

God Loves Teenagers

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes God's love for teenagers and the importance of recognizing and resisting the lies of the devil in their lives.

Duration: 59:51

Scripture: Genesis 3:4

Topics: "Resisting Temptation", "Youth Ministry"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of resisting the lies of the devil, which lead to sin and long-term consequences. It highlights the need to fight against temptations, especially in areas like sexual desires, and to seek Jesus as the ultimate example of overcoming struggles. The speaker shares personal experiences and encourages young people to make wise decisions, honor their parents, and be cautious of the influences around them.

Transcript

We read in the Bible, after God made man, is that the devil came and told him a lie. The first sin mentioned in the Bible is the lie that the devil told Adam and Eve, the devil told Eve actually, and she believed it. And I want you young folks to remember one thing, all the problems you face in your life, and all the problems that anybody in the world has faced, all the millions of people, all the poverty and sickness, all the wars and killing and hatred and bitterness and frustration and discouragement and every wretched thing that you can think of, started with someone believing the lie of the devil.

In Genesis 3, you trace something to the root, it's like a sickness, if you go to a doctor, he'll examine you and ask you what are your symptoms, and then he'll trace it down to the root of it. He says, if you just deal with the symptoms, you're not going to be healed. Supposing you have fever, that may be because you have tuberculosis.

You just take a crocin, get rid of the fever, it doesn't heal the disease. A good doctor will trace it down to the root. Where does it come from? They do a lot of tests, and they say, this is not something, this is not an ordinary fever, this is tuberculosis.

You need a stronger treatment for a number of months. So very often, you know, when we think of sin, we think of just these little symptoms, these external things, and the problem is never solved, because it never goes down to the root. I want to tell you the root is, that man believed the lie of the devil.

And in all these years, the devil has been fooling people, by telling them lies, and making them believe it. Telling you, this is good for you. That's what he told Eve.

I know God has said no, but forget it. God's just old-fashioned, or strict, or something like that. All those elders, or your dads are old-fashioned and strict, forget it, just do it.

This is good for you right now, you're going to enjoy it. You know, it's the same thing, with which he's been fooling people through the years. And supposing you heard that in Bangalore, there are some confidence tricksters, going around fooling people.

Here's a little tablet, if you take it, you'll get a hundred percent in mathematics. Okay? Guaranteed. And it's in the papers also, a lot of people are being fooled, and paying a thousand rupees to buy this one tablet, to get good marks in maths.

Now, if you read in the papers, that one thousand, or ten thousand students in Bangalore were fooled by it, and you still go and pay that thousand rupees, and buy that tablet, what would I call you? What should I call you? Fool. When are you going to learn, man? Do you know how many times, for years and years and years, the devil's fooled young people with lies? This is good for you. This is the thing that will give you a kick, or make you acceptable with your friends.

He never tells you the long-term effects. How is it going to end up? What are the long-term effects of it? What's going to happen to my brain, if I take this drug? I mean, not right now, I have enjoyed, but how will I be one year from now? Is that important? The devil only tells you about how it will excite you now. He will not tell you how it will affect you years later.

Supposing the devil had told Eve like this, you know, when you eat this, it's so tasty, you'll never have tasted anything like this before. That's right. He doesn't tell all lies.

Lies are coated in half-truths and sugar-coated. It tastes good, Eve. There's nothing like it.

It's such a fantastic taste. But I also want to tell you, Eve, that if you eat this, first of all, you'll get kicked out of paradise. Second, your first son will murder your second son.

And then, you're going to be sick. You're going to get all types of diseases. You're going to have thorns, and there'll be wild animals, and these friendly lions and all will suddenly turn wild.

And this snake that looks so nice right now, through whom I'm talking, will start biting you and kill you and chew your children. All your children and grandchildren are going to suffer and suffer, not just for one or two years, but for thousands and thousands of years. And they're going to fight each other and kill each other, and they're going to have diseases like AIDS.

Eve, come on, have this. You think she'd have eaten it? Would you have eaten it? Would you have eaten it? Would you have eaten it? What about if the devil tells you some lie about something else today, and doesn't tell you the long-term effects of that? You're falling for it. You've got to be careful.

I'll tell you something. The only real friend you have who's on your side is God. He's a hundred percent for you.

If you can be convinced about that, you will never hesitate to go to Him. See, sometimes you hesitate to go to some older brother, or even sometimes to some of you, to your parents or your dad, because you

feel he'll just clap down at you and say, shut up, I don't want to listen to you, it's all rubbish. But there's some other older brothers you may feel free to go to, because you feel he'll understand you.

Not all people are the same. That's right. Even among elders, there's a difference between elders.

