

ABOUT THIS SERIES: CHRIST SUPREME

Today's teenagers and junior youth are living in a new and different world from the one in which most of us grew up. As they look about them and witness the chaos in the world our generation helped to create for them, they have a right to ask straightforward questions and to expect straightforward answers. They are often shocked, confused, and mixed up by the goings-on in the world, but they expect their parents, teachers, and leaders to be clear-minded and logical.

The average teenager today actually wants to be circumscribed in his thinking and conduct, but they want to know why they are expected to do or not do certain things. Many of these questioning youth come from broken homes or homes where only one parent is a church member. They are exposed to constant exhibitions and glamorization of worldly sophistication and crime in all its ramifications. And, sad fact to admit, too many of these youth are left to their own devices while parents go their own ways, live their own lives, and follow their quest to get on in the world.

In the topics/messages and discussions which follow, I am presenting some of the questions most frequently asked by puzzled and bewildered teenagers as they come to us with their problems.

At a recent workers' meeting a union conference president related how he and his wife planned a "day off" each week with their children despite the urgency of their many duties. He told how one day he turned down an urgent request over the telephone to go to a disturbed member's home and listen to his personal troubles, because he had urgent business elsewhere. The fact of the matter was that he had promised his boys to go digging in the creek beds in search of certain minerals and stones which they were currently interested in.

Later that day as they were happily digging in a creek bed in the country, a car came to a halt on the bank of the creek. "Aha," accused the voice of the early morning's telephone conversation "So this is the 'urgent business' you said you were committed to!"

"Yes," agreed the father of the puzzled boys "I had made an appointment with my boys, and I consider it urgent business indeed!" The church member turned away and started up

the engine in thoughtful silence.

It would be good if all of us as parents and leaders would maintain such a relationship with those under our care. We must show an interest in their welfare, play with them, pray with them, and help them to make Christ supreme in their lives.

In the topics/messages and discussions which follow, I am presenting some of the questions most frequently asked by puzzled and bewildered teenagers as they come to us with their problems.

This series was originally written by Wilma Ross Westphal, one of our church's outstanding Women writers. The *Youth's Instructor* carried five of her book-length serials. She has written articles, short stories, and serials for numerous magazines and periodicals. A minister's wife, Mrs. Westphal spent fourteen years as a missionary in the Inter-American Division. Besides teaching in church school, academy, and college, she found time to become a leading interior decorator and also to raise twin girls.



day **1**

CHRIST SUPREME IN THE HEART

PURPOSE: To lead the Junior Youth from worldly attractions to Christ who is the author of love and happiness.

THEME SONG: “Majesty” No. 64, *He Is Our Song*
(Word and music on back page)

BIBLE TEXTS: Psalm 36:9 • Romans 7:15 • 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 • Proverbs 20:1; 31:4, 5

● About 1-2 weeks in advance, give the poem, *The Love of Christ In The Heart*, found at the end of the lesson to someone in the group to read. It should be memorized and read with much expression.

PREPARATION:

● If possible, get a copy of the Book *Issues: Lifestyle and Social* from your local ABC or AdventSource. You may also get in touch with the GC Youth Department for a copy of this book.

● A few days before your program have the young people name some Bible characters who chose their own course of action—rather than allowing Christ to dwell in the heart: Cain, who rebelled against being told what to do in connection with the sacrifices, and ended up as a murderer, Esau, who sold his God—given birth-right when he allowed his appetite to take over and who sired a nation which rebelled against God and His program of salvation for sinners; and others.

“Why should I be a Christian? What is there in it for me? The harder I try, the worse things get. What’s the use of trying any longer?”

It was a young man in his early teens that had come to the quiet of a minister’s home in quest of something he had failed to find in his own home or even in the church he had been attending with his parents.

“Yet, you are trying,” the minister said quietly. “Otherwise, you wouldn’t have come here to talk things over with us.”

The boy looked down to the floor. “Oh, sure; I’ve tried and tried. But no one seems to care, and besides, what’s in it for me?” The boy’s eyes were probing as he turned away.

“What’s in it for you?” the minister repeated. “Why, all eternity is in

drinking, or worrying about worldly things. If you do, that day might come on you suddenly, like a trap on all people on earth.” Luke 21:34, 35. [Have one of the junior youth look up this text and read aloud.]

“If He said that, maybe He’d understand how I feel now,” Phil declared.

“Certainly He understands how you feel,” assured the minister. “The apostle Paul had difficulty along these same lines early in his Christian experience. He mentioned a sort of ‘cold war’ which seemed to be waging in his heart as he cried out in anguish of soul, ‘I do not understand the things I do. I do not do what I want to do, and I do the things I hate.’ Romans 7:15.” [Have a junior youth look up text and read aloud.] “You see,” added

Phil’s particular problem stemmed from confused emotions, and as his thinking cleared and Christ took over his heart his problems dissolved. But there are those in their early teens and younger who, dazzled by the worldly pleasures about them, are led away by their worldly friends into the movies, to dances, and to other questionable places of amusement. There are also those who have seen more than enough of the seamy side of life over an uncontrolled TV set— so much that it makes smoking, drinking, and even gambling seem commonplace enough to become a temptation.

What about our church standards? Are they too strict?

(Open here for a short discussion of church standards, making sure to

Christ is always knocking at our heart’s door; we need only to let Him come in.”

it for you. And with all of your trying, let Christ carry the burden for you. Let Him be the center of your life and dwell in your heart; then see how your whole outlook changes. It’s just as simple as that!”

“There’s nothing simple in this crazy, mixed-up world.” The boy shrugged. “Besides, I don’t know how to...well, to pray and things like that.”

“You do have family worship in your home, don’t you, Phil?” the minister’s wife asked interestedly.

“We used to—sort of. But, well, the folks both work, and I’m in school. We’re always in such a rush. Not enough time, seems like,” Phil said wistfully. “Fact is, I hardly know my folks anymore.”

“Try to get reacquainted with them,” she encouraged gently, “and with the Master. Looking toward future years, Jesus foresaw conditions as they are today. Do you remember reading from His words, “Be careful not to spend your time feasting,

the pastor’s wife, “this is an age-old battle of the heart against evil and wrongdoing. We human beings can’t change the heart, but Christ can if we will allow Him to dwell within. It has to be a daily experience, however, because conditions are constantly changing.”

“Maybe I’m not so different from other people after all,” Phil said hopefully.

The pastor smiled. “Of course you’re not. Christ is always knocking at our heart’s door; we need only to let Him come in.”

The three knelt together, and after a little prayer session Phil put out his hand. “I want to thank you both for taking all this time with me. I haven’t found happiness just drifting along with the crowd, so I want to let Jesus dwell in my heart.”

As Phil left, the pastor extracted a promise from him that he would keep in touch with him and with the Master. Happily it changed the young man’s life completely.

close the discussion with positive facts to back our standards—see *SDA Church Manual*, Chapter 13).

