NLT)

**Isaiah 12:2**

BLESSING

**Psalm 84:12** LORD Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you. (NIV)

**Jeremiah 17:7** But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. (NIV)

**Psalm 34:8**

CONFIDENCE

**Psalm 112:7** He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD.

**Psalm 56:4** In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Abraham, Genesis 17:15–19
- Three young men, Daniel 3
- Centurion, Matthew 8:5–10
- Peter, Matthew 14:24–32

## **Practical Steps**

- Study the names of God in the Old Testament, reflecting on his trustworthiness.
- Study *trust* in the Psalms using a concordance. List and categorize the verses that deal best with your situation.
- Journal your prayers to God on a daily basis. Review them later, with thoughts about how God answered them.
- Write a paraphrase of Psalm 46, reflecting on the psalmist's confidence in God.

## **Resources**

- “Adolescents and Crises” in *Crisis Counseling*, Scott Floyd. Kregel.

- *God Can Not Be Trusted (and Five Other Lies of Satan)*, Tony Evans. Multnomah.
- *God's Hand in Our Hardship* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.
- "Lies about God" in *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Moody.
- "Replacing a Doubtful Heart . . . with an Attitude of Trust" in *Lord, Change My Attitude*, James McDonald and Erwin Lutzer. Moody.
- *Thankful Heart in a World of Truth* (pamphlet), Joni Eareckson Tada. Rose.

## Unwed Pregnancy

*See also* **Abortion, Adoption, Confession, Trust, Worry**

### **1. Seek God's wisdom and counsel to know if the baby should be kept or given up for adoption.**

**Proverbs 2:6–12** For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you, delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech.

**Psalm 139:23–24; James 1:5**

### **2. Go to parents and Christian leaders for help.**

**Proverbs 6:20–22** My son, obey your father's commands, and don't neglect your mother's instruction. Keep their words always in your heart. Tie them around your neck. When you walk, their counsel will lead you. When you sleep, they will protect you. When you wake up, they will advise you. (NLT)

**Proverbs 15:22** Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success. (NLT)

**Deuteronomy 5:16; Ephesians 6:1–2**

**3. Each life is significant. Abortion is not an option.**

**Psalms 127:3** Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him. (NLT)

**James 4:17** Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it. (NLT)

**4. If this pregnancy is the result of sin (that is, consensual intercourse), confession must be made to God and to parents.**

**Proverbs 28:13** People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy. (NLT)

**Psalm 32:5** Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. (NLT)

**1 John 1:8–9** If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. (NLT)

**Psalm 51:1–2**

## **5. Find others who are godly to help bear the burden.**

**Galatians 6:1–2** Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. (NLT)

**Romans 15:1** We who are strong must be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this. We must not just please ourselves. (NLT)

## **6. God will meet your needs through these difficult days. Run to him for help.**

**Psalm 46:1** God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. (NLT)

**Psalm 91:1–2** Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him. (NLT)

**Philippians 4:19** And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

### **Practical Steps**

For the counselor:

- The young person must see a physician.

For the youth:

- Read and study Psalm 139:13–16 to increase your awareness of God's plans for this child inside of you. The young man involved should do this also.

- Talk openly to those older than you for advice and help.

## **Resources**

- *When Good Kids Make Bad Choices*, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Harvest House.
- *A Young Woman's Guide to Making Right Choices*, Elizabeth George. Harvest House.

