

**“Even the Youths Shall Faint”  
(Isaiah 40:30)**

\*A Message for the Present Generation of Christian Young People\*

By Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Many years ago Judge Manuel Rocker of Shaker Heights, Ohio, sentenced a nineteen-year-old boy to three hours in a pig sty because the boy had referred to a police officer as a “pig.” The judge expressed his pleasure after the boy had served his time and announced to the judge that he had learned a valuable lesson. After the whole ordeal was done the judge finally said: “I hope that none of these young people call a policeman a crocodile!”

What is wrong with the youth of our present generation? Why are they so rebellious? Many would say that our youth have no home life and have never been taught to obey authority. This may be true in multitudes of cases. Others would say that the majority of our young people are unsaved and have no spiritual direction in life. This is also very true and alarming. But what is more shocking is how the vast majority of Christian young people of today resemble the non-Christian youth of our generation. They dress, act, and participate in many of the same worldly practices that non-Christian youth do. Why is it almost impossible to distinguish the Christian young people from the non-Christian youth of today? The answer is very simple. Christian youth have embraced and adopted the cultural lifestyle of the world. As a result, Isaiah says they have fainted, faltered, and fallen in their spiritual lives and commitment to God and His holiness. Isaiah 40:30 records these sad words:

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.”

**The Present Youth Generation**

Someone said that we live in a world that has gone stark raving mad! I agree. Young people, this is the kind of world in which you live today. You live “in the midst of a crooked and perverse” generation (Phil. 2:15) that is twisted and distorted in its thinking, values, goals,

ambitions, and living. Christian young people today are under constant attack from the world (1 John 2:15), the flesh (1 John 2:16), and the devil (1 John 3:8). These three spiritual entities are the archenemies of every young person who is seeking to live for God and do what is right.

Dr. Andrew Telford, a godly Bible teacher of the past generation, wrote a letter to me during my younger days as a pastor. He said, "The world, the flesh, and the devil are out to get you. Turn your back on all three of them and go on with the Lord." This was great encouragement and good advice for any young preacher. It's also timely advice for the present generation of youth.

As a result of the forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil leading people astray, we have witnessed the deterioration and departure of our society into the depths of sinful depravity and declining morals. Those who have come from the last generation can see how society has been on a steady ethical and moral decline. Dress standards, immorality, lust, paganism, alcohol consumption, devilish music, and ungodly forms of entertainment have sunk to an all-time low, not only in our society, but also within the ranks of God's redeemed children, and especially our younger generation of Christians. What was once deemed sinful and unbecoming to the Christian way of life and testimony (1 Pet. 4:3) has now become acceptable, and even promoted and glorified in the church, among the lives of many professing Christian young people.

Here is a five-fold survey of the present youth generation.

### **1. A love for sin**

Jeremiah 5:31

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

The problem with many young Christians today is that they love sin ("my people love to have it so"). They love to watch nudity on TV and in the movie theater. Most Christian young people talk about the R-rated movies they watch and the kinds of secular rock music they

listen to without batting an eyelash. They attend dances, date like the world, and dress like the world. All kinds of sins are being embraced and condoned today among Christian youth and within the church. Many young people also endorse unthinkable things in their homes such as pornography on the Internet, cursing, the blasphemy of God's name through movies, and they never think anything about it. Why? It's because the average young person loves sin and no longer wants to practice living a holy life. They have become desensitized to sin, embraced a carnal way of living, and "love to have it so" (Jer. 5:31).

## **2. A lack of holiness**

1 Peter 1:15-16

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

In this verse we see the call to holiness ("he which hath called you"), the course of holiness ("in all manner of conversation") the command of holiness ("Be ye holy") and the cause for holiness ("for I am holy"). The fact that God is holy should motivate us and stir our hearts to live a life that is pleasing to Him. Being godly is being like God. If we have a desire or longing to live a godly life we should want to be like God. We should want to be holy.

Today "the doctrine which is according to godliness" (1 Tim. 6:3) is replaced with "youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22). Young Christian girls want to dress in a provocative manner to get the boys to look at them. What they really mean is this. They want the boys to lust after them. Many young Christian women will admit that this is why they dress in the manner that they do. They want to be noticed. This is nothing less than pride (1 John 2:16). When you dress in a provocative manner and begin to display the nakedness and extreme shape of your body, you become a stumbling block to young men. The Bible says "that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Rom. 14:13). Is there anything spiritual and godly about provocative dress? Of course there isn't. Young ladies, in some measure and in some ways, you begin to play the harlot mentioned in the book of Proverbs, when you begin to dress to be noticed.

Proverbs 7:10

“And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.”

Many Christian young ladies of our present generation are trying to seduce men. They are dressing more like harlots than citizens of heaven (Phil. 3:20). God does not want young Christian women to show off and exploit their nakedness and shape before men. The Bible clearly says that women should wear “modest apparel” (1 Tim. 2:9). Young ladies, this is not God’s suggestion but God’s command.

A godly Christian woman wrote:

“A woman's clothes and her appearance are powerful, non-verbal communicators of what she believes, of her moral values, and of her character.”

Today harlotry is also expressed through the TV, Internet, and magazines. Our present-day Christian youth culture has followed the drift of the times. They have changed with the worldly culture. Most Christian youth have adopted a worldly pragmatic philosophy (“If it works, it’s okay”), an existentialistic philosophy (“If it feels right, then it must be okay”), and a relativistic philosophy (“What is right for me may not be right for you”). The young Christian generation of today wants no absolutes and standards of any kind. They attempt to rationalize sin and give it different names such as freedom, liberty, and grace living.

J.C. Ryle once said:

“We may give wickedness smooth names, but we cannot alter its nature and character in the sight of God.”

Many young people have bought into a perverted view of God’s grace (Jude 1:4), presented by modern would-be grace teachers, which have managed to redefine various sinful indulgences as liberty (Gal. 5:13), while prostituting the grace of God. *A spirit of tolerance has replaced truth.* In addition, many young people have come to view sin as something that is normal behavior, and if tamed and controlled a bit, something which can be acceptable before God. Today, like never before, young people can sin thoughtlessly and astonishingly without ever being convicted of their sins. They have lost their moral

compass! Many youth have become so familiar with their sins and rationalized their sins away, that sin is no longer seen as a *moral monster* which is committed against a holy God.

Psalm 51:4

“Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.”

When we sin we dishonor God’s holiness, offend God, break God’s law, and also break His heart. The young people of today have lost their integrity and have settled for carnality (“I am carnal, sold under sin” – Rom. 7:14). Instead of saying, “Woe is me! For I am undone” (Isa. 6:5), Christian young people are saying, “Wow, this is great fun.” Sin is being swept under the carpet by our young generation and modern youth pastors, while many young people are addicted to pornography, rock music, computer games, the Internet, TV, recreation, entertainment, fashion, gambling, sports, tattoos, heathen body-piercing, gluttony, alcohol, drugs, busyness, therapy and multitudes of other things. Many of our Christian youth engage in dancing and social drinking. They delve into sexual promiscuity, desire earthly praise and covetous living, and deal with deep-seated emotions of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. The cords of sin wrap tightly around the necks and feet of our young generation.

Proverbs 5:22

“His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.”

### **3. A laying aside of knowledge**

The vast majority of Christian young people today have “rejected knowledge” (Hosea 4:6) regarding the truth of Bible separation, “forgotten the law of thy God” (Hosea 4:6), “sinned against me” (Hosea 4:7) - against God’s holiness, and have “set their heart on their iniquity” (Hosea 4:8). The *new kind* of young Christian talks like the world, looks like the world, dresses like the world, listens to the music of the world, idolizes the world, and acts like the world. Christian young people are seeking to live like other unsaved young people and Paul asks “are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Cor. 3:3).

Vance Havner said:

“The world and the professing church first flirted with each other, then fell in love, and now the wedding is upon us.”

This is true in relationship to our young generation. Why has this happened? What is the cause of the present spiritual failure, carnal crisis, and moral decline of our younger generation? There are several reasons or causes, and most of them overlap to some degree, such as careless parenting, compromising preachers, and carnal pressure from the world. Perhaps all three are to blame in some measure when we look at the spiritual erosion and epidemic that is taking place among our Christian young people today.

We can summarize the departure of the present youth generation in this way. To our Christian forefathers (ancestors) the doctrine of separation was a *conviction*. To many of our Christian grandfathers the doctrine of separation was received as an *inheritance*. To the fundamental Christian parents of the present youth generation the doctrine of separation has grown to be a *convenience*. To many children of these same Christian parents the doctrine of separation has become a *nuisance*. There has been a trickle-down affect in fundamental churches and circles regarding the doctrine of separation or holiness.

The church as a whole has jettisoned the doctrine of separation. It has “rejected knowledge” (Hosea 4:6) concerning this vital Biblical truth. The church has replaced holy music with hellish music. It has replaced convicting preaching with easy-listening preaching (2 Tim. 4:2-4). It has adopted pagan music, worldly programs, and irreverent practices to try and make deals with sinners and entertain sinners in their sin! Is it any wonder why our present generation of young people have become so tolerant and worldly? The church is supposed to change the world but the world has changed the church! Many pastors are responsible for feeding our young people canned music and promoting the carnal junk food that is causing their downfall. I place much of the blame for the condition of our present youth generation on the candy-coated, compromising, preachers of these last days.

Rick Warren, a contemporary church guru, said:

"Saddleback is unapologetically a contemporary music church. We've often been referred to in the press as 'The flock that likes to rock.'"

