

Exhortations and Warnings for Youth

- I. Definitions.
- A. exhort: To admonish earnestly; to urge by stimulating words to conduct regarded as laudable.
 - B. admonish: To put (a person) in mind of duties; to counsel against wrong practices; to give authoritative or warning advice; to exhort, to warn.
 - C. warn: To make aware, to put on one's guard. To give timely notice to (a person) of impending danger or misfortune.
 - D. youth: The fact or state of being young; youngness. (Often blending with sense 2.) 2. The time when one is young; the early part or period of life; more specifically, the period from puberty till the attainment of full growth, between childhood and adult age.
- II. A man of God is to feed the flock under his care. **ACT 20:28; 1PE 5:2.**
- A. The flock may consist of mature rams and ewes but also of little lambs.
 - B. A minister primarily feeds the lambs by feeding the sheep who then nourish their own lambs.
 - C. There are times when a minister may need to feed the lambs directly.
 - D. Jesus instructed Peter to feed sheep and lambs. **JOH 21:15-17.**
 - E. John wrote to fathers, young men and little children. **1JO 2:13.**
 - F. Solomon dedicated a goodly percentage of his writings to warning, encouraging and preparing his son for the rigors and dangers of adult life.
 - G. I deeply, genuinely care for the children in this church and desire only their good. Thus, I must preach to them (and to their parents).
- III. The focus of this study is on the youth under my ministry.
- A. Our church no longer only has babes in arms and strollers. We have youth who are at a stage of physical development where they could be or soon could be a parent.
 - 1. They need to be forewarned and forearmed against what lies ahead in life.
 - 2. They need their minds and emotions to be steered towards maturity since the mind and emotions seldom keep pace with the maturing of the body.
 - 3. They need to know that foolish decisions have unprofitable consequences and that sin is nothing with which to trifle.
 - B. Hearken to some things Scripture says about youth:
 - 1. The imagination of the heart is evil from its youth. **GEN 8:21.**
 - a. "...the shame of thy youth..." (**ISA 54:4**).
 - b. "...committed whoredoms in their youth..." (**EZE 23:3**).
 - c. "...lewdness of thy youth..." (**EZE 23:21**).
 - d. "...the reproach of my youth..." (**JER 31:19**).
 - 2. It is a time of relative ignorance and immaturity which must be guided. **JER 3:4 c/w PRO 2:17.**
 - 3. It is a time of great potential and transition to independence which, if misused, bring judgment. **ECC 11:9.**
 - C. Instruction from Scripture, your parents and your pastor can, if heeded, save youth from a lifetime of regret over the sins of youth. **PSA 25:7.**
 - 1. Many are the lives that never fully recover physically, emotionally, mentally, financially or socially from the sinful things done in youth.
 - 2. Others have a way of bringing those things to your remembrance.

JOB 13:26; 20:11.

3. Worse yet, even though God may have forgiven the sins of one's youth, the memory of them is still there, sometimes tangibly and indelibly impressed upon our persons. And what the heart can't delete, it replays to the conscience.
4. Young people, you DON'T want to end up as one who cries **PRO 5:11-13.**
- D. Another thing that concerns me is the "post-Joshua syndrome."
 1. Joshua had brought Israel into their God-given inheritance.
 2. In the glow of that great season under a great leader, Israel served the LORD. **JDG 2:6-7.**
 3. But when that generation gave way to the next one, the latter did not carry the torch of faith. **JDG 2:8-13.**
 - a. The main battles that had through God gotten the victory and inheritance were in the past. What was the relevance of God and vigilance any longer?
 - b. Israel by this time was well-heeled in Canaan, prospering materially and so fell under the deceptions of materialism. **NEH 9:25-26.**
 - c. "Religion begat prosperity and the daughter devoured the mother."
(Cotton Mather)
 4. The parents in this church know full well how great, how significant, how blessed was their deliverance from their former ways into the knowledge of the truth about Jesus Christ.
 - a. But what about the children? How can they appreciate what they have?
 - b. And what about the parents? Have they taught and shown their children by example that the faith is real, is worth contending for, and that Jesus Christ is the only hope for sinners, and that submission to Him is the way to please Him and find true joy, peace and fulness?
- E. This study is designed to be a challenge and encouraging stimulation for the youth under my pastoral care, and for their parents.

IV. The time of youth and burgeoning adolescence is one of a maturing of the body and of a heightened desire for independence.