Let us now consider some of these activities as related to an indwelling Christ. Can you imagine Christ with a cigarette hanging from His mouth or from between His fingers as He talked to Nicodemus of the mysteries of being born again? Or can you even think of Jesus holding a glass of beer (or some other strong drink) in one hand while offering the woman of Samaria water from the “fountain of life”? Can you imagine Christ taking sips from that glass while pointing out the sins in her life which had brought her only disillusionment and discouragement? Be honest now; can you? (Ask for a show of hands.)

Still there are young people who because the great majority in the world indulges in such things, seem to take this as a license to go and do likewise. In the first place, smoking and drinking are injurious to the

health, and Christ said that our bodies are the temple of God. “Don’t you know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person, because God’s temple is holy and you are that temple.” [1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.] (Have text read by junior youth.)

You can well see that if we want Christ to dwell in our hearts and to dominate our lives, we cannot corrupt our body temples and expect His Spirit to remain in us.

Ted was born into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but as he entered his early teens he was attracted to worldly friends rather than to those who were his church school friends. One day his parents discovered him behind the garage getting ready to smoke cigarettes. They talked with him and prayed with him, and they did everything they could to keep him both pleasantly and profitably occupied. But, as time passed, Ted

became sullen, balking at any restrictions and making fun of the accepted church standards.

As an academy student Ted showed great potential for public speaking and leadership. But, because he chose to practice a worldly lifestyle with its pleasures and practices, his abilities were not developed. In fact, he barely made it through his academy course without being expelled. It had been the constant hope and prayer of his parents and teachers that he would be influenced by his Christian associates and Christian surroundings and dedicate his life entirely to Christ and to the finishing of His work.

But, in secret, Ted had never given up his contact with nicotine, and as he grew older, he found another companion which he hoped to keep secret—strong drink. (Have junior youth read Proverbs 20:1; 31:4, 5, and discuss briefly.) “Wine and beer make people loud and uncontrolled; it is not wise to get drunk on them.”

(20:1) “Kings should not drink wine, Lemuel, and rulers should not desire beer. If they drink, they might forget the law and keep the needy from getting their rights” (31:2, 5).

There was now no room for Christ in the heart, and in his second year of college Ted was expelled because, unlike Moses of old, he chose “the pleasures of sin for a season” rather than to walk with Christ. Today Ted is wandering from job to job in the world, when his talents all pointed to a successful life.

(Here have the young people name some Bible characters who chose their own course of action rather than allowing Christ to dwell in the heart: Cain, who rebelled against being told what to do in connection with the sacrifices, and ended up as a murderer; Esau, who sold his God-given birthright when he allowed his appetite to take over and who sired a nation which rebelled against God and His program of salvation for sinners; and others.)

WHAT’S SO WRONG?

(Comments of leader here: *How can a Christian afford to associate the type of dancing “for joy” and spiritual rejoicing over a God-given victory with today’s sensuous dances*)

Judy was not to be persuaded that such “beautiful physical exercises”—as she called it—could possibly be wrong. So she took up the free Thursday-night dancing classes at the local high school, and even got physical education credit for the class.

Weeks and months passed, and Judy was swinging along on a tide of artificial excitement and popularity that started with her so-called innocent dancing classes. Soon, however, she identified more and more with the young people with whom she associated at the dancing classes. She began to accept invitations to movies

and the theater. Gradually she separated herself from her church friends. Later she decided that the worldly university was “more on the ball,” as she called it, than our own church colleges, so she enrolled in one.

The next step was almost unavoidable under such circumstances. She became friendly with a worldly young man and married him. Eventually she stopped coming to church. She had two boys and reared them in the world, and for this world. It was only recently, after repeated efforts to rebuild a long-lost friendship, did her former best friend succeed in reminding her of the wonderful times they had together during their academy years. With a nostalgic sigh Judy said, “Those were the happiest years of my entire life, and how little I realized it then!”



“What’s so wrong about dancing? Dancing is graceful, and I’d like to know what’s wrong with doing all in one’s power to be graceful.”

The question was a candid query on the part of Judy, a young teenager who claimed her only interest in this activity was that of becoming “more graceful.” She even quoted Bible texts which she hoped would back up this theory of hers.

“Why,” she insisted, “even King David danced as he came back from a war where he was the victor.”

No one would ever guess today that her ambition in her academy days was to become “a missionary nurse.” Instead, Judy chose the “pleasures of

sin for a season” instead of allowing Christ to dwell in her heart and give direction and eternal purpose to her life.

Close with prayer and time for decision making.

THE LOVE OF
CHRIST
IN THE HEART
by Wilma Ross Westphal

Without the love of Christ within my heart
My life would be as nothing on this earth;
I could not go to church and act the part
Of hypocrite or saint in shameless dearth.
If life should yield to humans nothing more
Than joy and love and peace and pain and grief,
I'd still prefer a humble cottage door
Than fame and wealth without
Christ as my Chief.
Within the scope of social interchange of
Giving and receiving, I'd desire
To bring the meek and humble within range
Of Christ's great gift of love and lift them higher.
Without the love of Christ within my heart,
I could not really live and play the part.



day **2**

CHRIST SUPREME IN MY APPEARANCE

PURPOSE:

To help the Junior Youth realize that there are ways we can carry ourselves as Christians without looking so *peculiar/strange* that we stand out in the crowd.

THEME SONG:

“Majesty” No. 64, *He Is Our Song*
(Word and music on back page)

READINGS:

- Deut. 26:19
- Eccl. 2:8
- *Lifestyle Issues*, pp 25-31
- *Adventist Home*, pp. 462-464

PREPARATION:

About 1-2 weeks in advance, give the poem found at the end of the lesson to someone in the group to read. It should be memorized and read with much expression.

Today we shall discuss different ways by which we can make Christ supreme in our personal appearance without looking odd, or calling undue, undesirable attention to ourselves. Perhaps now, more than at any other time in history, there is a marked tendency for young people to act, walk, talk, eat, and dress like the crowd; in other words, to become carbon copies of their direct associates.

"I want to be one of the crowds," a young girl announced airily to her pastor's wife one day. "I don't enjoy being conspicuous—to look odd and outdated!"

"That's nothing unusual," her older friend answered without shock at her words. "But I have seen crowds which I shouldn't want to even faintly resemble; haven't you?"

In answer, Jackie shrugged her shoulders and smiled uncomfortably while her friend went on. "It isn't wrong to want neither to appear attractive in the right way, nor to dislike being conspicuous in the wrong way."

Jackie's face brightened visibly.

"Then you do understand!" But what do you mean about the right way and the wrong way?" She began tugging nervously at her too-short skirt. The gesture called even more attention to the distance zap from her kneecap to her hemline, and the excessively tight skirt and sweater. "I... I must be hurrying along," she faltered self-consciously.

"Don't hurry off," her friend said, looking away from her attire. "But you are feeling conspicuous right now, aren't you?"

Jackie grinned shyly. "Yes, and I don't know why, because I've always admired the way you dress—well, you know, you don't look like last week's warmed-over hash!