I may be wrong, but I don't think so. Since God has a special place in his heart for young people (Isa. 40:30) those leaders who direct them into worldly compromise and contamination will have a lot of answering to do at the Judgment Seat of Christ (James 3:1).

#### **4. A loss of purpose**

Daniel 1:8 says that "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself ..." Many young people in our present generation have lost their true calling and purpose to keep themselves "unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Instead of living a life of purity and holiness before God they have settled for a life of pleasure that can never give true purpose or lasting satisfaction since "the pleasures of sin" are only "for a season" (Heb. 11:25). Yes, you can have fun when you sin. But the devil always sends the bill later! The truth of the matter is this. Many Christian young people don't care if their lives are defiled or contaminated by the world. Furthermore, they don't want to be confused with the facts when their garments are "spotted by the flesh" (Jude 1:23). I recently researched a church ministry that was designed to reach our unsaved young generation. The young pastor of the church had horrible tattoos all over his body. His body-piercing was heathen, his preaching was watered-down, and the music in his church sounded more like a satanic band than Daniel's band.

"Standing by a purpose true,  
Heeding God's command,  
Honor the, the faithful few!  
All hail to Daniel's Band!

Dare to be a Daniel,  
Dare to stand alone!  
Dare to have a purpose firm!  
Dare to make it know!"

When will the younger generation of Christians realize that the unsaved are not interested in a cheap imitation of their way of life!

Someone wrote:

“The world is not impressed with a religious version of itself.”

I have had unsaved people personally tell me this, as they view the way many Christians dress and act today, and what they listen to. The unsaved world is not impressed by our sameness but by our difference! When we live a holy and different lifestyle, before the eyes of a watching world, it's only then that we become true light and salt before them (Matt. 5:13-14).

Charles Spurgeon wrote:

“In proportion as a church is holy, in that proportion will its testimony for Christ be powerful.”

Most of our Christian young people today are lulled to sleep by a watered-down, compromised, “lukewarm” (Rev. 3:16) version of Christianity. Many Christians represent darkness and participate in the same devilish practices of the unsaved. How can young Christian people share the true message of repentance and salvation with the unsaved (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30) when they are living like them? Young people, you belong to God (“ye are not your own” - 1 Cor. 6:19) and therefore should live a godly life that honors Him. You don't belong to the crowd or that person who is trying to pressure you into sin. You belong to God. Never forget this. Your identity with God and your desire or purpose to remain pure (Dan. 1:8) is what will bring God's true blessing into your life (Josh. 1:8).

## **5. A lingering problem**

What is the lingering problem that many young people face today? It's not the problem of temptation. Temptation has always been with young people since the days of Cain and Abel. It's not the problem of worldliness since worldliness was part of the early days of Christianity and the church (1 Cor. 5:1, 11; 10:20; 2 Tim. 4:10; Rev. 2:20). So what is the lingering problem that is plaguing the young people of our present generation? It's a three-fold problem.

**a. They have forsaken the counsel of their elders.**

The Bible teaches that the younger should obey the elder.

1 Peter 5:5

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.”

I am convinced that if the young generation would have followed the counsel of wise elderly pastors, as the Scripture commands them to, that this present-day church and generation of young people would not be in the spiritual condition that it's in today. Today the young people want to run the church instead of the pastors and the pastors are allowing them to do it for the most part.

What has happened? Let me tell you what has happened. Most churches have kicked out the elderly and the younger generation is no longer willing to listen to the spiritual insights of the previous generation concerning godly music, ministry, and manners of reverence and decorum. They would rather turn the church into a night club than listen to the godly counsel of their peers who have an “understanding of the times” (1 Chron. 12:32) and who want to honor God's holiness.

There is a very sad story in the Old Testament that illustrates how the younger generation forsook the counsel of the older and wiser generation. King Rehoboam wanted to get an answer to a question regarding taxation. What took place can be progressively seen in the following verses.

1 Kings 12:6

“And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?”

1 Kings 12:8-9

“But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him: And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?”

1 Kings 12:13-14

“And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.”

History repeats itself. What happened in the past has happened in our present generation. The younger generation has forsaken the godly advice and counsel of the older generation. As a result, unspeakable compromise and corruption has found its way into many churches and the personal lives of our young people.

**b. They have forsaken the call to holiness.**

There is another problem related to the younger generation. Most Christian young people don't want to live a holy life. They don't have a deep-seated desire and longing to live a life that is pleasing to God and which reflects His holiness. They do not have a principle of purity hidden in their hearts. They don't want to reflect the moral character of God in their everyday living. Christian youth don't want to respond to God's call of holiness.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 says:

“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

Let us remember that all true holiness starts on the inside of our heart (“the hidden man of the heart” – 1 Pet. 3:4; 2 Cor. 7:1) with righteous thoughts, attitudes, values, and motives that please God. However, holiness works its way to the outside for we are instructed to be “holy in all manner of conversation” or living (1 Pet. 1:15). If my heart is right then my outward life will also be right. Holiness of heart produces holiness of living. What is taking place on the inside will be reflected on the outside. Many Christian youth of today don't want to live differently than the average unsaved person. They don't want to distinguish between the light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness, and Christ and Satan (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

Many young people today “call evil good, and good evil” and they “put darkness for light, and light for darkness” and “put bitter for sweet,

and sweet for bitter!” (Isaiah 5:20). They have turned the tables and twisted the meaning of evil and truth. Many young people have dulled their spiritual sensitivity toward sin. The world has stolen away their affection for God’s holiness and righteousness and has altered their spiritual appetites and perceptions. Isaiah 5:20 teaches an important lesson. *Almost any behavior begins to look normal if you are exposed to it long enough!* This is why God calls us to separate (Rom. 12:2) from all sin and error and be holy in our approach to living and worship.

The contemporary youth generation no longer wants to put a difference between what is holy and unholy.

Leviticus 10:10 says:

“And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.”

God repeats this truth often in the book of Leviticus which is an object lesson on God’s holiness (Lev. 11:47; 20:25; see also Ezek. 22:26; 44:23). In the Old Testament God was teaching His children to mark a distinction between those things that He deemed holy and unholy. He was teaching that holiness is not an option for those who belong to Him. The same is true for our present young generation. God never said that youth was a time to “sow your oats” or pass off the seriousness of holy living by saying “youth will be youth.” Instead, God proclaims in Ecclesiastes 12:1: “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” God wants you to remember to honor Him and His holiness during your days of youth and also remember that you are accountable to Him. You should learn to reverence God, keep His laws faithfully, and serve Him responsibly. Christian young people are to live by a higher standard than the world; they are to live by the standard of God’s purity and holiness.

John Phillips aptly remarked:

“When we lose sight of God’s holiness, a holiness calculated to strike awe into every heart, we lose our sense of the seriousness of sin.”

This is what has happened to our young generation. They have lost a true sense of the seriousness of sin because they have lost sight of God’s matchless purity and holiness. Without a holy distinction and

standard based upon God's Word we will dress like the world, sound like the world, look like the world, and live like the world. Today nobody wants to be a different guy; everybody wants to be the same guy. Nobody wants to appear like they are a bad guy, they want to be a nice guy. The truth is this. Many young people don't want to appear different, extreme, or too spiritual because the fear of man has become a snare in their lives. They fear what others will think of them and how they will react. They fear not fitting into the crowd.

Proverbs 29:25

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."

### **c. They have forsaken the command to fear God.**

Ecclesiastes 12:13

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

The fear of God is a wholesome dread of displeasing God. Our young Christian generation fears man more than they fear God. Most young people are more concerned about what others think of their lifestyle than what God thinks about their style of modern music, manner of conduct, and misrepresented form of Christianity. The youth of our present generation want to go with the worldly styles even when the styles don't go with the Bible! For the most part youth have lost a true sense of the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 7:1 says:

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Holiness and fearing God are two peas in the same pod. They work harmoniously together. When a person truly fears God they will live a holy life. A survey of the present young generation of Christians will reveal a lingering problem. They don't really fear God. They have no sense or awareness of God's holy presence and how sin offends God, displeases Him, and brings His chastening hand upon their lives (Heb. 12:6).

“I want a principle within  
Of jealous, godly fear,  
A sensibility of sin,  
A pain to feel it near;  
I want the first approach to feel  
Of pride, or fond desire,  
To catch the wandering of my will,  
And quench the kindling fire.”

### **The Picture of Defeat**

In the midst of our present-day youth epidemic of worldliness and wickedness, among young people who call themselves Christians, Isaiah 40:30 gives this warning:

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.”

This is a staggering statement that should cause alarm in the heart of every Christian young person today. Your time of youth is supposed to be a time of spiritual energy, vitality, and advancement. It's to be a time of spiritual growth in relationship to the things of God. It's to be a time when you learn how to live a life of practical holiness and righteousness which is honorable and acceptable before God.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

Christian young people are in days of preparation and building as they learn how to walk with God, live for God, and love God with all of their hearts. They are to be taught how to stand against the worldly culture of their present generation and live above the world's temptations and call to compromise. Youth is to be a time of building, strength, and spiritual stamina. Isaiah knew this and was astonished when he saw the younger generation living in spiritual defeat and disregard for God's holiness. Young man or lady, what happens when the world zaps the spiritual life out of you? What happens when sin

and compromise with the evil age robs you of enthusiasm for God's Word and renders you too weak to go on? The Bible declares that you faint, falter, and fail in your Christian life and testimony for God. There is a picture of spiritual defeat that is painted by Isaiah.