Some you feel free to go to, some you don't feel free to go to. But I want to tell you, once you get to know Jesus, you'll find that there's nobody on earth like Him. No elder brother loving, compassionate or godly elder brother is like Him.

He is so understanding. You can go to Him if you've made a mess of your life and say, Lord, I made a mess of my life, that's it. Can you do something for me? And He'll say, sure, of course I can.

He'll never turn you away. There's a lovely verse that when I was a young, confused, 19 year old, see, I think I must have given my heart to Jesus first when I was maybe 13. But I never knew whether He came into my heart or not.

I didn't have any lights or sounds or electric shocks. No. I mean, I got a real electric shock once, but that was not from Jesus or the Holy Spirit.

It was an accident. So I never was sure. I asked Jesus to come to my heart.

The preacher said in the meeting, I asked Jesus to come to my heart. I was 13 years old. I said, OK, come to my heart.

Nothing happened. How do I know whether He came or not? So just to make sure, I asked Him a second time and a third time. I think I must have asked Him 500 times or a thousand times.

I don't know. And I still don't know today which was the right time, which was the time He came. I don't know.

But one day I read a verse in the Bible. John 6.37. If any of you have a problem with assurance, please remember one verse. John 6.37. You must know this verse.

It helped me so much. You know what it says? It's a very simple verse. Jesus says, if you come to me, I won't reject you.

Anyone who comes to me, I will not cast out. He will not say, get out. He won't say, you're coming back to me, confessing that sin for the thousandth time.

He will never say that. If He says that, I'll say, yes Lord, that is the thousandth time. What to do? I'm like that.

You never got a worse case than me. I will not cast you out. Please remember that.

That was the verse that came to my mind nearly 50 years ago, 1959. And you know, when I believed it, it was like dropping an anchor. You know what happens when you drop an anchor in a ship? The ship stops drifting.

It's the purpose of an anchor. To hold you to one place. When you drop a good anchor in a ship, you're there for as long as the ship is there.

As long as one of the tides, winds, anything, if it's a good anchor, you'll be there forever. So I dropped an anchor in my life. That verse.

Belief in that verse. 50 years ago, I've never moved. So I want to encourage those of you, if you're uncertain like me.

And when I read that verse, I said, Lord, I've come to you a thousand times or 500 times, I don't know. The Lord said, I never cast you out. Okay, you believe it.

And I believe, okay, from today onwards I believe He's not cast me out. It's as simple as that. And that really strengthened me.

One of the lies the devil tells us is that religion or Christianity is only for old people. Or, you know, you can't have fun if you become a Christian when you're young. You wake, you have your fun, and when you're about to die or something, give Jesus.

Because you want to go to heaven too. You heard, I think I said this in CFC once, the story of the Sunday school teacher who told the story of the rich man and Lazarus. You know that story? You don't know the story of the rich man and Lazarus? Yes or no? Lazarus was a beggar sitting outside the rich man's house.

And the rich man never cared to give him anything. And when he died, the rich man went to hell. And Lazarus went to heaven.

So at the end of the Sunday school lesson, the teacher said, Okay children, who do you want to be like? And guess what one smart kid like one of you said? What is it? I want to be like the rich man on earth, and I want to be like Lazarus after I die. But be honest, don't you feel like that too? See, there's nothing wrong with being rich, I'll tell you that. If God makes any of you rich when you grow up, there's nothing wrong in that.

Provided you don't think that you got it by your cleverness or your smartness. We got to say, okay, what God gave it to me so that I can live comfortably, but also think of other people who are needy. But the point is this.

The devil says, you won't enjoy yourself if you become a Christian. You'll be like that miserable Lazarus, like a beggar and suffer like that, and then finally you'll go to heaven. Okay, who wants to live like that on earth and go to heaven? I want to tell you that's a lie, it's not true.

I mean, there are beggars who go to heaven, there are lepers who go to heaven. But not everybody who goes to heaven is in that condition. And I certainly will tell you this, that my life would have been a mess if I hadn't given my life to Christ in my teenage years.

Sure. Because, you know, Jesus didn't offer Christianity just to older people. Think of a guy like Daniel.

He was 17 years old, in the midst of a lot of other teenagers and others, very smart, clever people, Jewish people there in a city like Babylon where they could make a lot of money and enjoy themselves. And Daniel said, I am going to stand up for God's word. I'm sure a lot of people made fun of him.

I'm sure a lot of people thought he was crazy. But you read about him in the book of Daniel. I mean, do you read about his friends? Where are they today? 1500, no, 2500 years after Daniel died, we're still talking about him.