"Well, thanks a lot," the pastor's wife said. "I'm certainly glad of that!"

They both laughed, and the tension was broken.

Jackie began to open and shut her purse in thoughtful rhythm. "I'm not very good at paying compliments" she went on. "At our house we criticize if anything goes wrong—and it usually does—but compliments? Never! Anyway, I have a feeling that you know what I mean. Some people think that if you wear a style that was in vogue ten years ago it's O.K., but that it's a sin to wear a style that's popular today."

"Come over here, and let's sit on this park bench," the older woman said. "You and I have some things to discuss."

Jackie nodded consent, and they sat down. "Some people are like that indeed," the pastor's wife agreed, "and they make themselves conspicuous trying to avoid the extreme in today's styles. Don't forget that God is the Creator of beauty. We do Him dishonor when we dress in such a way that our appearance is slovenly and so outdated that it call undue attention in the wrong way."

"I...I think I begin to see what you mean." Jackie grinned, giving her short skirt another agitated tug. "But you see, you'd look out of place in an outfit such as mine, because I'm a young girl and you're a mature woman!"

"Yes, there is a difference in taste for clothes at different age levels, I agree. But why are you so uneasy in that outfit right now? Could it be that the 'crowd' of which you speak isn't representative of our own high moral standards? Is that the reason you feel comfortable with 'the crowd' and a bit uneasy in my presence?"

"Maybe so." Jackie twisted on the park bench and tugged again at her skirt.

"Relax, dear; I'm not chiding you. I'm merely trying to get you to think

some of these problems through on your own. In the first place, remember that it's your duty and privilege to make the best of your looks. Choose a becoming hair style and keep it always well-groomed. Look for attractive, well-designed clothes, and then use this infallible test: Would I be ashamed or at ease if Christ should appear in person and speak to me?"

"I never thought of it in that way before," Jackie admitted thoughtfully. "I believe I'll go home and sort a lot of things out of my closet and give them away."

And as the two got up to leave, the minister's wife gave Jackie an encouraging pat on the shoulder. "You're going the right way now," she said.

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT



"Why shouldn't I wear fad haircuts if I choose to do so? And what's wrong with baggy pants if it's the style?" Tom, an eighth-grader, asked when his teacher suggested that he get his hair cut and wear better-fitting pants.

"Styles and customs do change," admitted the principal of the school, "but we can't condone extremes one way or the other. Today, clothing for both sexes are more casual than at any other time in history, perhaps. When a change in style is finally a generally accepted custom or fashion, and if the style is not extreme, then, and only then, should we as Christians adopt the style.

"Being one of the crowd is not always commendable," the principal told Tom as the boy stood first on one foot and then the other. "Daniel dared to be different in a heathen land, and at a time and under circumstances which could have cost him his life. But he stood the test—he dared to be

...if the style is not extreme, then, and only then, should we as Christians adopt it.

different! And the story had a happy ending. Lions' mouths were closed by God because he stood for principle! And the three Hebrew boys were honored by God for standing for right because it was right; they were cast into a fiery furnace, and yet their lives were spared, and they were honored above magicians and wise men of the court, because they did not follow the crowd. These and many more young men, like Joseph, dared to be different!"

"Yes, but...well, I'm not really hurting anyone if I wear my hair this way, or if I want to wear baggy pants and all that. I consider it my own personal affair; no one should dictate to me what I should wear or where I should wear it. It's my own business, isn't it?" the youth persisted sullenly.

"Not as long as it causes other students to lose balance, to lay aside books in favor of long discussions about attire. When our appearance is conspicuous to the point of causing unfavorable comment, then it most certainly becomes the business of others."

"You mean I'll have to...well...er...get a haircut and wear pants that's my size if I'm to remain in school?" Tom wanted to know.

"I'm afraid so, Tom. You see, this is a Christian school, and when you sign for registration, you automatically agree to follow school regulations."

"Guess I'll have to leave, then. But the regulations didn't say I had to wear my hair and pants any certain way. Well---er---good-bye." Tom turned slowly and started toward the door.

"What happened to your pants, Tom?" the principal asked quietly.

Tom put his hand to his back, and his colored. "Just---er---it got caught on the ---it got caught on something and ripped, I guess. It was an---an accident, that's what it was."

"An accident caused from wearing pants that are too baggy---with no belt on either---that's falling halfway down your legs when you walk, eh, Tom?"

"Well, er---it's a big rip, and everyone will notice it. Can I sit here in your office for the rest of the day?"

"You are going to feel a little conspicuous on your way home, aren't you Tom?"

Tom turned, went over to the chair by the principal's desk and sat down. "I was just thinking that since I have to buy new trousers anyway, I might as well get better fitting ones and stay in school. And I suppose I can get a haircut too while I am at it."

"I'm sure you'll not regret it, Tom. By the way, would you like a lift home?"

"I sure would, and thanks a lot," he said as the two left through the back door and made for the parking lot. "I've got a confession to make," he added as they drove off. "I used to want to become a missionary someday when I finished my education, but lately---since I rigged myself up in this gear and started wearing my hair like this---I---well, I almost forgot all about being a missionary and all that. Guess that's why my folks sent me here in the first place instead of to the local high school. My family has been a little worried about me lately. Thanks for helping me back on the right track. Makes me feel a lot better inside, too," he added with a grin.

"Be room for Christ in your heart again now, son. Right?"

"Yes, Sir. Things will be different from now on."

A BETTER REASON

"My parents tell me I shouldn't wear jewelry or makeup, and that I shouldn't wear tight or too skimpy clothes and things like that, because it's against the principles of the church. Shouldn't there be a better reason than this?" a young teenager moaned one day.

A little more explicit explanation might help us reason from cause to effect. There is, of course, a good logical reason for our church standards. The church represents Christ's teachings here on earth, and if we as His followers and representatives dress to look like the world, we certainly can't direct others in the pathway to the kingdom of heaven. (Have another short discussion on church standards: "Adventist Home," pp. 462-464. Select significant paragraphs having to do with the subject.)

A successful attorney was surprised one day when his young daughter burst into his office and complained that a man had insulted her as she was walking along the street. "It was awful, Daddy," she said furiously; "and I think there should be a law against such things!"

"Daughter, if you don't want to be insulted, take down the signs! If you do that and act ladylike, no one will insult you."

The young teenager looked startled, then angry. "Why, what do you mean take down the signs? Don't

you care what happens to your own daughter?"

"I certainly do care—more than I can express. But I've noticed that you are dressing pretty much as the crowd dresses—you know, low-cut in front,

sleeveless, and too tight, and far too short. When a girl dresses like that, she can expect to be insulted."

If the respected leaders and thinkers even of the world are concerned over the lack of moral standards in

dress, why shouldn't we, as a church, be much more concerned over such matters?

(Use a few moments for prayer and reconsecration to church standards in dress, etc.)