### **1. Youth can faint.**

The prophet Isaiah says that you "faint" ("Even the youths shall faint" - Isaiah 40:30). This means that you find yourself fatigued, drained, and tired in your Christian life because of the battle that you are facing against the world, the flesh, and the devil. When you seek to live by your own power and strength you will eventually faint or become spiritually drained and defeated. The battle is raging and you must learn the secret of being "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Eph. 6:10), or else you will become spiritually fatigued or faint, and eventually find yourself conforming and compromising with the world system, which is against God and His righteousness. Laxity in morals and righteousness is a sign of spiritual fatigue and leaves you vulnerable to Satan's temptations.

E. M. Bounds said it this way:

"The devil goes out into the wilderness, finds us in a fainting, discouraged condition, the pulsations of faith weak, its sky cloudy and its vision misty. Then he shows us the world from the loftiest peak of observation, appareled in its most attractive form, and tries to ensnare us by its bewildering glories."

Young people, when you let down the standard or spiritual guard it's because you have become "faint" or tired and weak in the battle. Beware of spiritual fatigue. When you weaken and let down the standard of holiness, you begin a chain of events that will lead to more compromise and further spiritual defeat. Remember that small and seemingly harmless compromises have a way of snowballing and set the stage for greater compromises and tragic consequences. A little leaven will eventually leaven the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9).

Many years ago I was singing in a 32 voice group called the choralaires. We were in a small church and it was very hot. While we

were singing one of the girls fainted in the front row of the group. Looking back it was rather hilarious. The conductor just kept leading the song and we continued to sing while a group of men carried her off the stage to revive her!

Today many youth have fainted from a spiritual perspective and it's no laughing matter. Satan has defeated many young people and they are living in a fool's paradise of worldliness and carnality. You must remember that there is a day of reward, reckoning, and recognition coming for every young person who is willing to take their stand for Christ and live a holy life that honors God and His ways. Don't faint under the pressure. Stay the course!

Galatians 6:9 promises: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

God has His seasons! Young people, you can reap eternal reward instead of fleshly corruption (Gal. 6:8), if you stand in the gap and shine forth a testimony of light, in the midst of this dark generation. God promises to give strength to those who are faint so that they do not continue on a road to self destruction (Isaiah 40:29).

## **2. Youth can falter.**

Isaiah then records that "Even the youths shall faint and be weary." When you are "weary" you are gasping for air and have become completely exhausted and overcome. When this happens you falter in your spiritual endurance or stamina and waver in your Christian commitment to Christ and His cause. You become weakened and worn out. You want to throw in the towel and get out of the race of living a pure and wholesome life that counts for God (Heb. 12:1). You want to give up. You look at other Christians around you who are moving in a different direction and are pressured to go with them and be sucked into the great vortex and whirlwind of the world system that embraces careless living, contemporary music, and carnal dressing.

When youth are pulled into this great vortex of the world system their holiness and purity of living are compromised and they lose their effective testimony and outward distinction of being saints. They refuse to live in a manner "as becometh saints" (Eph. 5:3). As a

result, they falter or fail in life, since they are overcome with the pressures of life and the present worldly trends of our society.

I heard about a tornado in the Midwest that was two miles wide. It was like a giant vacuum cleaner moving across the flatland sucking up and destroying everything in its path – trucks, cars, houses, and people. It leveled everything in its path and brought devastation everywhere. Today many young Christians are being sucked into a great worldly whirlwind that is destroying their spiritual lives and effectiveness for Jesus Christ. It's destroying their spiritual lives and bringing devastation into their own personal lives, homes, relationships with others, churches, and their relationship with God.

### **3. Youth can fail.**

Isaiah also records how many youth fall from their spiritual steadfastness (“and the young men shall utterly fall”). This is a staggering truth that applies to our present generation of Christian young people. Many young people have been defeated by the world, the flesh, and the devil. The truth is this. When you cooperate with sin, and become captivated or overcome by sin, you live in spiritual defeat. Yes, you can “utterly fall” and don't think you can't. A young person must “take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). Have you fallen? Do you even know that you have fallen? Do you realize that your life is spiritually tainted and shipwrecked? I ask this question in view of the deceptiveness of sin. The Scripture speaks about “the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:13) and how Christians can lose spiritual discernment regarding spiritual virtues and become blind to living a life of integrity and honor before God. 2 Peter 1:9 says: “But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

The world's temptations and pressures are out to destroy our youth today. There is a satanic war that is being waged against our young people today. The Evil One doesn't want our young people to be spiritually strong and successful in life (Joshua 1:8). It's interesting that every age group is vulnerable. However, through the prophet Isaiah, God shows a special interest in young people when He exclaims, “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall” (Isaiah 40:30). Why is God so interested in

young people? It's because they are the next generation to follow God's Word and take His Word to the lost. They are the next generation to represent God to a world that does not know God. They are the next generation to uphold God's holiness and do His will. Furthermore, God knows that when a young person gets started right and internalizes Bible commands, principles, and convictions in his heart, he will be more apt to follow through with a life that counts for God. Yes, a life that counts for God! Isn't this what you want today?

We see from this passage in Isaiah that God has pledged Himself to help young people. God has a real concern for the younger generation. This is because young people are at great spiritual risk. They can faint, falter, and fail miserably in their spiritual lives as we have seen by this passage in Isaiah 40:30. Life's demands and temptations can weigh them down and cause them to become discouraged and unraveled in life. However, God gives wonderful encouragement to every young person who is presently fainting and failing in life.

Isaiah 40:29 records:

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

Ephesians 6:10 puts it this way:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

### **The Promise of Victory**

Dear young person, the boundaries have disappeared and the definitions have changed. But I have good news for you. The basic principles of how to live the Christian life have not changed. You can live above the fleeting things of this world and learn to be victorious in your Christian walk and life. Young and victorious! Isn't this what you want? God has made a way for you to live triumphant and victorious in the midst of powerful passions, perilous times, and pagan ways. God has made a way of victory for you. God has made a way! You need to know this. Remember that principles never change. The Bible is timeless and its teachings can be applied in every age and in every culture. No, the Bible is not outdated and culturally irrelevant. It's as

up-to-date as the morning news. Below is a Bible plan designed to give you victory and freedom in your days of youth. Everybody needs a plan. So here is a Bible plan to follow for victory and blessing. We will call it “God’s Bible Plan for Youth Deliverance.”

## **1. Repent of your sin before God.**

Revelation 2:5 says:

“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works.”

To repent means to change your mind and heart about your sins. You are to see every sin as a terrible offense before God and His holiness. You must realize that your sin is a horrible stench in God’s nostrils and cry out to God with the words of Isaiah, “Woe is me! for I am undone.” (Isa. 6:5). When you truly repent it means that you will take sides with God and possess a willingness to forsake your sins and “do the first works” of living righteously for God and loving God once again. Are you truly ready to agree with God and follow His commands and will for your life?

Isaiah 55:7

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

Vance Havner said:

“It takes a radical break to turn a man from earth’s trash to heaven’s treasure.”

## **2. Recommit yourself to God.**

Romans 12:1-2 tells you what to do for victory: “present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” The Bible teaches that we are to present or surrender our bodies to God in a decisive and once-for-all manner. There needs to be an initial surrender to the Lord of our bodies. Are we willing to surrender our eyes, feet, hands, ears, tongues, and every part of our body, even the physical aspects of our body, to God? Are we willing to make Jesus Lord of our lives over every organ of our body and in

every area of our lives? Do we really want to give ourselves to the Lord, or are we holding back, knowing that we still want to have our own selfish and sinful way? We must be truthful to God about this absolute surrender and willingness to follow Christ. Absolute surrender to God is where victory begins. It's the foundation for all victory. There is a need for daily surrender to God (Rom. 6:12-13) but there is also a need for this initial surrender when you present your body to God and His holy purposes.

“All to Jesus I surrender,  
Humbly at His feet I bow;  
Worldly pleasures all forsaken,  
Take me, Jesus, take me now.  
I surrender all,  
I surrender all;  
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,  
I surrender all.”

### **3. Raise the standard unto God.**

Isaiah 59:19 says in part:

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”

God will give the children of Israel a delivering and victorious standard in the future when Jesus returns to the earth as the Messiah. But there is a principle to learn from this verse. Without a standard there is defeat!

“Sound the battle cry!  
See, the foe is nigh;  
Raise the standard high  
For the Lord;  
Gird your armor on,  
Stand firm ev'ry one,  
Rest your cause upon  
His holy word.”

God's people are to have a higher standard of living than the unsaved! Every young person needs to commit themselves to the

high standard of personal purity and the power of God in order to combat the enemy. You must raise an ensign or banner of holiness and righteousness against the enemy of your soul today.

“Rouse, then, soldiers! rally round the banner!  
Ready, steady, pass the word along;  
Onward, forward shout aloud, Hosanna!  
Christ is Captain of the mighty throng.”

#### **4. Redevelop your devotional life with God.**

This means you need to reestablish your time with the Lord, when you read the Bible and pray to Him, and when you commit your day and life to Him. It must be a sincere time of devotion before God where God can speak to your heart afresh and anew.

Psalm 5:1-2

“Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.”