## Words That Hurt

### Gossip/Rumors

*See also Lying, Speech*

**1. Words used inappropriately can bring hurt, even destruction, into the lives of all involved.**

**Leviticus 19:16** Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the LORD. (NIV)

**Proverbs 16:28** A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends. (NIV)

**Proverbs 26:20–22** Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife. The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts. (NIV)

**Matthew 12:35–36** A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. (NIV)

**Proverbs 11:13; 13:3; 18:21; Galatians 5:15; James 3:5–12**

## **2. Words used inappropriately will damage our daily walk with God.**

**Psalm 15:1–3** LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart; whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbor, and casts no slur on others. (NIV)

**2 Timothy 2:16** Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. (NIV)

## **3. We must choose not to use hurtful words.**

**Psalm 17:3** Though you probe my heart, though you examine me at night and test me, you will find

that I have planned no evil; my mouth has not transgressed. (NIV)

**Psalm 141:3** Set a guard over my mouth, LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips. (NIV)

**1 Peter 3:8–10** Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.”

**Proverbs 4:24; James 1:26; 1 Peter 2:1**

#### **4. Damaging words must be replaced with positive, productive words.**

**Proverbs 12:18** The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. (NIV)

**Ephesians 4:29** Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. (NIV)

**Proverbs 16:24**

## **5. God is our refuge against hurtful words.**

**Psalm 31:19–20** Oh, how abundant is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you and worked for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of the children of mankind! In the cover of your presence you hide them from the plots of men; you store them in your shelter from the strife of tongues.

**Luke 6:22** Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!

**Psalm 62:5–7; 140:12**

## **6. What to do when words hurt us.**

**Psalm 64:2–3** Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the throng of evildoers, who whet their tongues like swords, who aim bitter words like arrows.

**Psalm 119:69** Arrogant people smear me with lies, but in truth I obey your commandments with all my heart. (NLT)

**Psalm 120:1–2** In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.

**Proverbs 12:16** A fool is quick-tempered, but a wise person stays calm when insulted. (NLT)

**Luke 6:27; Romans 12:17–21**

## **Biblical Narratives**

- Hannah, 1 Samuel 1
- Jesus, 1 Peter 2:21–23

## **Practical Steps**

- When others have hurt you with words, remember how it feels. Commit not to do the same to others.
- Commit to obeying Jesus’s commands of nonretaliation. See Matthew 5:38–44.
- Be ready to obey Paul’s commands for responding peacefully, Romans 12:14, 17.
- Ask family or friends if you have said things to them that were harsh or mean. Be ready with an apology.
- When talking to people, remember that words are extremely powerful and difficult to forget. Speak with this in mind.

## Resources

- “Sins of the Tongue” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- *War of Words*, Paul Tripp. P & R.
- *Words That Cut* (booklet), Alfred Poirier. Peace Maker Ministries.

## Work Ethic/Employment

*See also Career, Laziness, Time Management*

- 1. God's plan for work was established from the very beginning—shortly after the creation of the world—and is therefore good.**

**Genesis 2:15** The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

- 2. Hard work continued in God's plan after sin entered the world.**

**Genesis 3:17–19** Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return. (NIV)

### **3. Working for our needs with our own hands is God's will.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:11–12** Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody. (NIV)

**Proverbs 21:25–26** The desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labor. All day long he craves and craves, but the righteous gives and does not hold back.

**Psalms 90:17**

### **4. All work must be done for God's glory and with his reputation in mind.**

**Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.

**1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13–14** The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment,

everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. (NASB)

**Colossians 3:17**

**5. Respectful obedience is due our employer. (For today's cultural application, substitute "workers" for "slaves" and "employers" for "masters.")**

**Ephesians 6:5–8** Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free. (NIV)

**Titus 2:9–10** Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive. (NIV)

**1 Timothy 6:1–2; 1 Peter 2:18–19**

**6. We should enjoy work because God created us for it, and it gives us satisfaction.**

**Ecclesiastes 5:18–19** Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward. Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God. (NASB)

**Ecclesiastes 3:12–13** I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime; moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor—it is the gift of God. (NASB)

**7. Note the example of the apostle Paul.**

**1 Corinthians 4:12** And we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure. (NASB)

**Acts 18:3** Paul lived and worked with them, for they were tentmakers just as he was. (NLT)

**1 Thessalonians 2:9** Don't you remember, dear brothers and sisters, how hard we worked among

you? Night and day we toiled to earn a living so that we would not be a burden to any of you as we preached God's Good News to you. (NLT)