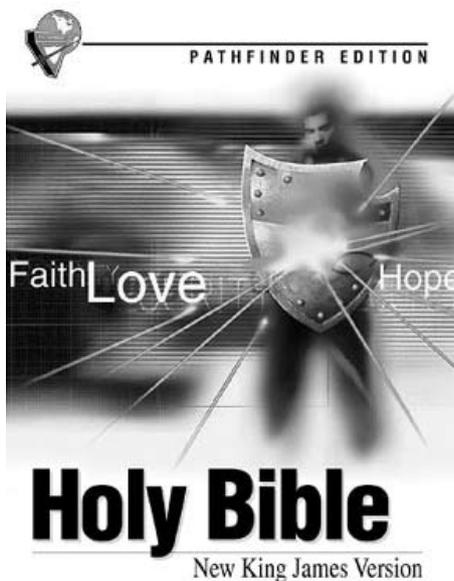
CHRIST IN MY APPEARANCE



If I have Christ within my heart, I'll surely dress to look the part.
The worldly styles which are extreme don't add one thing to His esteem.
Though wandering eyes such may attract, from Christian graces they detract.
In dress I'll never choose a style which causes either sneer or smile.
Though simple beauty we admire,
Undue extremes in one's attire may cause some soul to deviate
And lose the path to heaven's gate.
I'd like to dress in such a way—whether at my work or play—
I'd never be ashamed to meet Christ's scrutiny from head to feet!
Our dress should always represent the One we know is heaven-sent!



—WILMA ROSS WESTPHAL.





day **3**

CHRIST SUPREME IN MY SOCIAL LIFE

- PURPOSE: To help the Junior Youth realize that there are ways we can carry ourselves as Christians without looking so *peculiar/strange* that we stand out in the crowd.
- THEME SONG: “Majesty” No. 64, *He Is Our Song*
(Word and music on back page)
- READINGS:
- 2 Cor 6:14, 15
 - Isa 30:21
 - Matt 9:10-13
 - *Lifestyle Issues*, pp. 65-67
- PREPARATION: About 1-2 weeks in advance, give the poem found at the end of the lesson to someone in the group to read. It should be memorized and read with much expression.

“A ray of sunshine, a balmy breeze
Are gifts from our Father above.

But He also gives us friends
To warm our hearts with love.”

Today we shall consider another aspect in our relationship to Christ. On Monday we talked about making Christ supreme in our hearts, and yesterday we discussed the importance of putting Him first in our personal appearance. Today we are going to consider the importance of making Christ supreme in our social life.

“Why shouldn’t we ‘go steady’ even if I am barely in my teens? My parents are too old-fashioned. We’re not living back in the horse-and-bug-gy days!”

This outburst came from an attractive, wide-eyed thirteen-year-old girl still in church school. She was in dead earnest, and she expected a logical, honest answer. Sue was determined that her case was different, that there were no dangers lurking along the pathway of such an immature friendship which involved going steady.

(At this point the leader might ask several of the junior youth to express their views on this all-important subject of friendships and going steady. Such a discussion will be varied and revealing and will serve as a springboard for the presentation of the dire and far-reaching results so often suffered by the young who enter into such a relationship before they are mature enough to realize what life is all about.)

Shirley was an attractive young junior who had a zest for life and a winsome personality. Both parents were working, and they paid little attention to Shirley’s social activities, feeling that as long as she was in church school there was nothing to be concerned about. As a matter of fact, she was often permitted to stay overnight with Mary Evans, who was a schoolmate and close friend. At Mary’s

home there was even less supervision than there was at Shirley’s home, so the two girls began to respond to the attentions of two older boys from the local high school, and they often went for rides with these boys.

Shirley and Mary began to feel rather sophisticated and grown-up, deeming themselves capable of making their own decisions and resenting any interference from either parents or teachers. But the time came when Shirley’s parents began to realize that they seldom saw their daughter and that she was undergoing a complete change in outlook and personality which was not for the better. They decided to have a talk with her.

“Where are you going, Shirley?” they asked one night as she started for the door as usual.

“I’m going to Mary’s. Why? What’s suddenly so wrong about that? You’ve always liked Mary. We’re in the same classes at school, and we like to study together.”

“From the looks of your grades lately, it’s obvious that you don’t spend much of your time studying. Why don’t you invite Mary over here part of the time as you used to do? We have never deprived you of friends, you know.”

“I can’t change plans now, Mom. We were going to study some, and then go out for icecream or something. Anything wrong with that?”

“After this, Shirley, you are to stay at home unless special permission is granted. We, as your parents, have a right to know where you are, who you are with, and what you’re doing,” her father said with finality.

“Why the sudden interest in my activities? You’ve never seemed to care before. Besides, I’m a person, and I have my rights, and... .”

Her father cut in. “Because we are your parents, and we are responsible for your future—what you are now,

and what you make of yourself as you grow up.

“I’m already grown up,” Shirley snapped as she opened the door and went out, letting the door slam in their faces.



Dumbfounded, Shirley’s parents looked at each other, then sat down and had a long talk. At the end of their discussion, they had reached several important decisions, which were to be carried out as soon as Shirley returned home from school the very next day. They also decided to get acquainted with Mary’s parents and find out just what the two young girls were doing with their evenings. Subsequently, they paid a visit to the Evans home, but the girls had already gone out.

“Do you mean,” Shirley’s father asked in a startled tone, “that you permit the girls to go out on the streets alone at night?”

“Of course not,” Mrs. Evans said airily. “You must know that they’ve been going out with two very nice-looking young men from the high school. They’re quite the heroes of the football team, and, well, we think it is helping the girls to have more poise and self-confidence.”

“How long has this been going on? You know we want our Shirley to graduate from church school this year and eventually to graduate from college. This foolish notion of running around unchaperoned with any

The teenage years should be spent developing your physical and mental powers and cultivating christian friendships which help develop poise, grace and a pleasing personality.

boys is bad enough, but with boys who are not in the church is unthinkable. And it has to stop where Shirley is concerned. We are both working to put our children through school and to prepare for life, and eventually for marriage with a home and children. All one has to do these days is pick up the daily papers or listen to the news broadcasts to know the outcome of unsupervised and unchaperoned teenagers!" Shirley's father was now quiet worried as to what might be happening, even as they were speaking.

"They're just kids and couldn't possibly be serious. There's really nothing to worry about. They've been going out with Tom and Bill for months now, and nothing has ever happened to them. We thought you knew about the boys," Mrs. Evans added coolly.

"If this is the state of affairs, then Shirley is to stay at home from now on," he stated, turning to his wife. She nodded, and they left for home.

In the months that followed Shirley was closely supervised in all her school and social activities, while her friend, Mary, was permitted the continued "going steady" with Tom. A year later, however, Tom and Mary eloped and were married in Nevada. She knew now that she didn't love Tom, but she couldn't face her parents as an expectant mother without being married.