People named their children after him. And you know, you can live a life where even if the Lord carries people who remember you and your life would be a blessing to others, you would have really accomplished something on earth. Don't think fun and enjoyment and pleasure is everything on earth.

Because in every pleasure of sin, there's like a trap. It's like, I remember years ago, we heard a story in the Sunday school here. Oh, it was so many years ago, I think, before some of you.

I don't know if any of you were in Sunday school those days. About this little mouse, little baby mouse. Do you remember that story? Any of you? No? Okay, then you didn't hear it.

There was a little baby mouse just born and living with family of mice in some little hole in the ground. And the mommy mouse told this little baby, now there's that house, don't ever go there. Because they'll catch you and kill you.

You got to be careful. Look around for your food here and there on the ground, but don't go inside. But you know how children are.

If daddy and mommy tell them not to do something, that's almost the first thing they do, right? So baby mouse is also like that. They say, why is daddy and mommy telling you not to go to this house? So one day the baby mouse went into this house and looked in. And the man of the house saw it.

And looked at it and smiled. And this baby mouse smiled back and then ran away. Came back and said, mommy, you're all wrong.

This is a very nice uncle who lives in this house. He smiled at me when he saw me in the corner. And he looked and stared at me for quite some time.

You're all wrong. It's a nice person who lives in that house. Mommy mouse said, don't ever go there.

These are all tricks. They're out to catch you. So he disobeyed and went the next day.

And he saw a small little house. Made of wood. With some cheese inside.

The door was open. You know a small house with a little door open. He said, what a nice uncle.

He's put some food for me today. And he's also made a little nice little house for me. Which looks much nicer than the hole I live in the ground out there.

And walks into this little house. You know what that was? And as soon as he bit the cheese, what happened? The door slammed shut. Oh, he said, he doesn't want anybody to disturb me while I eat.

He's such a nice uncle. He's closed the door behind me. So that no other mouse comes and disturbs me.

I can eat this cheese all by myself. And after some time, he comes, the uncle comes and has a look inside. And smiles at the mouse.

And the mouse smiles back and says, thank you very much. And then he lifts up the house. Takes it and says, this is great.

He's taking me for a ride now. Mummy's all wrong about this uncle. Then when he dipped into the bucket of water.

He realized that his mummy was right. That's a hard way to find out that. What you're warned about.

What your parents warn you about. If you're God fearing, what the elders warn you about is right. The Bible says, honor your father and mother, children.

Obeys your parents. Honor those who are older. Because they've got experience.

They don't hate you. I don't hate any of you. I want all of you to enjoy life.

But I don't want you to enjoy life in such a way that it will destroy you. I believe in enjoying life. I don't believe in sleeping on the floor.

I'm ready to sleep on the floor if I have to go somewhere. And I don't get a proper bed. I don't say there's any virtue in facing unnecessary hardship.

There's nothing wrong in eating good food. But you have to be careful about things which the devil tells you to enjoy. Which is ultimately going to make you a slave.

It's called addiction. Now any type of addiction. Anything.

It could be smoking. It could be drinking. It could be alcohol.

It could be witchcraft. It could be rock music. It could be anything.

It has a power that I can call it. It's a big word. But try and understand it.

The law of diminishing returns. Can you understand that? You know what diminishing means? Getting less and less and less. That means the law of diminishing returns means.

If you took this much of the drug this time. Next time you have to take a little more. Because this much doesn't give you the same kick as it did last time.

You have to take a little more. And a little more. To get the same measure of excitement.

Because your body. The first time you did it. You know like a person went and had some illicit sex.

The first time he enjoyed it. But the next time if he does the same thing. He won't enjoy it so much.

It will be a little less. He's got to do more. This is called the law of diminishing returns.

God has made it like that. So that you won't get the same enjoyment out of any wrong thing. God's made it like that.

As a protection for us. So ultimately you need more. And more and more.

Whether it's music or anything. You enjoy a certain type of music. Which is destroying your mind.

And probably your ears as well. And you find after some time. That's not enough.

You need something more. You need something louder. You need something crazier.

You need something where God is blaspheming some more. And where the devil is glorified some more. And you want to have these wild type of activities.

And pictures and all. Where God is dishonored more and more. It's an addiction.

And in the world they think. They say oh you're cool if you are like that. You know where you don't care for God etc.

But what happens? Who are you destroying? You're not destroying God. He's in the heavens. You can't touch him.

You are destroying yourself by getting more and more and more of this. And all because you don't have the guts to stand up to your friends and say no. You know I remember I was in the Navy.

And in the military they really make fun of you if you are a sissy. If you are a coward. Because you are supposed to be facing bullets and all types of things.