## **2 Thessalonians 3:7–13**

### **Biblical Narrative**

- Joseph, in spite of his difficult situation, Genesis 39:2–5

### **Practical Steps**

- Listen to your parents when they want you to have consistent times for going to bed and getting up. Make this a habit of life. When you have more responsibilities later, you will appreciate this greatly.
- Go to the Laziness topic in this book and review all the Proverbs listed there.
- When you have chores or jobs to do around the house, commit to doing your very best, without complaint. This will be great preparation for future outside employment.
- When your parents agree, begin working at small jobs, such as babysitting and lawn care.

## Resources

- *Created for Work: Practical Insights for Young Men*, Bob Schultz. Great Expectations Book Company.
- *Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion against Low Expectations*, Alex and Brett Harris. Multnomah.
- “Work Matters” and “A Reason to Work” in *A Journey Worth Taking*, Charles Drew. P & R.

## Worry

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*See also Depression, Fear, Trust*

### **1. The results of worry are negative and provide no help for the situation.**

**Proverbs 12:25** Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up. (NLT)

**Job 6:1–3** Then Job spoke again: “If my misery could be weighed and my troubles be put on the scales, they would outweigh all the sands of the sea. That is why I spoke impulsively.” (NLT)

**Matthew 6:27** Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? (NLT)

### **2. Instead of worry, consider the proper response.**

**1 Peter 5:7** Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. (NLT)

**Philippians 4:6–7** Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds

anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

**Isaiah 41:10, 13**

**3. Anxiety is often fear of what *might be* rather than what *is*. Concentrate on what is true and positive.**

**Philippians 4:8** And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (NLT)

**2 Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. (NLT)

**4. God's sufficient resources are adequate for our every concern.**

**Philippians 4:13** For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (NLT)

**Philippians 4:19** And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

## **2 Corinthians 12:9–10; Psalm 94:19**

- 5. Do we believe God is sovereign? The days God has given us are planned for our best interests. Trust puts anxiety to rest.**

**Psalm 139:16** Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them. (NASB)

**Isaiah 44:6** Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me.” (NASB)

### **Isaiah 45:5–7**

- 6. God can use anything for his ultimate plan. God wastes nothing.**

**Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

- 7. Anxiety about the future is sheltered in God’s ultimate plan.**

**Isaiah 26:3–4** You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in

you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock.

**Matthew 6:33–34** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

**John 14:1–3; 2 Thessalonians 3:16**

### **Biblical Narratives**

- Hannah, who worried because she couldn't have a baby, 1 Samuel 1
- Gideon, who didn't feel he was strong enough to accept God's call, Judges 6
- David, whose enemies were about to get the best of him, Psalm 13
- Jeremiah, who obeyed God and then had second thoughts, Jeremiah 32:24–27

### **Practical Steps**

- Memorize Psalm 91:1–2. Study the four different names for God in those two verses. Study other

key words—*shelter, refuge, fortress, trust*. Write out the passage; keep it close by to review.

- Listen often to hymns and praise songs that have strong, meaningful lyrics that tell of God's provision, strength, and guidance.
- Talk to someone you trust who can help bring an objective view to your worry and direct you toward God.

## Resources

- “Anxiety” in *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges. NavPress.
- “Fear, Anxiety, and Worry” in *Feelings and Faith*, Brian Borgman. Crossway.
- *God: As He Longs for You to See Him*, Chip Ingram. Baker.
- *Let It Go: Breaking Free from Fear and Anxiety*, Tony Evans. Moody.

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- suicide
- terrorism
- worry

In addition to the appropriate Scriptures, topics include a list of biblical narratives illustrating the topic, practical steps to take, and suggested resources. Pastors, parents, and counselors will quickly discover that this is an essential tool for helping teens blossom into strong Christian adults.

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