- A. The maturing of the body requires no effort; it is virtually inevitable.
- B. The maturing of the mind and the character are a different story.
- C. Young people! Don't ever get to thinking that just because your body is looking more like an adult's body means that you are mature! True maturity is a condition built by proper character development and that requires learning and discipline of one's thinking.
- D. Our culture is already awash with physically mature people who still think and act like children.
 1. A culture is in danger when children take control. **ECC 10:16; ISA 3:4-5.**
 2. We don't need to be adding to that problem; neither should we be conformed to that model. **ROM 12:1-2.**
 3. Though Solomon was an adult when he came to power, he knew that what he needed was wisdom. **1KI 3:7-9.**
 4. His son, Rehoboam, assumed that age and heritage were all that were needed to rule in Israel but his naivety and arrogance split the kingdom. **2CH 12:13-14; 13:7 c/w 1KI 12:12-20.**
 5. A nation can put a gun in immature peoples' hands and send them off to war but unless their character and thinking matures, they find that the biggest battles begin when they return home to where they can't kick doors in to get the job done.

- E. Independence is not an unqualified right, young people!
 - 1. Whereas parents do well to guide their children towards independence in due course, unqualified independence granted unto youth who have not proven themselves worthy of it will most likely destroy them.
 - 2. Consider the second clause of **PRO 29:15**.
 - 3. Independence involves responsibility. Parents should mete out opportunities for independent action according to youth's ability and TRUSTWORTHINESS to handle it.
 - a. Putting confidence in anyone who has proven themselves unfaithful is pain for all involved. **PRO 25:19**.
 - b. One must be faithful in small things if he expects to be entrusted with greater things. **LUK 16:10; 19:17**.
 - 4. Independence is never the liberty to do wrong! It is rather the privilege of acting responsibly in the presence or absence of parents. **PHIL 2:12**.
- F. Young people! If you think that you know more than your parents what is best for you and resent their guidance and restrictions on your liberty and independence, then consider:
 - 1. Your parents provided for your care and safety when you could not do so.
 - 2. Do you think you're pretty good? Remember that you got where you are because of your parents. You would have never made it this far by yourselves. They apparently knew something!
 - 3. Your parents have been where you are. You have NOT been where they are. They can see what you cannot see.
 - 4. Your parents have by both positive and negative experience learned much about what it takes to succeed in life.
 - a. You don't have to suffer the negative, destructive things that your parents experienced in order to develop your character.
 - b. Some of what your parents are trying to do is to save you from the things that they now see were foolish and destructive things in their youth.
 - c. You don't have to learn about destructive things by bitter personal experience. Experience may be a good teacher but the tuition to her school can be very expensive.
 - d. Those who will not hear must feel.
- G. Following is a challenge concerning maturity.

V. Young people:

- A. Do you believe in God?
- B. Do you believe God is good?
- C. Do you believe God is supremely intelligent?
- D. Do you believe the Bible is God's word?
- E. Do you believe the Bible is true?
- F. If so, do you believe what the Bible says about God's standard of maturity is right?
- G. maturity: The state of being mature ('Having the powers of body and mind fully developed'); fullness or perfection of development or growth.
 - 1. Mind that the definition presupposes a standard of perfection or development.
 - 2. The measure of that standard by any other than Jesus Christ is a false measure.

VI. Consider the Biblical concept of maturity.

- A. **LUK 2:52** describes the maturing of Jesus Christ.

1. stature: The height of an animal body in its normal standing position. a. esp. of a human body.
 2. See **MAT 6:27**.
 3. Jesus Christ's maturity consisted of more than physical development.
- B. Wisdom is set forth as the highest level of human development; it is the standard of maturity. **PRO 4:7-13; 8:12-21**.
1. principal: First or highest in rank or importance; that is at the head of all the rest; of the greatest account or value; foremost.
 2. Wisdom brings life to its fullest potential but if sinned against brings the opposite. **PRO 8:34-36**.
- C. All wisdom is treasured up in the Lord Jesus Christ. **COL 2:3**.
1. He is the absolute standard of all that it means to be mature. Conformity to Him IS maturity! **EPH 4:13-15**.
 2. There is NO TRUE maturity apart from being a Christian, striving continually to be more Christ-like in thinking and conduct.
- VII. A fool lacks wisdom (**PRO 10:21**). Hence, a fool is NOT mature.
- A. Young people, ask yourselves the following questions:
1. Do you hate being told what to do? **PRO 1:7**.
 2. Do you bring sorrow and heaviness to your parents? **PRO 10:1; 17:21**.
 3. Do you misrepresent or distort the actions of people in order to defame them or put them down? **PRO 10:18**.
 - a. slander: The utterance or dissemination of false statements or reports concerning a person, or malicious misrepresentation of his actions in order to defame or injure him. 2. A false or malicious statement or utterance intended to injure, defame, or cast detraction on the person about whom it is made.
 - b. Have you ever done this to a sibling? **PSA 50:20**.
 4. Do you enjoy wrongdoing? **PRO 10:23; 13:19**.
 5. Do you only consult with yourself to decide what is right? **PRO 12:15**.
 6. Do you have an explosive, uncontrolled temper? **PRO 12:16**.
 7. Are you proud? Do you think you are "hot stuff?" **PRO 14:3**.
 8. Do you think excellent speech is weird? **PRO 17:7**.
 9. Do you think all this talk about wisdom is boring? **PRO 17:16**.
 10. Are you unable to settle down and concentrate on something worthwhile? **PRO 17:24**.
 11. Do you think only of yourself? **PRO 18:2**.
 12. Are you quarrelsome? **PRO 18:6**.
 13. Do you lie? **PRO 19:1**.
 14. Are you wasteful? **PRO 21:20**.
 15. Are you lazy? **PRO 24:30**.
 16. Are you the type that can't be corrected? **PRO 27:22**.
 - a. bray: To beat small; to bruise, pound, crush to powder; usually in a mortar.
 - b. mortar: A vessel of hard material, having a cup-shaped cavity, in which ingredients used in pharmacy, cookery, etc., are pounded with a pestle.
 - c. pestle: An instrument (usually club-shaped) for bruising or pounding substances in a mortar.
 17. Do you never know when to shut up? **PRO 29:11**.