Of course, Mary's parents were heartbroken at such unexpected developments in the innocent social activities of their little girl Mary. "Why," her mother exclaimed, "Mary's not

fifteen years old yet. The idea of her becoming a mother at such an age is unthinkable! One hears of such things happening all of the time, but to other people—not to us or to our Mary!"

"I just wish you had put restrictions on me like Shirley's parents did on her!" Mary exploded. "Shirley's going to the academy now. She has lots of friends, and she's making good grades. And she has good, clean fun, too. They have group activities, and she's learning to be a real leader. She says she's going on to college and prepare to become a teacher or a missionary. Why didn't you see the danger I was in and protect me as Shirley's parents did her? Isn't that what parents are for?" The young girl buried her face in her hands and wept bitterly for a while. Then she raised her head and faced her mother. "My life is ruined, simply ruined! And you could have protected me from this. I don't love Tom, and he says frankly that he doesn't love me, either, and that he is now stuck with a wife and child! He was someone to run around with and have fun with, but I surely didn't plan on marrying him."

"If I'd only known, dear," her mother said ruefully. "But you were so determined, and he seemed like a nice young man! We--well, your daddy and I trusted you."

"Kids like to feel that their parents know what's best for them, and they like to know that they're restricted, and just what the restrictions are. You never told me of any dangers. You just acted as if you were proud that I could

attract someone like Tom. I even heard you brag about it one time!"

"Even parents make mistakes. Please try to forgive us, Mary," her mother pleaded.

"Too late now. The damage is already done, and I'll have a whole lifetime to pay for my mistakes," Mary cried bitterly.

And, sad to say, Mary is still paying for her mistake of going steady while she was far too young. Youth is a time to prepare for life and for a true life companion. Every young person's ideals and ideas change as he grows older and matures in his thinking and in his outlook on life in general.

The teenage years should be spent developing your physical and mental powers and cultivating Christian friendships which help develop poise, grace and a pleasing personality. These precious years should be busy years, but free from the burdens of parenthood and running a household. Statistics show that the happiest marriages and the lasting ones are more likely to be those entered into in the twenties, rather than in the teens.

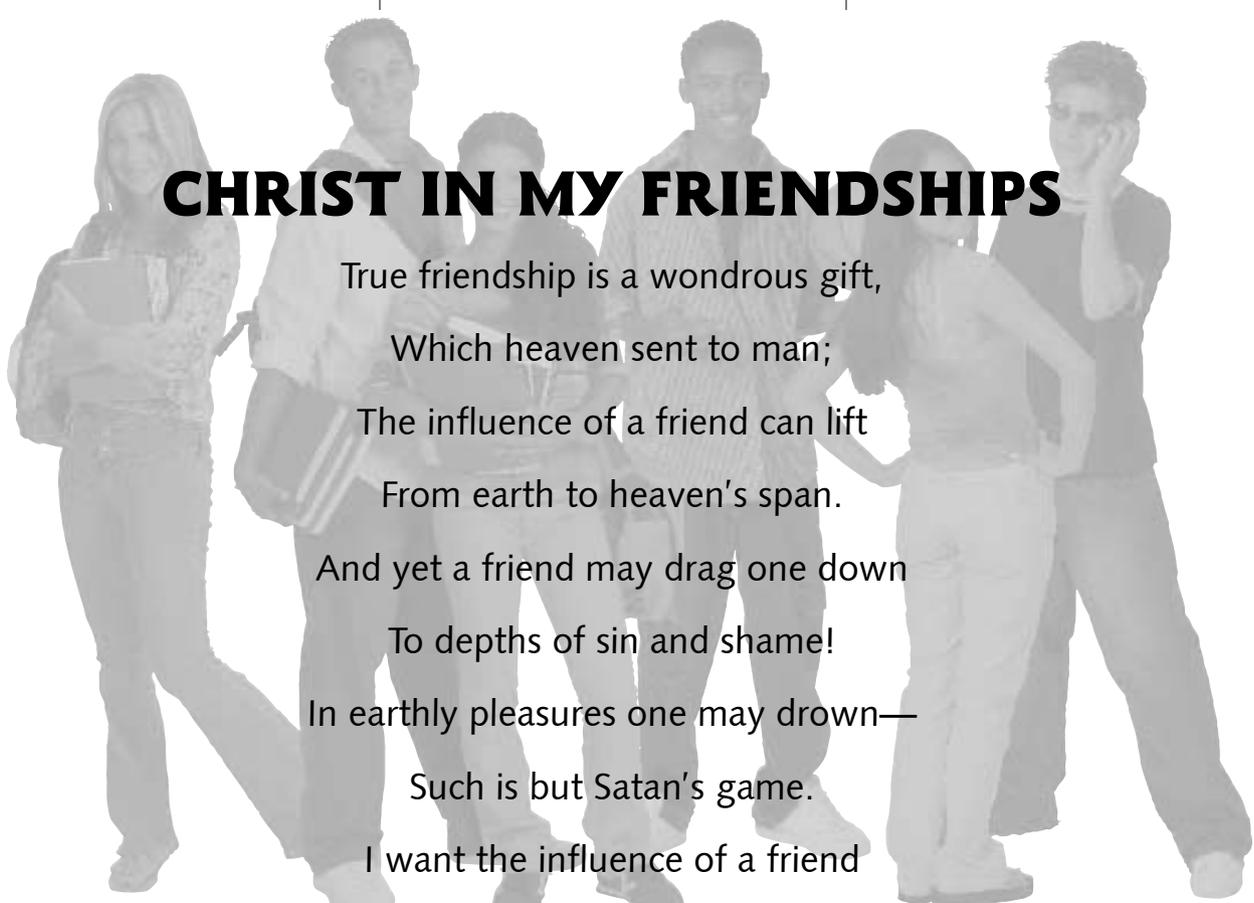
This is because the mature young Christian has had ample time to develop his physical and mental powers sufficiently, time to cultivate wholesome friendships and to develop Christian ideals. Such young people generally learn to work with their hands as well as with their minds. He has had time to attain a certain degree of independence along financial lines, too, and this is very important; many marriages fail because one or both of the parties involved have not learned the value of money on their own. A young person should frankly and honestly prepare for marriage along with securing an education along professional lines.

A young person approaching marriageable age has a right to expect to meet someone with high moral stan-

dards to match his own. Marriage is not just a garment to be thrown aside if it doesn't quite suit the fancy; it is for life, "for better or for worse, until death do us part." Marriage is not only finding the right person; it is also being the right person. The success of a marriage depends largely on what you plan to do with your life from this

day onward. It depends upon meeting problems and temptations which will sometimes set you apart as a "square" or a "prig," but if you make Christ supreme in your social life, this cannot touch the real you, and you will not mind being a little different while you are preparing for one of life's greatest gifts—Christian marriage!

(Close the meeting by asking the junior youth to consecrate their social activities and choices of friends to Christ. Additional helps along these lines may be found in "The Adventist Home," page 455.)