You must take time to read the Bible and pray to God every day, asking Him for help and strength to live a holy life, to do what is right, and to correct your sinful ways. It has been said that *the Bible will keep you from sin and sin will keep you from the Bible*. Buy a good devotional book that allows you to meditate upon Scripture and start using it every day. You need to once again allow God to speak to your heart and redirect your paths. The devil whispers in your ear, “Save precious time by skipping your devotions!”

Psalm 119:105

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

#### **5. Reconfirm your covenant with God.**

Job 31:1

“I made a covenant with mine eyes: why then should I think upon a maid?”

I've addressed the young women earlier in this study. Now let me address the young men. Men, as you go throughout the day you must

make a covenant with your eyes and before God that you will not “think upon a maid” or commit sexual lust in your heart toward any member of the opposite sex (Matt. 5:28). This is a covenant that must be made on a daily basis especially among our young people today. It’s a covenant that must be made in connection with Internet use, TV viewing, and when entering motels where pay channels are freely available to view. There needs to be a covenant made between you, your eyes, and God. It’s a covenant of purity. Many times we make “a covenant with hell” (Isa. 28:15, 18) instead of a covenant with God.

Generally speaking, God wants you to make a covenant and vow to Him today. It’s a covenant and vow that involves purity. You must vow to live by the *purity* principle. This is true for all young people. You must say, as the Psalmist said, “unto thee shall the vow be performed” (Ps. 65:1). You must make a vow to love, worship, and serve God with a pure heart and life. This covenant and vow with God is especially important to mention during the time of temptation or the “evil day” (Eph. 6:13). Remind God that you have committed yourself to Him and His cause.

“I will serve Thee  
Because I love Thee  
You have given life to me.  
I was nothing until You found me,  
You have given life to me.”

## **6. Reclaim your position in God.**

The Bible says that God “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3) and that today Christ is the great Victor seated “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Eph. 1:21). Let’s simplify this teaching. Jesus is the great Victor over death, demons, and the devil himself. His exalted position in heaven declares this to be true. But the wonderful promise is this. We share this same position of victory with Christ because we are spiritually tied with Him in the heavens. We are “seated in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3) and He hath “raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). Together with Christ! Yes, we are seated and

living together with Christ who is the exalted Victor and Champion over every wicked and demonic force.

“Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o’er His foes.  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose.”

Because we are “in Christ” (a place of spiritual position) we have already shared in His victory over sin (Rom. 6:5-8) and Satan (Eph. 1:19-23; Col. 2:15; 1 Cor. 3:21-23) through His death and resurrection and can claim this victory. Furthermore, the Bible says that “all things” are presently “under his feet” (Eph. 1:22), and if this is true of Christ, it’s also true of us. This is because we share in Christ’s risen and exalted life of victory over every evil force that is in this world. We are not to look up to gain victory but look down from our place of exalted position and victory in Christ.

You are a victor! Shout it from the rooftops! Shout it from the heavenlies! Young person, you must reclaim your position in Christ if you want to have victory. You must stop living the “earthlies” and start claiming your position in the heavenlies! It’s not who you are but where you are that counts! You are co-crucified (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20), co-resurrected (Rom. 6:5, 8) and co-exalted (Eph. 1:3; 19-23) with Christ as victors over sin and Satan. You must know that you are a victor or overcomer in Christ (1 John 5:4). When you know *what* you have and *where* you are in Christ you can claim the victory over sin and Satan.

1 John 2:13 says in part: “I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one.”

Did you catch what the Bible says? You have overcome! Young people, you are already victors! You don’t have to plead with God and ask for victory. It’s yours to claim. Never forget this. You can’t live beyond what you believe!

God told Joshua in Joshua 1:3, “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you ...” What God gave to

Joshua was his to claim. There was no doubt that God had given the children of Israel the land of Canaan. The same principle applies to you. God has already given us the victory in Christ! The promise and position is ours to claim. We don't fight to obtain victory; we place our faith in an already acquired position of victory. Young people, you must reclaim your position of victory in Christ today. The victory is yours. Let's sing and shout the victory!

“Fainting soldier of the Lord,  
Hear His sweet, inspiring word;  
I have conquered all thy foes,  
I have suffered all thy woes.  
Struggling soldier, trust in Me.  
I have overcome for thee!”

## **7. Rehearse the songs of God.**

Praise is another key word associated with victory. In the time of battle we can “sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously” (Exodus 15:1). In other words, during the time of temptation we can rehearse the songs of deliverance that pertain to God's victory and praise the Lord. When the believer by faith claims the promises of Christ's victory and Satan's defeat, he can sing songs of deliverance (Ps. 40:2-3) and shout the victory (“thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory” – 1 Cor. 15:57). I have found that singing songs centered on the truth of God's Word helps me to experience both spiritual stability and victory in my life. I have automatically found myself praising God in the times of adversity and this is true for most believers. The songs of praise (Col. 3:16) should fill our hearts as we pass through temptation and aid us in the “evil day” (Eph. 6:13).

“Songs of praises  
Songs of praises  
I will ever give to Thee  
I will ever give to Thee.”

Truth-directed praise can be an effective tool in the time of temptation. Praise can cause the satanic barriers that are before us to come tumbling down, even as the walls of Jericho fell down in response to the people's shout. Joshua 6:20 says that in response to

the people's shout "the wall fell down flat."

"Joshua fit the battle of Jericho  
And the walls came tumbling down!"

The last shout may give us the victory! Praise can bring down the walls of the enemy, which he is seeking to erect against our lives. Paul had a terrible past (Acts 22:4). But whenever Paul remembered his past he was seen turning his past memories into times of praise and thanksgiving for how God had saved him and transformed his life (1 Cor. 15:9-10; Eph. 3:8, 1 Tim. 1:12-15). When Satan reminds us of our dark past we must go to the Lord in praise and thanksgiving for the grace that He has showered upon our lives (1 Cor. 15:10).

We know that prayer changes things! But it's equally true that praise changes things. There is a certain power that comes into our lives through praise. When the children of Ammon and Moab were coming to destroy God's people they began to praise God.

2 Chronicles 20:21-22 reads:

"And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten."

The result of this praise attack upon the enemy was one of victory! 2 Chronicles 20:24 concludes the account by saying: "And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they *were* dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped."

Praise changes things! Our praise to God brings us to the place of dependency upon God and becomes an effective tool to use in the time of temptation. Praise is one way to overcome the intruding thoughts of the enemy and his temptations. Instead of meditating upon the enemies thoughts we can meditate on thoughts of praise directed to our Redeemer and Deliverer. Praise is one way to overcome the spiritual blockades that the devil puts before us. *Praise*

*can paralyze Satan.* It is praise that comes from the heart of those who know the victory that Jesus won on Calvary and who are fully surrendered to God. Psalm 7:17, "I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high."

Praise changes things!

"In heaven's eternal bliss  
The loveliest strain is this,  
May Jesus Christ be praised.  
The powers of darkness fear,  
When this sweet chant they hear,  
May Jesus Christ be praised."

## **8. Remember how to have victory through God.**

A prison inmate scratched on the wall of his cell his philosophy of life: "Born to lose." Christians believe that they were born to win! Yes, because of Christ's promise and provision of victory we are winners.

So how can you have victory?

### **a. Submit to God.**

James 4:7 says:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

This means you must place yourself under God's authority during the time of temptation. The word "submit" is a military word that means subordination and subjection as a soldier would obey his sergeant. God is our Commander and Chief. You must allow God to rule your life instead of the devil and your old nature. In the time of temptation you must pray, "I give myself to You God, instead of this sin. I am Yours. At this very moment I place myself under your authority and command instead of the devil's authority." When I submit to God I can effectively resist the devil. To resist the devil means to take a stand against the devil. Like a military soldier, I must submit myself to the Commander (God) and place myself under His allegiance. After doing

this I can effectively stand against anything and everything that the devil throws at me. Those who transfer their allegiance to God will find that Satan will flee from them since he is a defeated foe. When I place myself under God's authority and command I can stand against the devil and withstand his temptation. The promise is this. The devil with his temptation will flee from us.

### **b. Know the victory you have through God.**

The Bible says that we are victors in Christ through what He has already done for us. First, the Bible teaches that Jesus defeated the old person we used to be under the power and slavery of sin ("old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" – Rom. 6:6). When Jesus died on the cross and shed His blood He died to free us from the old person we used to be under sin's power. Christ died to defeat sin and because of His death we no longer must allow sin to defeat our lives.

Second, the Bible teaches that Jesus rose from the dead to give each one of us a living spiritual union with His own risen life ("we shall also live with him" – Rom. 6:8). Our present spiritual tie or union with Christ means that we can rely upon Him for daily power for victory ("the power of his resurrection" – Phil. 3:10). So Christ died to defeat sin and free us from the old slave or master relationship we once had with sin and rose again to provide us with daily power so we can "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Do you know this truth? Psychology says that you are a victim but God's Word says you are a victor! You are already a victor in Christ. Now you must know it and believe it to be true. This is the starting point of all victory.

### **c. Rely on the blood of God.**

The Bible places a special emphasis on the connection of the blood of Jesus Christ and the believer's victory. The blood of the Lamb (Rev. 12:11 – "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb") is an invincible weapon and an effective judicial weapon we have to battle Satan with. The secret of victory over Satan does not lie in our inherent power but in our union with Christ and His victorious death over Satan (Col. 2:15). The blood of Jesus Christ shed on Calvary stands for that victory. Those five words ("the blood of the Lamb") are

connected with all the virtue and value of Christ's redemptive work. Because Jesus broke the power of sin and Satan by shedding His blood, we who are united to Him also share in His victory. We can claim our victory through the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross.