And if you are not willing to do something brave and gallant. They call you a sissy. So that's the way they would tease people to do something wrong.

They dare you to do something wrong. Like how many bottles of beer can you drink? And the people who get into that competition get drunk and vomit all over etc. And the same way they come on do this.

And if I said no I'm not going to do that. They say oh you don't have guts. And then I have to say my guts is shown by the fact that I don't go along with the crowd.

To go along with the crowd that doesn't require any guts. That's a sissy. A coward.

Everybody says come on do it. Okay I'll do it. He's a coward.

Or the one who stands up against the crowd and says no I'm not going to do it. That's the bold person. You must realize that.

When you follow the crowd you are a sissy. You are a coward. You don't have the courage to stand up to those friends.

I know people in the navy who didn't have the courage to face bullets in war. Who couldn't stand up to their friends. And say no.

So I learned that was a lie of the devil. The devil fooled Eve with a lie. And he tried to fool me saying come on if you are a bold person do this.

I say no. I'm a bold person by standing against these fellows. These guys are all sissies.

That's why they are scared to say no to their friends. Anyone who is scared to say no to his friends. He's a sissy.

He's a coward. He's the one who can stand up to his friends when everybody is doing something. And say no I'm not going to do it.

I'm bold. You can call me what you like. You can hit me if you like.

But I'm not going to do it. I'm not a coward. I'm bold.

You know you got to be bold. If you are not bold you ask Jesus to give you. At that moment you say Lord Jesus just give me a little boldness to stand up to these folks.

So religion is not for older people. And a lot of things that older people tell you sometimes are good for you. Let me read you something which I read years ago.

This is a tribute to a dad. Okay. When a child is four years old.

You know what he says about his daddy. My daddy can do anything. That's what almost all four year olds say.

When he is seven years old it tones down a little bit. He says my daddy can do a lot of things. When he is nine years old he says well dad doesn't know everything exactly.

When he is twelve years old or thirteen years old he says my dad just doesn't understand. When he is fourteen years old he says dad is all old fashioned. Forget it.

When he is twenty years old he says the old man, he doesn't even call him dad. That old man is out of touch. Then he gets a little older.

He has made a mess of his life already by the time he is twenty five. He doesn't know what he is saying. He says I think dad is okay.

By the time he is thirty he is married. He is having more problems. And he begins to say I wonder what dad thinks about this.

I would like to get his opinion. Age thirty five I say I better get dad's opinion first. By the time he is fifty and his own children he is having problems with them.

He says what would dad have done here in this situation. By the time he is sixty his dad is dead. He says oh I wish I could talk this over with my dad once more.

See how you go full circle. So all of you are in that phase. What is that? Your dad is out of touch.

All these elders they are all old fashioned. They don't understand me. I understand it.

It is a phase. You are moving. But I will tell you where you will end up ten fifteen years from now.

Mark my words. If Jesus doesn't come you come and tell me ten fifteen years from now if I am not right. It is a phase.

But don't make a mess of your life during this phase thinking that all these older people and these elders don't have a clue. They are sort of old fashioned. They are living in the eighteenth century or something like that.

Okay. I remember somebody. Billy Graham is one of the world's famous evangelists.

He was once talking to a group of young people. And he said, what shall we talk about first? What do you think people said? In India people are a bit shy. In America they are not shy.

Sex. And Billy Graham said, yeah that is an important subject. If it were not for that none of us would be here.

You know it is true. If it were not for that none of us would be here. It is a very powerful force.

It is not the most essential thing for life. Because Jesus and Paul and all lived without it. Food is more essential.

You can't live for one year without food. You can easily live your entire lifetime without sex. So don't let the devil tell you that is the most important force in your life.

That is an absolute lie. Because the most important thing in your life must be that which you cannot live without. Oxygen.

You can even live without food for many days with oxygen. That is absolutely essential. Everyday you can't even live five minutes without it.

You will get brain damage. So there are many things more essential than sex. That is the first lie of the devil you got to expose.

This is not the most important thing in life. You got to earn your living when you grow up. That is important.

Otherwise you will be like a beggar. Or you will be dependent on your parents when you are 50 years old. Because you were too lazy to study and work hard.

You played the fool with a whole lot of other things in your younger days. You know nowadays even your 10 standard marks are so important. To chart the direction of your life.

Those early years when you are in 9th standard, 10th standard, 11th standard, 12th standard or PUC. Those are very critical years now. Because you know we are not farmers.

If you were farmers or plumbers or carpenters, then forget it what marks you got in school. But you are not going to be carpenters and plumbers and painters. You will have to live in a little hut or a slum.