CHRIST IN MY FRIENDSHIPS

True friendship is a wondrous gift,
Which heaven sent to man;
The influence of a friend can lift
From earth to heaven's span.
And yet a friend may drag one down
To depths of sin and shame!
In earthly pleasures one may drown—
Such is but Satan's game.
I want the influence of a friend
Who'll help through thick and thin;
Who'll boost morale, but never send
Me back to paths of sin.
I wish to walk from day to day
With friends who choose the right;
So those beholding may not say
I've lost the Christian's Light!

—WILMA ROSS WESTPHAL



day **4**

CHRIST SUPREME IN MY LIFEWORK

- PURPOSE:** To help the Junior Youth realize that there are ways we can carry ourselves as Christians without looking so peculiar/strange that we stand out in the crowd.
- THEME SONG:** “Majesty” No. 64, He Is Our Song
(Word and music on back page)
- READINGS:**
- Deut. 26:19
 - Jer. 1:5; Eccl. 2:8
 - Titus 2:14
 - *Education*, chapter titled “*Science and the Bible*,” p. 128
- PREPARATION:** About 1-2 weeks in advance, give the poem found at the end of the lesson to someone in the group to read. It should be memorized and read with much expression. Have several youth find other examples of Bible characters whose lives were dedicated to God and His service.

**"The
happiest place
on earth for me is
where my Lord would have
me be; the happiest thing
that I can do is work my
Lord has called me to."
—Author Unknown**

Today we are going to discuss quite another aspect of our relationship to our Maker, Christ. We have already considered the importance of making Christ supreme in the heart, in our personal appearance, and in our social life and friendships. But as we grow older and begin to think about our lifework—what we wish to make of our lives or what profession to prepare for—we should again take Christ into our confidence and ask Him to guide us in this all-important decision. Our Creator bestows special gifts and talents on each of His children, and it is our duty as well as our privilege to cultivate the gifts He so graciously gives us.

Let us name a few of the professions which we, as Christians, can follow with Christ as our Guide and Helper, and with His blessing. (Have the junior youth name some of the professions which come readily to mind, such as teaching, nursing, medicine, ministerial work, Bible work, secretarial, bookkeeping, mechanical, architectural, interior design, electronics, art work, counseling, welfare work, etc. Have the young people write down their own preferences and natural leanings on slips of paper, then discuss the merits of each profession, stressing the fact that God is the center and the source of all knowledge, and that real success in one's work cannot be measured by worldly standards or by the acquisition of wealth. Also point out the fact that there is decided merit in physical labor, or in the arts and

crafts which require mechanical skill or physical exertion.)

Christ worked in His father's carpentry shop while He was growing up, and He did not downgrade menial labor. Some have special talents along mental and scientific lines, or in literary subjects, while others are natural teachers, nurses, or preachers. But each should carefully and prayerfully cultivate their own God-given talent.

God used the humble fishermen who consecrated their lives to Him and to His service, where some of the more highly educated of His time could not be used in His work because their lives were self-centered instead of being Christ-centered. This is the element which makes all the difference between failure and success in God's cause. Some outstanding examples are Peter, James, and John, who were humble fishermen when Christ first called them into His service; but they became mighty leaders in spreading the gospel as they consecrated their lives to God. On the other hand, there was Judas, who was more sophisticated and highly educated, but he failed because his life was self-centered; he cared more for financial gain than he did for success in spreading the gospel of Christ.

Samson was given super-physical strength, but he wasted many years in self-indulgence instead of accomplishing the work that God designed he should do. And there was the boy David, whom God used to slay the giant Goliath with only a slingshot and some small stones as a weapon. His task was accomplished because David had given his heart to God and had chosen early to follow His plan for his lifework. And because he was faithful to Christ while young God used him mightily as king and ruler of Israel, as long as he made Him the center of his life.

(Have junior youth cite other examples of Bible characters whose lives were dedicated to God and His service and who thus, were able to accomplish outstanding things in the important work God had given them to do.)

SPACE TRAVEL

"My parents are old-fashioned," Bobby complained one day. "We are now living in the Space Age, and I want to be a part of it. Just think what science has accomplished in recent years! All of this talk about the power of religion is outdated. I plan to go places—maybe to the moon someday!" He became carried away with his own enthusiasm.

"Why, that's fine, Bob," his aunt said with a lift of her brow. "And I plan to space-travel much farther than that someday."

Bob stopped in his tracks, then turned and gave her one of those looks designed to cut her down to size. The very idea of his aunt being interested in space travel seemed preposterous. "You? Why, you've got to be kidding!" he said haughtily.

"No, I'm deadly serious," she answered emphatically.

"But, you haven't studied science as a profession! You do church work, and I must admit you know how to make a house beautiful, but I can't imagine you in a space capsule!" Bobby guffawed.

"Nevertheless"—she smiled placidly—"I'm definitely planning on space travel in the not-too-distant future!"

Bobby sat down on a comfortable chair and gazed across at her. "I might have known," he said tonelessly. "That religion stuff again!"

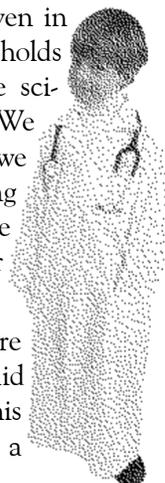
"And where do you think science came from? Merely because God has permitted human beings—beings He Himself created—to uncover some of His previously-hidden scientific se-

crets is no sign that He isn't behind it all. The Bible foretells a time like this, a time when 'many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased' (Daniel 12:4) And another thing, He has designed that man's mind be tuned to space travel now, in the time of the end, and just before He returns to this world to take His chosen ones up through space, through the star-studded caverns of Orion, to our heavenly home. He would like to use the scientists and the so-called wise of earth to help proclaim the good news of His soon-coming, but more often He has to use the humble, less-educated ones to accomplish His purpose. What a pity that more of these cannot be used in proclaiming the gospel; if their lives were really dedicated to God, then they would be a power unto salvation. This, of course, doesn't mean that we shouldn't educate ourselves fully and prepare to do His work efficiently. It only means that when people put all their faith and lives into building up their own names, they cannot be used of God."

"I hadn't thought of it in that way, but I guess you're right. I like science though, and what chance does a Seventh-day Adventist Christian have of making any real headway in such a field?"

"If you pray for God's guidance, and He leads you along these lines, you may be sure that there will be a work for you to do, even in scientific fields. God holds all the secrets of true science in His hands. We limit ourselves only as we refrain from allowing Christ to reign supreme in our lives and our work."

"I suppose you're right again," Bobby said as he went back to his room to tinker with a defective radio set.



(For further discussion on this phase, choose some pertinent paragraphs from the book 'Education' chapter titled "Science and the Bible," page 128.)

HE WHO WOULD BE GREAT

"I want to be well-educated and looked-up-to when I choose my life-work. My dad is a mechanic; and when he comes home from work, he's tired out and his hands and clothes are grimy and greasy. Besides, he never finished high school, and he doesn't care to read much or to discuss current trends or progressive subjects. I'm often ashamed to bring my friends home, and he gets his feelings hurt because of it. What is your advice, Pastor?"