“Oh I thank God for Calvary,  
It's the blood that sets me free!  
He bore my shame,  
Oh praise His name,  
I've never been the same,  
Since I came to Calvary.”

The blood stands for victory over sin and Satan. Satan has no counter weapon to the blood of the Lamb.

“Oh the blood,  
That gives me strength,  
From day to day,  
It will never lose its power.”

Oswald Sanders adds this:

“So then, when in prayer we plead the blood of the Lamb, we are really saying that our faith is resting for victory over Satan and sin upon all that Christ achieved for us by His vicarious death and victorious resurrection.”

#### **d. Yield your body to God.**

Romans 6:13

“Neither yield ye your members (the members of your body – hands, eyes, feet, tongue, physical organs) as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members (the members of your body) as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

When you are tempted you can yield yourself and the members of your body (eyes, hands, feet, ears, tongue) to God. You must pray, “Lord, I give my body to You right now during this temptation. I yield my body to You so that it might be used only for holy purposes.” This is the daily yielding that is needed for victory. You must do it in the

time of temptation. You must make the personal decision to yield your body to God during the time of temptation so you won't yield to sin. You must yield to God and claim the victory that you have through Christ's death (the past defeat of sin – Rom. 6:6-7) and Christ's risen life (the present power to live victoriously over sin – Rom. 6:8-9). We can yield to God knowing that we can “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4). In the moment of temptation turn every part of your body over to God and claim the victory. If you don't do this your human flesh and Satan's army will kick you around like a plastic ball.

### **e. Destroy the sinful thoughts that dishonor God.**

2 Corinthians 10:5

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

You must make the decision to demolish the wrong sinful thoughts in your mind (“Casting down imaginations”) which the devil places there. If you have ever witnessed an implosion or the destruction of a building you will get a perfect picture of what the Bible is saying here. We must implode or demolish the sinful thoughts that are trying to overtake our minds and hearts. The Bible says that Satan tries to erect a wall (“every high thing”) of sinful thoughts or wicked imaginations which are actually “against the knowledge of God” (what God is like and expects from our lives). The Evil One wants to distort your knowledge or thinking about God (His goodness, love, wisdom, and plan for your life) so that you harbor resentment in your heart toward God. Satan wants to manipulate your mind concerning the truth of God's character and ways (“the knowledge of God”). To counter this devilish deception of the mind you must turn to the Scriptures and reshape your thinking about God.

Our responsibility in the time of temptation is to demolish these thoughts and bring our thinking under the lordship of Jesus Christ (“bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”). This is done by replacing lies and lusts with the absolute truth and standard of God's Word. The counterfeit and deception must be exposed and demolished by the unbreakable standard of truth (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

Choosing the truth may be difficult if you have been living a lie. Remember that deception is the subtlest of all satanic strongholds (John 8:44). The helmet of salvation (Eph. 6:17) refers to the mind controlled by God, which provides daily spiritual deliverance (salvation) from Satan's thoughts. Satan is a deceiver (2 Cor. 11:1-4; Matt. 16:22-23) and we must learn to think thoughts geared around the truth if we are going to be victorious. If Satan gets his thoughts into our mind we will be deceived by his wiles (Eph. 6:11), possess a corrupted mind (2 Cor. 11:3), and play into his masquerade of deception (2 Cor. 11:14).

The most powerful weapon in Satan's arsenal is the power of suggestion. Satanic suggestions will constantly keep us in defeat if we do not wear the helmet of deliverance (1 Tim. 4:1). When we reprogram our minds or thinking patterns (Rom. 12:2 – "renewing of mind") God can control our mind and Satan cannot lead us astray. Living victoriously is a "head game" between the devil and Christ or the flesh and truth. *Let us remember that intellectual deception and defiance is the reason we live in defeat.* Our minds can become a spiritual junkyard that needs to be emptied and replaced by new righteous and victorious thoughts (Eph. 4:23 – "renewed in the spirit of your mind"). Young people must learn to demolish satanic thoughts and not allow these thoughts to control their minds. This is done by replacing devilish thoughts with God's standard of truth.

#### Philippians 4:8

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

You must think differently if you are ever going to live differently. This can only happen when you exchange the lustful images of temptation with God's truth. You must keep guard over your mind (1 Pet. 1:13 – "gird up the loins of your mind"). This is done in a practical way as temptation comes before your mind. You must immediately replace the temptation to lust, overeat, express pride, or covet something with the absolute standard of truth. Memorize specific verses that will help counteract the areas that you are struggling with and hide them in

your heart so that you might be able to destroy the devilish deception and temptations that invade your mind.

Psalm 119:11 says:

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” You remember the expression, “Out with the bad and in with the good.” This is what needs to happen in the moment of temptation. You must rid yourself of the evil thoughts that Satan races through your mind by replacing them with the standard of truth found in God’s Word. If you dwell upon any temptation or wicked thought long enough you will be defeated. If you play with fire long enough it will burn you!

Satan shoots his “fiery darts” (satanic suggestions – Eph. 6:16) into our minds and we need to deal with these thoughts or they will overcome our spiritual thinking processes. If we fail to program truth into our minds and hearts we will be victimized by Satan and ultimately become a victim of the world culture.

Earl Radmacher said it best:

“The truth of God establishes our vision, straightens our course, and resets our compass on the North Pole of accurate thought.”

The way we think is really the beginning of victory or the start of our spiritual downfall and defeat. Young people, in the time of temptation, you can say, “Dear Lord, I give no consent to this sinful thought. I refuse to allow these sinful thoughts to rule my mind. I’m casting them out and will not allow them to rule me. I accept your standard of truth over this temptation.” When you are trying to break a bad habit you must really stay focused so you can tear down the strongholds that Satan has built up in your life. You must remember that you are in a real spiritual battle that revolves in the mind.

#### **f. Take back the territory of God.**

The Bible says you can “give place (territory) to the devil” (Eph. 4:27) over a period of time and this territory needs to be reclaimed for God. The concept of giving ground or territory to the enemy is very critical. The Biblical concept of yielding ground to Satan occurs when you allow sin to consistently master your life or deceive you. 2 Corinthians

2:11 states it this way, “Lest Satan should get an advantage (a greater part, portion, or share of our life) of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” The Evil One tries to get an “advantage” or a greater part of our lives when we “give place” or any marked portion of territory to him. Giving place to the devil in our lives means to give him a foothold or a beachhead to work from. We allow Satan to take control of a portion of our lives when we become involved with sin and fail to confess and forsake it.

Proverbs 28:13

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

You can allow the sins of lust or sexual thoughts (1 John 2:16), covetousness (Col. 3:5), bitterness (Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15), unforgiveness (2 Cor. 2:8-11), anger (Col. 3:8), rock music and the party life (Exo. 32:15-18; Eph. 2:3; 1 Pet. 4:3; Rom. 12:2), immoral behavior (Gal. 5:19; 2 Tim. 2:22), unholy alliances, relationships, or wrong associations (1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14-17), gambling (Prov. 28:22; Phil. 4:10-13), tobacco use (1 Cor. 6:12, 19), wrong philosophies (Col. 2:8), drinking alcoholic beverage (Prov. 23:31), dancing (1 Cor. 7:1, 2; 1 Peter 4:3-4), improper and suggestive movies (Ps. 101:3; 119:37; 1 Peter 2:11), literature that is sensual and worldly in nature (Ps. 101:3; Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:11), subjective experiences or feelings that do not line up with God’s Word (2 Pet. 1:19; Isa.8:20; 2 Tim. 2:15), gossip (Lev. 19:16; Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20-22; James 4:11; 5:9), immodesty (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Thess. 4:4), filthy talk (Eph. 5:4; Col. 3:8), pride (1 John 2:16), anxiety and depression (Phil. 4:6), fear (Heb. 2:14-15), and rebellion against authority (1 Pet. 5:5; Heb. 13:17; 1 Sam. 15:23) to take hold of your heart and control your life. Whenever sin begins to control your life, you can be sure that Satan is capturing territory and is trying to gain a stronger hold on your life.

When you give ground to Satan he begins to build strongholds in your life (2 Cor. 10:4-5), in order to undercut your testimony and work for Christ, as well as your relationship with Christ. Giving ground to the devil allows him to get a firm foothold on your life. When you give some ground to Satan in your heart and life, you also set yourself up for further attacks to be marshaled against you, through destructive

thoughts and temptations. A chain of destructive events begins to occur in your life where Satan begins to control you in a greater way. Giving Satan jurisdiction over parts of your life leaves you vulnerable and opens the door for the Evil One to attack and defeat you in a greater way (“For some are already turned aside after Satan” - 1 Tim. 5:15).

Here is the secret. You must learn to give God the full run of the house. You must give God all the keys of your heart. If you don't, Satan begins to occupy various rooms in your heart or house that only God has the right to occupy and control (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Here is the good news. You can renounce “the hidden things of dishonesty” (2 Cor. 4:2) and turn yourself over to the truth once again. You can acknowledge the truth (John 8:32), repent (Rev.2:5), confess your sins to God (1 John 1:9), and take back the territory that Satan has stolen from you. In doing this you will reclaim your body, life, and mind for God. As a result, God will once again bring showers of blessing upon your life. Take back the territory!