God has allowed your parents to bring you up with a certain amount of comfort and a certain living standard economically. You should at least live up to there even if you don't go higher. And for that you need an education in the world in which we live.

It's very important. You may not realize that when you are a teenager. But I will tell you this, it is so important.

I know people in some of our churches who didn't take their studies seriously when they were young. Or their parents never compelled them to study. And they grow older and they are married and they are without jobs.

They are looking around for jobs and they are always struggling, struggling. When they are 40-50 years old. Why should it be like that? Do you want to be like that? Do you want to be like some of those people when you are 40-50 years old struggling, struggling, struggling? Just because you played the pool when you were 18-19 years old? You know, when you sow something, you are not going to get a crop immediately.

Supposing you are planting coconuts. And you don't check up whether this coconut tree is a really good one. And it starts bearing coconuts years later and you find it is really bad.

Well, you are stuck with that for life. You are stuck with that rotten coconut tree for life. Because you planted, you didn't check it when it was planted.

Or a mango tree, supposing you didn't. You planted some rotten old mango tree. And the mangoes, I don't know whether it takes 10 years or something for the mangoes to yield.

And then you are stuck with it for life because it is a bad one. What can you do? You can plant another one but it will take another 10 years for it to grow. That's why it is so important.

When you are young, in your teenage years. To make sure that you are setting your direction of your life now. So very, very important.

I wish you would realize this. I wish I could drill it into your head. That's why I say concentrate on some of these things in your studies.

Seeking to pursue some profession. Not all of us have the same intelligence. Now intelligence is like the color of our skin.

Look at all of us, we are all different colors. God made us like that. It's not important.

God loves all of us. Intelligence. God gave each of us a different level of intelligence.

Some may have a little less than that. But that doesn't mean God made a mistake. It means God has some other line of profession for you.

Which would be just as good. I mean you may not earn as much money. I am not going to earn as much money as... Most of us won't earn as much money as a lot of businessmen.

They've got a mind for that. But that's not important. The important thing is just to earn enough to live.

And there are a lot of dangers in having too much money. Just like there are dangers in having too little. I mean none of us want to be a beggar.

But there are a lot of dangers in having too much money also. I'll tell you that. You may think there are not.

But I know enough of that of a lot of people who have a lot of problems. Because they have too much money. Unhappy marriages and all types of things.

So it's very important to think that some of the decisions you take now are going to have long term consequences. You know Eve took a little decision and the consequences are lasting till today. You know that? Okay.

Have you read in the newspapers about the Israel and the Palestinians always fighting with each other? Yes or no? You read the newspapers? The Jews and the Arabs. Can you tell me when that fight started? 19? It started when? Which time? Old Testament? In Jesus time? World War II. Any other answers? It started with Isaac and Ishmael.

When was that? 2000 years before Christ. Isaac is the father of the Jewish nation. Ishmael is the father of the Palestinians.

Not all. Isaac, one of Isaac's sons, Esau, is also a father of some of the Palestinians. And Lot, Abraham's nephew, is also a father of some of the Arabs I mean.

So this fight started years ago. And it's gone on for generations. Conflict.

And you know how Ishmael was born? Ishmael was born by Abraham making him a servant of God. What I'm trying to say is, there could be, you know a man can make a mistake in his life that has long term consequences. I'll tell you another example of that.

There was a king in Israel, in Judah, whose name was Hezekiah. Have you heard of him? Hezekiah, king. One day the Lord told him, you're going to die.

Set your house in order, you're going to die. And the man went to God and started praying. Oh God, please, I've lived a good life, please have mercy on me, just extend my life.

And so, the Lord sent the prophet Isaiah and said, okay, you can live another 15 years. That wasn't God's will. But sometimes God gives people what they ask for.

Have you sometimes pestered your father and mother for something and got it, even though they didn't want to give it to you? Have you had that experience? Yeah, sometimes your father and mother, you pester them long enough, they'll give you something, even though they don't want it. I don't mean something that really harms you, but something which is not so harmful, but they didn't want to give it to you, but you pestered them and you'll get it. Well, then God gave this guy 15 years and you know what happened? In those 15 years, after about two years within that period, he got a son.

Which son would never have been born if he had died when God told him to die. The name of that son was Manasseh. M-A-N-A-S-S-E-H.

And the Bible says, towards the end of 2 Chronicles, Manasseh was the worst king that Israel ever had. He reigned for 55 years, that Judah ever had. Now you see, that one action of Hezekiah had long-term consequences that made so many people suffer.

What I want to say is, that some of the actions and decisions you're taking today, have long-term consequences, good or bad. Say a farmer, for example, who really is careful to get the right type of seed. He goes to labs that have done research and says, I want the best type of seed.