The pastor smiled at the young teenager before him. "Just see to it that you are a credit to your parents, and quit worrying about whether they are a credit to you. Perhaps the real reason you are being sent to school and your parents are sacrificing to do it is because they want you to have something they didn't have the chance to have—a good education.

"It was Mark Twain who commented on how much his father had learned between the time Mark Twain left his home at the age of sixteen and his homecoming at the age of twenty-one! I shall leave it to you to judge just who had learned the most during those years. Perhaps your choice of a lifework isn't along mechanical lines, but your father has the reputation of being the best mechanic in his community, and you can well be proud of that!"

The young boy moved uneasily in his chair and muttered, "Guess you're right."

"In regard to being well-educated and looked up to, Christ once said, 'Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave' (Matt 20: 27), and

again, 'Those who try to hold on to their lives will give up true life. Those who give up their lives for me will hold on to true life' (Matt 10:39)."

(Ask the junior youth what they think these words of Christ mean, and open it up for a short discussion.)

There was once a seamstress who was poor and humble, but she took pride in her work, for she said that she did her sewing so well that even a seam would not rip out, and that no one would have to do her work over. "I try to put my Christianity into my work," she added meaningfully.

No matter what one chooses as a profession, one should prepare for it as well as possible. Then it should be done to the glory of God, and it will carry His blessing.

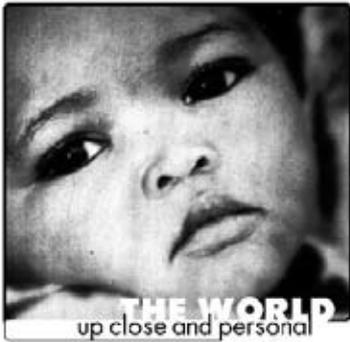
"Why are so many Christians poor?" one youth asked. "Is it wrong to want to make money?"

There are those, of course, who are poor managers and are consequently poor in this world's goods. But, conversely, there are those who choose to be poor in this world's goods so that they can give most of their possessions to support the spreading of the gospel and thus "But store your treasures in heaven where they cannot be destroyed by moths or rust and where thieves cannot break in and steal them." (Matt 6:20.)

There are also those who make a god of their ability to make money, and this is wrong. Money is useful only as it brings about good in the world. It is not money itself that is evil, but rather the "love of money" which is "the root of all evil." (I Tim 6:10.) A person who has dedicated his lifework to God and to the spreading of the gospel in the earth will give cheerfully and willingly to the support of His work, and in turn God says: "I will open the windows of heaven for you and pour out all the blessings you need." (Malachi 3: 10.) (Have a junior read this text.)

A truly successful and happy life is one that is dedicated to others. This is beautifully expressed in the little stanza "Lord, help me live from day to day in such a self-forgetful way that even when I kneel to pray, my prayer shall be for others."

(Close the session by a short consecration service in which the junior youth dedicate their talents to God and to His service; have one of the youth offer the closing prayer.)



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IF GOD SHOULD CHOOSE MY WORK

***If God should choose the work He has for me,
I'm sure I shall not fail at what I do.***

His choice may lead through ways I cannot see

At present; yet His way I would pursue.

The world may beckon-dazzle-even call

For talent which my God to me has given;

But if I follow Christ,

I must give all And trust that through my work

I'm nearer heaven.

Could I but see beyond this present life,

The end from the beginning well discern,

I'm sure I'd live above this worldly strife,

And God would teach me lessons

I should learn.

If God should choose the work He has for me,

I'm sure 'twould tell for all eternity!

WILMA ROSS WESTPHAL.



day **5**

CHRIST SUPREME IN MY LIFE

PURPOSE:

To help the Junior Youth realize that there are ways we can carry ourselves as Christians without looking so *peculiar/strange* that we stand out in the crowd.

THEME SONG:

“Majesty” No. 64, *He Is Our Song*
(Word and music on back page)

READINGS:

- Prov 22:6
- Mark 16:15
- Isaiah 8:20
- *Adventist Youth Lifestyle Series, # 9* (youth.gc.adventist.org)

PREPARATION:

Review discussion questions at end of lesson. Be prepared to have an interactive session with the youth. Allow time for them to ask questions and elaborate.

Now we have come to the last day of our week together. It has been a good week. Let us bow our heads in a special prayer that God will be present with us again on this occasion. *(Say short prayer)*

BEFORE CHRIST CAN REALLY BECOME THE CENTER OF OUR LIVES AND REIGN SUPREME, WE MUST FIRST SUBMIT OUR WILLS TO HIM AND ASK HIM TO TAKE US AS WE ARE, TO CHANGE US INTO THE KIND OF PERSONS HE WOULD HAVE US BE.

We have to accept by faith the fact of His transforming power, just as we accept by faith the fact that the lights will come on in a room if we turn on the light switch. This means that we make Christ supreme in our hearts, as we discussed the topic on Monday. *(Review some of the changes this naturally makes in the life of an individual.)*

If Christ becomes supreme in our hearts, then as a natural result our appearance will proclaim to the world that we are Christians; and since Christ dwells within our hearts, our outward appearance will reflect the indwelling Christ. This will not be a sacrifice on our part, because our greatest desire will be to please Him both in our actions, which come from the heart, and in our dress, which reflects His Spirit within. Does this mean that we will become careless in our appearance, sloppy and unattractive? Christ would have us be attractive in the RIGHT WAY. *(Review*

briefly some of the things discussed on Tuesday concerning appropriate attire for the true follower of Christ. Have some of the juniors tell some of the ways this might best be accomplished.)

On Wednesday we talked about our associations and our friendships which make up our social life. What kind of friends do you feel you will attract if Christ is really dwelling in your heart, and your appearance truly represents Him? *(Discuss briefly the church social standards as presented on Wednesday. This daily repetition will help to impress upon young minds the principles of true Christian living.)*

If, then, we have Christ within our hearts, and our appearance is neat and attractive without being gaudy and worldly, and our associations and friendships are also Christian, what effect will all of this have upon our choice of a lifework? *(Take a few moments to list some of the professions a Christian can safely follow.)*

What is the aim of a true follower of Christ, whether a worker in the organization or as a lay member of the church? "Go everywhere in the world, and tell the Good News to everyone" (Mark 16:15). Can a lay member of the church preach the gospel? *(Make a list on the chalkboard, the poster, or on the screen/PowerPoint Presentation of the numerous ways this can be done, such as living our religion before our neighbor, peers, classmates and teachers. Also in our social contact and by doing unto others as we would have them to do unto us; by holding Bible studies and Voice of Junior Youth Campaigns and participating in the various service projects in the community and/or a mission trip. How may Junior members help in preparing for their lifework, and in spreading the gospel? Examples: Through accepting parts on the AYS program, in Sabbath School; by studying the lesson daily; in being re-*

spectful and thoughtful of others; in being cheerful and happy each day; by entering into family worship periods both morning and evening, etc.)