#### **g. Rely on the power of God.**

Ephesians 6:10

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

In everything that you do you must remember to rely on God's power. This is vital to having victory (“our sufficiency is of God” – 2 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 9:8). You need God's power to help you surrender, submit, yield, and cast down the wicked thoughts that are seeking to destroy your spiritual life. You can't do it on your own. You have no power. You must rely on God's power for daily victory. God will unleash His power in your life so that you can resist the devil and have victory over His power and scheming ways. The devil's touch is lost upon our lives because of the power of God (“greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” - 1 John 4:4).

“A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;

Our helper He, amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and pow'r are great,  
And, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal."

#### **h. Put your faith in God.**

The expression "shield of faith" (Eph. 6:16) means that each believer must express faith in God's power (Eph. 6:10), promises (2 Cor. 1:20), and daily provision (Gal. 2:20) for victory. Faith is the victory! As a young adult, you must believe in God's power and promises in the time of temptation. You must place total confidence and faith in what God has said and promised to you ("above all, taking the shield of faith" – Eph. 6:16). Faith is still the victory that overcomes the world. We are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).

"Faith is the victory,  
Faith is the victory,  
O glorious victory  
That overcomes the world."

#### **i. Use the Word of God.**

"Holy Bible! Book divine!  
Precious treasure! thou art mine:  
Mine to tell me whence I came;  
Mine to tell me what I am."

We've mentioned this already. The expression "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17) speaks of the Word of God ("which is the word of God") and how the Christian must use the truth of God's Word to have victory. *Victory is a truth encounter.* We must have our "loins girt about with truth" (Eph. 6:14) and know what the Bible says about victory and those Bible verses that will present God's truth concerning the particular sins we are dealing with and seeking victory over. There are many verses that you can use to counter devilish temptations (Ps.

34:13; Rom. 8:37; 1 John 4:4). In “the evil day” (Eph. 6:13) of temptation we need to bring God’s Word to our mind and use it in our battle against Satan. We must believe what it says, claim its promises, and confirm it in our heart (“It is written” – Matt. 4:3-4). The Bible is a sword that can be effectively used to ward off the devil.

D.L. Moody often said:

“Every Bible should be bound in shoe leather.”

The application of God’s “precious promises” (2 Pet. 1:4) to our lives, which are found in the Bible, provide us with hope, courage, and victory in the time of temptation and adversity.

“Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,  
Bound to Him eternally by love’s strong cord,  
Overcoming daily with the Spirit’s sword,  
Standing on the promises of God.”

#### **j. Take time to pray to God.**

Prayer is an important key to living the victorious Christian life!

Dr. Alan Redpath has often said:

“Let’s keep our chins up and our knees down - we’re on the victory side!”

Ephesians 6:18

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

The statement “praying always” suggests the thoroughness and intensity of our praying. Prayer should be a habit and not an isolated act (1 Thess. 5:17). We are to always be ready to pray and commit ourselves to a consistent life of prayer. The moment of temptation is the moment we are to pray. Crisis times are crying times. You are to cry out to God in prayer and ask for strength and claim the victory. Jesus said, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation” (Matt. 26:41). Stay awake spiritually!

“Principalities and powers  
Mustering their unseen array,  
Wait for thy unguarded hour;  
Watch and pray.”

You must not become lax in your praying. The devil is never far away when we become too busy to pray. “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1).

“Oh! Thou, God of all,  
Hear us when we call,  
Help us, one and all,  
By Thy grace.”

Remember:

“Satan trembles when he sees, the weakest saint upon his knees.”

#### **k. Stay away from things that make you stray from God.**

One of the most practical things you can do to obtain more consistent victory in your life is to stay away from those places, people, and particular objects that cause you to sin. There are three practical lessons to remember.

##### **1. Don't make it easy to sin.**

The Bible says, “and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:14). This is a very practical verse that means we should never set ourselves up to sin by fellowshiping with the wrong people, listening to the wrong music, viewing or reading wrong things, and attending certain places that might feed the old nature. Many times we make it easy for ourselves to sin. We hang ourselves. We should give no chance for the flesh to have its fling! We must cut off every possible means to sin. Many times we make choices that take us right to the edge of sin! Sometimes we must make radical choices so we can protect our hearts and minds from sin. Many times we feed the old nature by the things that we expose ourselves to and allow to pass before our eyes.

In Matthew 5:30 Jesus told his followers, “And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee ...” Of course, Jesus was not

advocating bodily mutilation. The lesson behind what Jesus said was very simple. Jesus said that we should cut off every avenue and enticement to sin. This means we should refuse to read certain magazines, listen to a certain kind of music, and watch certain movies that will entice us to lust, sin, and violate God's holiness. Young people, you MUST make wise entertainment choices today or you will be defeated in your Christian lives.

A Christian author wrote:

“Anyone who imbibes the sensual culture through movies and other forms of entertainment that feature sexual innuendos, suggestive and immoral scenes, and provocatively dressed women is going to struggle morally – count on it!”

I am going to be blunt at this point because the young generation needs Biblical bluntness. When I expose myself to entertainment and other influences that put immorality in a favorable light, it will eventually cause me to sin morally, whether emotionally, mentally, or physically. If living a holy life really matters to you then erect some guardrails or parameters around your life. If the TV is defeating you spiritually then don't watch TV alone. Make a covenant with God about this. If certain magazines or books are placing unholy thoughts, desires, or images in your mind, then don't buy them or subscribe to them any longer. If you are tempted to commit fornication then don't single date. Put parameters on your computer if you are being enticed by pornography. Don't buy certain foods if you are a binge eater and are committing gluttony.

If computer games are consuming your time, or if they are causing you to stumble because of their content, then get rid of them. If they are not obscene games then put a time limit on how long you will spend playing them. If certain movies fuel sexual fantasies in your mind then don't watch them. A well-known preacher left the movie theater after watching an R-rated movie and said, “I was convicted after watching that movie.” At least he was honest in telling everybody about his conviction. The question is this. What was he doing in the movie theater watching nudity and filthy sexual content?

Ephesians 5:12 tells us that it is “a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” In other words, it's a shame

to openly describe the sinful acts of fornication, uncleanness, filthiness, foolish talking, and coarse jesting (Eph. 5:3-4), let alone watch, listen, and be entertained by these sinful and sinister things on prime-time television. If descriptive statements about sexual sin and lewd practices can defile the minds of those listening then surely watching sinful acts of fornication and adultery on screen will defile the mind and heart. Young people, you need to make wise entertainment choices today. How long are you going to allow yourself to be entertained by lust, people cursing God, and filthy talk? It's time to slam the door on the obscene and carnal entertainments presented on TV, DVD's, computer games, and the internet.

Here is some straight talk. You **MUST** be willing to take extreme measures to avoid sinning (Rom. 13:14) and break sinful bondages. You **MUST** separate yourself from anything and control everything that seeks to dull your spiritual sensitivity for God and His holiness. What is competing with your spiritual life? What do you need to break off, control, or change in your life to help you get victory over sin? If you are really serious about living a holy and consecrated life before God then you must establish some guardrails in your life. Don't make it easy for you to sin. Don't feed the old nature. When you view certain things, go to certain places, put yourself in certain positions, and listen to a particular type of music, you can be sure that you are setting yourself up to sin. Setting yourself up to sin through music, movies, or the media is like adding fuel to a fire or pouring fertilizer on weeds!

Many young people think they can play with fire and not get burned. So they toy with sin. However, in the end they always become defeated. The Bible gives us this timely advice: "be sure your sin will find you out" (Numb. 32:23).

The old adage is still true:  
Sin takes you further than you want to go and keeps you longer than you want to stay."

## **2. Stop looking at sin.**

There is an old verse in the Bible that is up-to-date, relevant, and which will enable you to have victory.

Psalms 101:3 says:

“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.”

Think of the practical applications of this verse to your life. Satan tempts through the eye gate (“the lust of the eyes” – 1 John 2:16). This is why we cannot dwell upon visual images that stir up the passions of the old nature. Of course, we can’t always avoid seeing wicked or evil things as we function and live in a world that is spiritually polluted and whose god is sex and lust. However, we don’t have to “set” some wicked or shameful act before our eyes. The word “set” means “to fix” or “to set your mind to” and connotes purposely dwelling upon something that is wicked with a fixed interest. This verse is talking about purposely looking at images that will excite lust and cause us to commit fornication or adultery within our hearts and minds. 2 Samuel 11:2 says, “the woman was very beautiful to look upon.” David got into trouble because he was looking upon her naked body with his lustful eyes and heart. Young men, it’s one thing to acknowledge the natural beauty of a woman (Gen. 24:16; 26:7) but an altogether different matter when you look upon the same woman with lust.

Matthew 5:28

“But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

Men, when you see a woman that is dressed scantily and in a provocative manner, you must learn the secret of not allowing lust to give birth in your heart (“when lust hath conceived” – James 1:15). *You give birth to lust when you refuse to put those images out of your mind.* Your own flesh and the devilish crowd of demons (Eph. 6:12) are tempting you, so that you will give birth to lust in your heart. Now remember, the temptation itself is not sin. Even Christ was tempted (Matt. 4:1-11). What is wrong is when we give in to the temptation and allow lust to be spawned in our hearts. This happens when we excessively dwell upon a woman without practicing what we’ve already learned – demolishing the thoughts in our minds (2 Cor. 10:5) and replacing them with truth (John 8:32) and wholesome thoughts (Phil. 4:8).