Well, other fellows don't care, just sow whatever seed they like. This farmer takes some time and spends more money to get really good seed and plants it. And harvest time, which comes many, many months later, this farmer gets a fantastic crop of very good material in the crop.

And those guys get useless harvest. Why? Because this person took care about what he planted. Even though at that time, people would have said, what a fool you are, spending so much money on seed.

And that's what a lot of other people will tell you when you're a teenager. What a fool you are, wasting your money and time and money on all this. Come on, man, enjoy yourself.

Yeah, I know a lot of people who told me that. When I used to sit in my ship as a 20-year-old and just read the Bible in my room, all by myself, because all the others were playing cards and drinking and doing all types of terrible things on the ship. They thought I was a fool.

I'd like to know where they are today. I know where I am. I know one of my colleagues who became an admiral and he was the secretary to the president of India.

And he said, Zak, you made the right choice. This is when years lived. I mean, what was I? I was not secretary to the president of India or an admiral or any such thing.

But he knew me. He knew me from the days, you know, what, 40 years ago, 45 years ago. Even then people knew I was a Christian.

I wouldn't join them in all their ways. And years later, they don't forget it. They realize their end of their life and they see what is the end of my life.

I want to tell you something. Every decision you make has long term consequences. Don't forget that.

Do you remember the story of Jacob and Esau? You know that story? Esau wanted a bowl of soup. And actually it was dal curry. You know that? The Bible says that was dal curry that Esau.

I mean, I don't know how people have such a great fondness for dal curry to sell your birthright. But maybe that is a great tasty dish those days. And he said, OK, birthright.

Who wants it? Birthright is something that is going to come in the future. Who wants it? Give me that lentil soup. Jacob said, sure, take it.

I want the birthright. It was a decision both of them made. One was, I want something in the future.

I'm willing to give up. I'm also hungry. I'd like to have the soup which I've made just now.

But I'm willing to give up this temporary enjoyment to get something in the future. Esau said, no, I want this temporary enjoyment now. I'm willing to forget, lose something in the future.

And I want to tell all of you sitting here. All of you are making a decision exactly like Jacob or exactly like Esau. Sometimes, frequently.

You're saying, I want some enjoyment right now. I want to be popular with my friends right now. Long term effect, forget it.

Who's bothered? That's Esau. And you know what the Bible says? Afterwards, when he realized what he lost, you know what the Bible says he did? He wept. Let me read you that verse, Hebrews chapter 12.

Afterwards, verse 17, Hebrews 12, 17. When he wanted to get the blessing, he was rejected even though he begged for it with tears. Oh, Father, please give it to me.

Isaac couldn't give it to him. Do you know it's possible? I know people who years later can be weeping and asking for something. And they can't get it.

Because way back in their younger days, they sowed something and they're reaping the harvest. So I want to tell you, do you want it to go well with you? The Bible says, honor your father and mother. Honor

those who are godly elders, who love you and care for you, who pray for you, who sacrifice so much for you, who try to do so many things like this camp, for example, for you.

What do they get out of it? Honor them. It will go well with you. I can testify, I'm nearly 70 years old now.

It's gone well with me. Because I honored my father and mother. I honored older godly people wherever I met them.

From my younger days, where I've met a godly... I don't mean everybody who called himself an elder. But if I met a man who was really godly, I would honor him. Because he's a man of God.

And I would honor him more than a human authority. A man of God. And I want to tell you, it's gone well with him.

It's a simple thing. Learn to be respectful. We're living in an age where young people don't have any respect for older people.

Yeah. I know what's going to happen to those young people, 20-30 years from now. Because I've seen what's happened to a lot of other young people.

In whom those 20-30 years have already gone by, where they are today. Learn to respect older people. It's a very simple thing.

Don't get into unnecessarily conflict with your parents. You may disagree with them. Some of you may feel your parents are old fashioned.

And perhaps you're right. Maybe they are old fashioned. Maybe they make all types of rules which are unnecessary.

And they are unnecessarily hard and legalistic and all that. But endure it for a few more years. One of these days you'll leave your home.

And you'll be your own master. So avoid conflict with your parents. But coming back to this matter of sex.

I asked the Lord many years ago a question about it. When I say I asked the Lord, it means I asked Him in my heart. And I got the answer in my heart also.

I said, Lord, why is it that you have allowed, I mean God is the one who made us, right? And for a boy or a girl to be attracted to each other. And to begin to think about girls when they are 12 years old. And be attracted to some girl when they are 13.