All of the subjects we have been discussing from day to day are important and essential in making Christ supreme in our lives; all of these—through the infinite grace of God—merge to make up a Christian's life; therefore we cannot place too much emphasis on these things.

One junior youth came out with the following question not long ago on a panel discussion at an AY meeting: "How do we know that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the right one when there are so many, and they all differ in their beliefs?"

Can you answer this question? If not, why not? As true followers of Christ, we should devote time each day to Bible study, and we should never open the Bible without first bowing our heads to ask for guidance in its study. In this way we shall store up treasures of spiritual wisdom and knowledge. The Bible is God's letter of instruction to His earthly children, and unless we study this letter, or book of instruction, we shall never be able to discern right from wrong, truth from error. God says, "You should follow the teachings and agreement with the Lord. The mediums and fortune-tellers do not speak the word of the Lord, so their words are worth nothing." Isaiah 8:20. *(Allow a junior youth to read the text, then discuss its meaning.)*

Can we believe one part of the Bible because it happens to strike the fancy, and disbelieve another part, then expect to have Christ supreme in our lives? This, of course, would be impossible. *(Have a short discussion here.)*

Another junior youth came out with the following question, which was discussed at length by members

of the panel: “Aren’t young people overprotected in our church schools, academies, and colleges? Doesn’t such close supervision and protection by strict rules and regulations work against them when they finish school and come face to face with the world and its temptations and problems?”

(Under the careful guidance of the leader, some of these questions may best be handled through a panel discussion, giving the young person the questions to look up and study ahead of time. The one who leads out in these daily talks should guide and add to these discussions.)

protection of our own schools and Christian associates, so that we might become strong enough to detect truth from error when we encounter it, as all of us have to as long as we live on this earth. If you don’t have the privilege to study in a Church school we still encourage you to look for Christian influence and fellowship.

We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy, that before the end of time many bright lights will go out. Do you think this happens all at once? Do you believe that the individual in question suddenly came up against a tempta-

our lights shine, but we can’t do that by participating in the world’s so-called pleasures and “little sins” and expect to win souls to Christ or to maintain our own moral standards.

“What’s wrong with gambling now and then, especially if one wins frequently and uses the money, or some of it, for tithes and offerings?” This question, though rather startling, came from a teenager named Jim, who could have fit perfectly into your age group.

His parents had thought it only innocent fun for him to feed nickels into a slot machine at the county fair, with the hope of winning—the jackpot now and then. The occasional winning of the jackpot stimulated a taste for gambling for bigger stakes in Reno and Las Vegas. Now, the parents are shocked and filled with anxiety because Jim, in spite of his Christian upbringing, is losing interest in religious and worthwhile activity and has taken to a life of crime. Although still a minor, he was twice apprehended for stealing small amounts of money from cash registers, and later for being an accomplice in armed robbery.

Today Jim is most unhappy, and in place of an indwelling Christ and a life dedicated to God and the spread—ing of the gospel in the earth, a quite different spirit dominates his life. He is critical of his parents (who now see their mistake and have tried with bitter tears to rectify it), and he is prone to criticize and blame the church members and leaders for the predicament he is now in. This is always the result of a self-centered life—unhappiness results, and then the blame is always placed upon someone else, and especially the church and its leaders.

And while we are talking of gambling, we have the pitiful example of Judas, who gambled the life of his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Oh, he argued that Christ could perform a miracle and escape, and the treasury



TRAIN UP A CHILD

God plainly states, “Train children how to live right, and when they are old, they will not change.” (Prov 22:6) Also, statistics prove that those who have had a good home background, and have been trained in our schools and colleges, are more apt to become valuable workers in God’s vineyard. The governments of the countries, in training workers to distinguish true money from the counterfeit, permit them to study mainly the true one; thus, when they come across the counterfeit they will be able to detect it immediately. This is also true in our Christian lives; we should seek the

tion that overcame him completely and thus left the paths of righteousness? No, the process is a slow letting down of the standards, of allowing little sins to take over the life, until truth is undistinguishable from error, and the unfortunate victim of Satan’s wiles falls out by the way.

If we place just one rotten apple in a pan of good ones, the good ones soon start the process of spoilage. We wouldn’t think of putting one good apple in a box filled with half-rotten ones and expect the rotten ones to suddenly change over to good ones, would we? So it is with the Christian life. We are placed in this world to let

would be thirty pieces of silver better off! But it didn't turn out that way. Judas, realizing the enormity of his crime, lost even his own self-respect and not only lost his Lord but his hope for eternal life in the earth made new. Ananias and Sapphira gambled with some property which had belonged to them originally. They had promised to give it to the cause of Christ to further the spreading of the gospel in their day. But they got to thinking of it, and they allowed thoughts of covetousness and greed for this world's goods to gain the upper hand. As a result, they not only lost their lives on this earth but also in heaven.

You will recall that Esau forgot that his life belonged to God, and he gambled his birthright and lost his hold on eternal things. He lived

only for the moment—the present, so to speak—and his life was self-centered instead of Christ-centered. Joseph, on the other hand, was sold into bondage, and he could well have become bitter over the treatment he had received from his brothers. But his early training bore fruit, and he avoided even the appearance of evil. As a result of his God-centered life, he became ruler over Egypt, rewarded his brethren good for evil, and accomplished much good in his adopted country; and through his faithfulness, he gained a right to enter the pearly gates.

God has given each one of you this morning the power of choice. He doesn't force anyone to serve Him, for He wants a willing service that comes entirely from the heart. He

has given you talents, and He distributes His blessings to the good and to the evil in the earth. You will not fall dead if you make a wrong decision but God's Spirit will work with you and try to make you see the error of worldly ways. However, what you do with your life will be up to you. Christ died to save you from a life of sin and unhappiness, and He will take a small seed of faith which you might have within your heart, and if you make the right decision, then that small seed will grow and grow and grow until you can become a mighty worker in His cause. What will your decision be today concerning your life?

(Finish with a short consecration service, and allow the young people to stand or to come forward for prayer.)

Discussion Questions

(recap of the week's lessons)

1. **What are some of the ways we can get to know God better?** *(Monday's lesson)*
2. **What specific guidelines do you think Christians should follow regarding dress?** *(Tuesday's lesson)*
3. **What role does culture have to play in dress standards? In other words, are some things OK for one culture and not for another?** *(Tuesday's lesson)*
4. **Give some of the reasons that young people get involved with substance abuse?** *(Monday's lesson)*
How can this be prevented?
What can young people do to help their peers avoid getting involved in substance abuse?
5. **How old do you think is old enough for dating?** *(Wednesday's lesson)*
How do you know if you are mature enough to date?
6. **Is it wrong to choose an occupation solely because you can make a lot of money at it?**
Why or why not? *(Thursday's lesson)*
7. **What are some positive things Adventist youth can do to make the world a better place?**
(Friday's lesson)