“Yield not to temptation,  
For yielding is sin.  
Each victory will help you  
Some other to win.  
Fight manfully onward,  
Dark passions subdue;  
Look ever to Jesus,  
He will carry you through.”

There is a story of two monks walking in a drenching thunderstorm. They came to a stream, and it was swollen out of its banks. A beautiful young Japanese woman in a kimono stood there wanting to get to the other side but was afraid of the currents. In characteristic Buddhist compassion, one of the monks said, "Can I help you?" The woman said, "I need to cross this stream." The monk picked her up, put her on his shoulder, carried her through the water, and put her down on the other side. He and his companion went on to the monastery.

That night his companion said to him, "I have a bone to pick with you. As monks, we have taken vows not to look on a woman, much less touch her body. Back there by the river you did both." The first monk said, "My brother, I put that woman down on the other side of the river. You're still carrying her in your mind."

When we are purposely viewing images on TV or in movies, magazines, books (romance novels) that strike evil passions in our hearts, then we are setting wicked things before our eyes, which will take us down. I get tired of hearing the young people say, "I can handle the sexual innuendos of the modern movies. I can control myself. After all, we all have different levels of strengths and weaknesses in our Christian walk." Will the next liar please stand up!

### **3. Run away from sin.**

Sometimes you must run from sin as fast as your feet will take you! 2 Timothy 2:22 gives sound advice to the young generation:

“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

We all remember the story of Joseph. Genesis 39:10-12 records:

“And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.”

Joseph practiced what 2 Timothy 2:22 says, “Flee also youthful lusts.” He fled from the place and person that would cause him to sin. We are commanded to “flee fornication” (1 Cor. 6:18) and “flee from idolatry” (1 Cor. 10:14) and “flee these things” (1 Tim. 6:11) or those things which are sinful and stealing away our loyalty to God. Sometimes the best thing you can do is run away from sin. As a young person, you must make the decision to avoid sin at any cost!

Proverbs 4:14-15 gives this sound advice:

“Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.”

We must take sin seriously today. We should see sin as violating God’s holiness (Hab. 1:13; 1 John 1:5), offending God (Ps. 51:4; Jer. 14:20; Luke 15:18), and take the extreme steps necessary to avoid it. If Proverbs 4:14-15 were obeyed, it would save our young generation of Christians from a multitude of sins. Think about it. If you stay away from the path that leads to wickedness and the way that eventually leads to evil, then you will save your neck. You will save yourself from spiritual defeat. If you do everything to avoid sin, pass by sin, and turn away from sin, then you will keep yourself from committing certain sins that want to continually defeat your spiritual life. If you will build parameters around your life and take the necessary precautions, it’s then that you will be able to have more consistent victory over sin. In fact, in time you will find that you no longer want those things, which you once craved and felt you couldn’t live without. God will change your heart when you learn the secret of running away from those things that are a stumbling block to you.

Someone wrote:

“Learn to ride the horse that threw you.”

As young people you must learn the secret of getting victory over sins that once defeated you. This will be a great blessing and encouragement to your heart. Follow God’s plan for victory and you will be able to overcome instead of being overcome.

“I shall not be, I shall not be moved,  
I shall not be, I shall not be moved.  
Just like a tree planted by the water -  
I shall not be moved!”

## **I. Make your choice to follow God.**

Philippians 2:13 says:

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

Yes, God has given a new nature to every Christian that enables him to desire righteous and holy things (“to will”) instead of the old cravings of the flesh. He has also given every Christian the power to live victoriously (“to do of his good pleasure”). However, you must still choose victory.

### **1. The choice to denounce sin.**

There is an element of the human will that enters into the picture. You can choose victory or choose to sin. “Choose you this day whom ye will serve” (Joshua 24:15). First, the Bible says we can choose to sow to the flesh (Gal. 6:8) and become “sold under sin” (Rom. 7:14). When this happens we will find ourselves doing the very things the new nature is advising us not to do (“what I hate, that do I” – Rom. 7:15). Second, we can choose to renounce “the hidden things of dishonesty” (2 Cor. 10:4) and “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness” (Eph. 5:11) that are trying to overtake our lives. The choice is ours – sowing to the flesh or serving the Master (Jesus Christ).

James 1:14 says:

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”

The temptation can only go so far. We can choose to bring an end to the temptation by standing upon the solid foundation of truth (Matt. 4:11 – “the devil leaveth him”). The temptation will eventually stop when you stifle it with God’s truth and demolish the thoughts that are being placed in your mind by the flesh and Satan (2 Cor. 10:5). However, when you choose to reflect upon the enticement to sin too long, without countering it with truth, you will be lured away by your own lust. Did you catch what the Bible is saying? You are “drawn away,” like a fish following a lure, when you give in to your “own lust.”

Let’s state it like this. You are responsible for your own sin! The devil didn’t make you sin. The old nature didn’t make you sin. You sin because you have chosen to conceive lust in your own heart and follow its deceptive and luscious lure. You have made the active choice to say “yes” to sin and give birth to lust in your own heart. Nobody or nothing made you do it. You did it! Stop passing the buck like Adam and Eve did. Adam blamed the woman for his sin and the woman blamed the devil (Gen. 3:12-13 – “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me” and “the serpent beguiled me”).

Every young Christian can plug God’s victorious plan into his or her life but the bottom line is this: God gives you a choice. Your human will and desire does enter into the picture. God has given you everything you need for victory – new nature, new drives, new determination, and new power. But you still have the gearshift in your hands. You must put the gearshift either in park or in drive. If you park the car, suppress the temptation, and yield to God, you will have victory. If you put the car in drive, then you are going to follow the temptation, and move down the road of sin. When you reflect on any temptation long enough, you will fuel your passions, and start driving the car. When this happens you can be sure that the devil is in the back seat laughing!

Your love for God (Matt. 22:37), His holiness (Lev. 11:44), and the desire to please Him (2 Tim. 2:4) will be the final things that cause you to put the gearshift in park. You will stop the temptation from going further, and not fuel the temptation, by refusing to entertain

thoughts in your mind that lead to defeat, when you truly love the Lord more than your sin. You must choose to sin or honor God with your life. There is no middle ground!

“I will honor God with all my heart,  
I will honor God with all my soul;  
I will honor God for He is worthy!  
I will honor God.  
Honor God with all your might!  
Honor God for it is right!  
Will you honor God?”

Young people, when God has your heart, when you “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart” (Mark 12:30), you won’t sin! Never forget this. When God has your heart, He has everything! A teacher can instruct your head but only God can instruct your heart. Make your choice to love, follow, and honor God instead of sin.

Romans 6:12 says:

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”

Make your choice. Stand your ground. Don’t allow sin to defeat you. You don’t have to sin! You are a victor; not a victim! I’m reminded once again of Daniel’s purposed heart. Daniel “purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself” (Dan. 1:8). We must have a purposed heart that is fixed on honoring God and doing what pleases God (“for I do always those things that please him” - John 8:29). Do you really want to please God with your life?

## **2. The choice to discipline your body.**

Today we are living in an undisciplined, self-centered, “feel-good” relativistic age. Young person, you must make the choice to bring your body under God’s control and reject sin’s control. The Christian life is a disciplined life.

1 Corinthians 9:27

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a

castaway.”

Paul was willing to discipline his life and body in such a way that he would not fall prey to sin. The life of the Christian is a disciplined life. The expression “keep under” means to “give a black eye.” Paul is using an illustration from the athletic world to teach how he was willing to subdue his passions and not allow them to rule and run his life. The point is this. You must deny your body of sinful pleasures and inclinations. There is a volitional aspect to victory. You must say “no” to sin and by God’s power and grace forsake it. Don’t be a run-of-the-mill Christian who takes sin lightly. Discipline your heart and life. You must choose to discipline your body and cleanse yourself from filthiness of the flesh.

2 Corinthians 7:1 says:

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

How can we “cleanse ourselves” from sins that are related to the “flesh” (outer body) and spirit (inner life)? The answer is simple. We must discipline both our inner and outer life. We must say no to sin and yes to God. We must obey God’s truth. When we discipline our lives and make the decision to follow the truth we will cleanse ourselves from filthy living and the chains of sin that are trying to keep us under bondage. Discipline your life!

Winston Churchill once said:

“I spent the first twenty-five years of my life wanting more freedom, and the next twenty-five years of my life wanting more structure, and the last twenty-five years of my life realizing that structure is freedom.”

### **3. The choice to die to sin.**

You must make the choice to die to your sinful inclinations and choose the way of victory over the path of sin. In a very practical sense, every person must make the decision to suppress the evil passions that are seeking to rule their life and reign in their heart.

Jesus said in John 12:24: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Jesus spoke these words in the context of His own personal death (vs. 23) as well as surrender and discipleship (vs. 25-26). *What was true of Christ must be true of His followers.* They must be willing to die. Christ physically died to bring forth the fruit of saved souls whereas His followers must die to their sinful and selfish ambitions to bring forth the fruit of righteous living. In a very practical way, every true follower of Christ must be willing to put to death his own sinful ways, and his own personal plans and goals in life (“he that hateth his life in this world” - vs. 25). This involves a choice! You must be willing to die to the self-life or your sinful patterns of behavior, wrong relationships, the improper use of time, comforts, personal agendas, and completely turn your life over to the control of Jesus Christ.