Or a girl to be attracted to a boy when they are 13. It's about normal. I mean when you are 4-5 years old you don't have that type of attraction.

But when you become around 13 years old or 12-13 years old. You suddenly find yourself admiring somebody in the opposite sex. That is absolutely normal.

But that can become, it can lead to a lot of fantasies and all types of things in your mind. Which can occupy your mind so much. And particularly for boys.

The passions in the body begin to become like a burning furnace inside us. By the time you are 13-14 years old. And you can't get married till you are at least 26-27 or 28 sometimes or even later.

What I asked the Lord was, Lord why have you allowed these passions to start when they are 13? I mean why didn't you make man in such a way that boys and girls will relate to each other like innocent 2 year olds until they are 25. Wouldn't that have been great? Till you are 25 years old you just treat each other like 2 year old boys and girls treat each other. Absolute innocence, no desire.

And then 25 years old this desire starts. And then within 6 months or something you get married. Wouldn't that have been great? I mean I often thought if I were God I would have done it like that.

Make it easier for people. But I am not God. And I am stupid.

God is wiser. You believe God is wiser than you? No problem believing that. And he in his great wisdom decided to give you that desire when you are 13 or 12.

I think nowadays it's even earlier with internet and TV and all. It probably starts when they are 9 or 10 or something. I don't know what age it starts now.

I am talking about how it was 50 years ago. And you have to wait 15 years almost before you can fulfill some of those sexual desires in a right way. What am I supposed to do with this burning furnace inside me for 15 years? And I think I got an answer from the Lord.

The Lord said that I, that's what the answer I got in my heart was that He wanted us in our young age to fight this. To fight it and fight it and fight it. If you fall get up and fight it again.

If you fall get up and fight it again. Fight it, fight it, fight it. And become an overcomer.

And that fighting is what makes you strong. Even if you are losing. For example, Supposing I decide to do wrestling.

At the age of 13. I start wrestling with somebody. With some strong wrestler.

And you are also 13 years old but you just sit on a chair there and watch me. And for the next 15 years I am wrestling with this guy and he is always beating me. Okay, but I am wrestling and I am wrestling and I am wrestling.

And he is always defeating me but I am going to wrestle with him everyday. Everyday. And you just sit there in that easy chair and eat potato chips and get fatter and fatter and fatter.

While I am wrestling with this guy. And every time in this wrestling match I lost. Tell me at the end of 15 years who will be stronger, you or me? Me.

Even though I lost in every wrestling match? Yes or no? Why? Because you never entered the ring. And even though I lost. I was still fighting.

And the very fact that I was exerting my muscles against that guy made me strong. Got it? What I want to say is, don't get discouraged if you lose the battle against sex. Frequently.

What I want to say is, If you give up and say I am going to just sit in the chair and eat donuts and potato chips and watch television all the time. You are a loser. Don't be like that.

Stay in the ring and say I am going to fight, I am going to fight. If I lose I am going to get up and fight again, fight again. You will be a strong person in this area by the time you are a marriage person.

And I tell you, you will have a very very happy marriage. Even though you can't even count the number of times you lost this battle sexually. I hope that's an encouragement to you.

Most men lose the battle in the sex area numerous times. So many times they can't even count. It's true of every single boy and every single young man.

So don't get discouraged thinking you are the only one like that. You are not the only one. You are one like everybody else.

You are perfectly normal. In fact if you don't have strong sexual desires you probably need a medical check up. Yes.

It's perfectly normal. But fight the battle. Fight the battle.

Don't listen to the lie of the devil saying if you yield. You will enjoy. No you are not going to enjoy by yielding.

Fight the battle. Fight the battle. Go at it.

And I don't know how it is with girls but I am sure you also feel attracted towards boys. And you got to be very careful because as you grow older you have more to lose in this area than a boy has. A girl has a lot to lose.

One time you make a mistake you ruined your whole life. That's not true of a boy. You got to be extremely careful.

In friendships and also attachments you know. The world is full of boys who try to take advantage of girls. And if you are one of those innocent girls who believes that every boy is a holy angel.

You are living in another world. It's not true. Most boys are crooks.

They are out to get you. So be careful. That's what I am saying.

I want to tell you something about images. You know you have images in your mind that come through television, videos. You know you can never take them out of your mind.

That's the sad thing about images. You put an image into your mind, it's there for the next 50 years. It will never go.

You read something in the sexual area, particularly sexual images and sexual stories have a way of sticking to your mind forever. Other stories you may forget. Your physics and geography you forget in one day actually.

But sexual stories and images stay there for years. It's the way we are made. We got to be very careful.

And the only way is avoid. You know you can't do anything about all the images you have already put into your mind. But please, please be careful in the days to come.