Like a seed put into the ground, a person must die to self, sin, and Satan’s control over his life. When you surrender your life and body to God you will be able to bring forth godly fruit (vs. 24 - “it bringeth forth much fruit”), experience victory over sin (vs. 25 - “shall keep it unto life eternal” - experience victory and receive reward in the next life), and become a follower of Jesus Christ (vs. 26 - “If any man serve me, let him follow me”). Death to self brings fruit and victory. Living begins with dying! Absolute surrender is the key to breaking the power of sinful bondage, experiencing newfound victory, and producing godly fruit in your life.

Now remember one thing. Christ already died to defeat the power of sin over your life and rose again to give you His own resurrection power to live victoriously over sin (Rom. 6:4-10; Phil. 3:10; Gal. 2:20). You can’t grit your teeth and try to overcome sin by your own strength or power. This will surely lead to your defeat. You can only stand and be victorious in the strength of the Lord (Eph. 6:10).

“Stand up, stand up for Jesus,  
Stand in His strength alone;  
The arm of flesh will fail you  
Ye dare not trust your own.”

Young people, you can't by your own strength die to sinful ambitions and passions, without claiming the victory you already have in Christ. Christ already overcame for you! You are a victor because of what Christ has already done for you. You can "be of good cheer" since Jesus said "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). You "have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14). No amount of striving, human effort, electrical experience, or crying at the front of an altar will ever give you victory. You don't fight *for* victory, you fight *from* victory! You don't *cry* for victory; you *claim* the victory! You must claim the victory you already have in Christ.

All of this is very wonderful and true. However, there is a practical side to your position in Christ. You must surrender and be willing to say "no" to sin and die to your selfish ambitions and sinful passions in life that are seeking to rule your life ("but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" – Rom. 8:13). By the enablement and power of the Holy Spirit you can put to death those sinful passions that are seeking to overcome your life. As a result, you can live in victory and enjoy your spiritual life right now.

Do you really want to cleanse yourself? Do you really want victory? The choice is yours. You can make the choice to obey God right now by relying upon His power and provision for victory. Remember one thing. You only do what you want to do! The ball is in your court. Choose to do right and then sing and shout the victory!

"No foe can daunt me,  
No fear can haunt me,  
On the vict'ry side.  
With Christ within,  
The fight we'll win.  
On the vict'ry side!"

### **m. Confess your sins before God.**

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."

When sin does invade your heart and life you must confess those sins to God. Nobody is perfect (“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves” – 1 John 1:8). A man once told me that he had not sinned for six years. I wanted to talk to his wife! Since sin does “so easily beset us” (Heb. 12:1) and invade our lives we must always be ready to confess our sins to God.

When you “confess” your sin to God, it means that you are saying the same thing about your sin that God says. It means that you are agreeing with God about your sin. Don’t try and whitewash your sin before God. You cannot perfume a skunk! Don’t try and put perfume on your sin! You must agree with God about your sin and see it as a stench in God’s nostrils. Confession of sin means that you name your sin as wickedness before God and tell God what He already knows about your sin. When you confess sin in this manner God promises to forgive you of your sin on the basis of Christ’s shed blood (1 John 1:7).

Someone said:

“The blood of Jesus cannot cleanse us from excuses!”

Don’t view your sins as mistakes, blunders, or errors. You must see them as serious offences in the eyes of a holy God (1 John 1:5; Hab. 1:13). When we truly confess our sins before God He is always “faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Don’t believe the devil’s lie that God won’t forgive repeated sin or that your sin is too great for God to forgive. Our forgiveness is based upon God’s faithfulness and justice which is related to the shedding of Christ’s blood and sacrificial death (1 John 1:7 – “and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”). Christ paid the penalty for all our sins through the shedding of “the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20). The blood will never lose its power! Christ’s blood continually maintains my standing of acquittal before God. For this reason God will always be “faithful” (trustworthy) and “just” (righteous) in restoring a believer’s fellowship with Himself. In other words, because of Christ’s blood God can faithfully and justly forgive our sins and restore our relationship with Himself.

God can provide the believer with forgiveness and restored fellowship in his Christian life based upon Christ's death as the sufficient payment for his sins. Since Christ paid the penalty for our sins, through the shedding of His blood, we can have restored fellowship with God. God is "faithful" and "just" in His dealings with His children based upon Christ's sufficient payment for sin. God can continually cleanse us (1 John 1:7) from the sins that invade our lives and provide repeated cleansing and communion with Himself on the basis of Christ's finished work.

An old Bible student once said to me:

"There is not victory all the way but plenty of victory along the way."

In other words, we are not perfect (1 John 1:8). This is why we need to confess our sins as they invade our lives (1 John 1:9). Immediate confession is very important when you do sin. If you want to stay on the victory side you must confess your sins and "let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).

One day Charles Spurgeon was walking across the street and stopped in the middle of the street to pray. After a brief time of prayer he walked to the other side. A friend asked, "Mr. Spurgeon, I noticed you stopped and paused in the middle of the street to pray. Couldn't you have waited until you got to the other side to pray?" Spurgeon's reply was simple. "I had a thought that came between the Savior and myself and had to make it right."

There is an important lesson to remember when it comes to confession. Keep short accounts with God!

### **Conclusion**

The prophet Isaiah foresaw a weakness and vulnerability in young people when declaring these words in Isaiah 40:30, "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." However, we must read on. Every young person can take comfort in the promise that Isaiah gave in the very next verse.

Isaiah 40:31 records:

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall

mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

God promises to give you eagle’s wings of deliverance. This means you can victoriously soar above life’s temptations, trials, and tensions. Of course, this does not mean that you won’t be tempted. What it means is that you can be victorious through the temptations and not be overcome by them. You can fly above them by God’s strengthening and enabling power and be victorious. God promises to provide eagle’s wings of deliverance for your days of youth. You don’t have to live in the lowlands of defeat. You can soar to higher ground, You can soar above the devil’s temptations and claim the victory.

The Bible says “we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Rom. 8:37). “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14). The Bible says, “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). You are victors – not victims! You can fly above the crowd’s pressure, the cravings of the flesh, the carnal living, the compromising situations, and the cares of this world. God describes your wonderful promise of victory and provision for deliverance as eagle’s wings. Young people, you can fly!

Psalm 103:5 adds this:

“Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

The young person who dwells close to God enjoys continuous renewal and strength for victory much like an eagle remains strong throughout its entire lifetime. Young people, you can be renewed like the eagles! You can also fly with the eagles! God gives you the strength of an eagle and the flight of an eagle! Do you need renewal? Do you need victory? Do you need a lift? If so, then fly away! No, you can’t fly away from your temptations and problems (Ps. 55:6) but you can fly above them! Claim God’s victorious promise. Practice what we have outlined in “God’s Bible Plan for Youth Deliverance” and be sure to share it with someone else.

An offering was being taken at a youth rally. When counting the money the ushers discovered a picture of a young person in the offering plate. Thinking it was a joke the usher threw it on the table.

However, when tossing it he noticed something written on the back. It said, "I have no money to give, but I give myself to God." Have you ever given your picture to God? Have you ever given yourself to God? Have you ever said to God:

    "Take my life, and let it be  
    Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;  
    Take my moments and my days,  
    Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move  
    At the impulse of Thy love;  
    Take my feet, and let them be  
    Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing  
    Always, only, for my King;  
    Take my lips, and let them be  
    Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold,  
    Not a mite would I withhold;  
    Take my intellect, and use  
    Ev'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine:  
    It shall be no longer mine;  
    Take my heart it is Thine own:  
    It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour  
    At Thy feet its treasure store;  
    Take myself and I will be  
    Ever, only, all for Thee!"

Have you ever fully and unreservedly surrendered to God's holy will and purpose for your life? Have you ever given your whole life to God? Be honest when answering these questions.

Romans 12:1 says:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Have you ever presented your body to God for His holy use and purpose? God is looking for a surrendered life that is willing to follow the straight and narrow way. Are you willing to surrender your body and entire life to God? It only makes sense to present your body to God as an act of *holy* service and worship. It's the only “reasonable service” that can be directed toward God in light of what He has done for you.

“O Jesus, Lord and Saviour,  
I give myself to Thee,  
For Thou, in Thy atonement,  
Didst give Thyself for me;  
I own no other Master,  
My heart shall be Thy throne;  
My life I give hence-forth to live,  
O Christ, for Thee alone.”

What is the most important thing in your life? Who is the most important person in your life? Are you ready to put God on the throne of your heart and life? Are you ready to love and follow Him above all else? God and His holy will must come before your selfish goals, plans, and any other person (Luke 14:26). He must be first and followed at all costs (Luke 14:28-33). Are you ready to count the cost and follow the Lord?

Andrew Murray once said:

“I give myself absolutely to God, to His will, to do only what God wants.”

Young person, it's time to change. It's time to give yourself to God, without any strings attached. Caleb said, “I wholly followed the LORD my God” (Josh. 14:8). Are you ready to place yourself on God's altar and wholly follow Him? Are you ready to yield to the Lord? Surrender before God is the starting point for all true and lasting victory. God is looking for a surrendered vessel that is “meet (prepared, consecrated) for the master's use” (2 Tim. 2:21). When you do finally

surrender to God, you will start down a new path of victory, and be able sing these precious words from your heart:

“Filled to overflowing,  
Hearts a-glow and showing  
Christ to those who do not know Him;  
Sanctified and holy, Yielded to Him only,  
Vessels for the Master’s use.”

Your Personal Testimony of Surrender to God

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---