Okay. I want to say you know the greatest example is Jesus. He was 13 years old.

Do you think Jesus had sexual desire or not? He was tempted. Like who? Like us. If he was not tempted in sex, I'd have to say, Lord, you missed the biggest battle of all.

You can't tell us to follow you because the biggest battle you never faced. He faced it. He overcame it when he was 13.

He overcame it when he was 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, all the way to 33. Fought it and overcame it. And he wasn't fighting it all the time because these battles get easier and easier as you keep fighting it.

And by the time he was 30, you could have a woman come and wipe your feet and he's not even tempted. You know you can come to that place of purity if you fight the battle. So Jesus fought a battle and he's your example.

Whenever you're tempted, think of Jesus. Lord Jesus, you were also 15, 16, 18 years old once upon a time. How did you handle it? Think of that.

I used to think of that many times. Lord, when you were in Nazareth and you were tempted, how did you handle it? I want to be, I want to follow you. You're my example.

So what shall I say to you young people? Stick at it. Don't give up. Stick at it.

It's worth it in the long run. Please listen to somebody. I'm not putting a sales pitch trying to sell Jesus or sell anything.

I'm telling you honestly from my experience. It's worth it in the long run. It's worth it to stand against your friends and to stand and be different.

I used to be in a ship with 200 people and I was the only Christian. I was completely different. I wouldn't do those things they were doing.

I'd be different. They'd make fun of me calling me Holy Joe and they'd call me all types of names. But do you know what happened in those years? It made me, it gave me a backbone.

A lot of young people today don't have any backbone. That means they don't have the guts to stand up against their friends and say, Sorry, I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to make fun of the teacher like all of you are.

Imagine if you took a stand like that. I tell you in different things where you see people going in the wrong direction and say, Sorry, you can't do it. Okay, I'll tell you a little story.

When I became a Christian, I was 19 and a half and I was sure of my salvation. One day two of my friends told me, we used to, we were living in the naval base in Cochin. We had just become officers with a stripe on our shoulder.

And one of the, two of these friends came to me and said, Okay Zack, let's go to the movie. Inside the cinema, inside the naval base we had our own cinema theater for all the naval personnel. So, I was the one who used to take them to the movies before that.

And now I had become a Christian and I didn't have the courage to tell them, I'm sorry, I'm a Christian. They think, what happened to him? Has he gone off his head or something? So, they said, come, let's go. And I quietly went with them.

And as we were walking towards the movie theater, I was crying in my heart, Lord, get me out of this. Somehow, I don't want to go, but I don't have the courage to say no to them. I don't want to go Lord, you know that.

But I don't have the courage to say no to these good friends of mine. I'm a sissy. And I walked and walked and walked and I didn't have the courage to say no.

We came right in front of the cinema theater. And there was a notice there saying, today's cinema is cancelled. Because we didn't get them real in time.

I tell you, I didn't say hallelujah loudly, but I said, Lord, this is wonderful. You're a God who answers prayer. You saw my heart's need and you answered.

This is a true story, I'm not telling you some fiction. I came back home and I felt the Lord say to me, I won't do that next time. Next time you have to say no yourself.

Because if I keep cancelling the movie every day, you'll never become strong. You'll become strong if you learn to say no. But that event encouraged me so much.

That the next time they came, I said, sorry friends, I've stopped going to the movies. I've got other things to do. Okay, make fun of you for a little while.

After some time they say, forget it, he's an oddball. And they don't bother you anymore. The devil will stop bothering you too.

Okay, did you get something out of today's camp? That will help you long term? Okay, don't forget it. I think CFC boys and girls are great. I mean, you have some struggles, but I hope you'll overcome them.

Be careful. A lot of things that the world offers you are not very... Some look very attractive. I want to tell you another thing.

Some of you got websites. Go back to those websites and see whether Jesus could sit with you and approve of all those things you have there. What you cannot approve of, get rid of tonight.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I thank you for these lovely boys and girls. I pray that the devil won't make a fool of them.

They're young, impressionable. And I know how the devil would like to get a whole lot of them and mess up their life. I can see that.

And I can see, Lord Jesus, how you're also waiting there and you're different from the devil in the sense that the devil will force them, but you don't force them. You're such a gentleman. You wait outside the door and knock, whereas the devil forces his way into their life.

I pray that all these young people will have the sense to see what a gentleman you are. That you don't force your way into anybody's life, but you wait for them to open the door. I pray they'll see how wonderful

you are, how beautiful you are and respond to you.

See that you're the only one who's got their eternal good at heart. Please preserve them and encourage them and bless them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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