- B. If the answers to the above questions are “Yes,” then you are a fool and are therefore not mature.
 - 1. Being a fool, you will not get ahead. **PRO 11:29.**
 - 2. You will rather come to shame. **PRO 3:35.**
- C. Parents! Examine yourselves in the light of the foregoing questions. What kind of example have you given your children to follow? Could they be like you and be mature?

VIII. A wise, mature person:

- A. is submissive to authority. **PRO 10:8; 28:7.**
- B. admits when he is wrong and accepts correction. **PRO 9:8-9.**
- C. is willing to learn. He doesn't think he knows it all already. **PRO 1:5.**
- D. is thoughtful, cautious and foresightful rather than hasty and impulsive. **PRO 14:8, 15; 22:3; 4:26; 15:28.**
- E. is industrious and frugal. **PRO 30:24-25; 21:17.**
- F. understands his weaknesses and does not allow them to be exploited. **PRO 7:7; 17:18.**
- G. controls his passions. **PRO 14:29.**
- H. is generous to those in need. **PRO 3:27-28.**
- I. fears God and departs from evil. **PRO 3:7.**
- J. makes glad parents. **PRO 23:22-25.**

IX. Fathers! It is your solemn duty to provide leadership conducive to your children reaching the maturity herein described (**EPH 6:4**). Consider (again) some salient points about effective fathering and leadership.

- A. The Biblical ideal for effective fathering and wholesome family life is **DEU 6:4-9**.
 - 1. Normal life is to be saturated with the plan, presence and love of God.
 - 2. Life at home should be so appealing that all else is eclipsed by comparison.
 - 3. This exhortation was timely in view of what would be encountered in Canaan:
 - a. Affluence. **DEU 8:6-18.**
 - b. Competitive religions. **DEU 12:1-3, 29-31.**
 - c. Seductive women. **DEU 7:3-4.**
 - d. Alternate commandment-free lifestyles. **LEV 18.**
 - 4. Our society is a modern day counterpart to old Canaan.
 - 5. God's preparatory directives for Israel are as relevant today as then.
 - 6. Fathers: Prepare your children against their impending entrance to Canaan!
- B. The effective father will lead children to maturity first of all by example.
 - 1. You want to teach a child *diligence*. Does your work ethic agree with what you want the child to embrace?
 - 2. You want the child to prioritize spiritual things. **MAT 6:33.**
 - a. Is your day so overwhelmed with work and the cares of life that Scripture is choked out? **LUK 8:14.**
 - b. Does your child have any doubts that prayer is a vital part of your life?
 - c. Does your reverence for and attendance to God's house leave the child with the impression that you value it very highly?
 - d. Do you take your pastor's instructions and counsel seriously? If not, why should you expect your children to give serious attention to the same (or to your own instruction and counsel)?
 - e. Do you responsibly support the minister God gave you? Don't fool yourself on this one: children will “sniff out” a parent's attitude in this regard.

3. You want the child to learn *patience*. Are you patient with others? with your child? Are you patient in the matter of acquisitions or are you impulsive?
 4. You want the child to learn *thrift*. Do you eschew debt? Do you throw away money on vanities?
 5. You want the child to learn *endurance*. Do you just quit that household or yard task at the first hint of sweat or fatigue?
 6. You want the child to learn *responsibility*. Do you try to “pass the buck” on things for which you are responsible: duties, errors, security, etc.?
 7. You want the child to learn *prudence* and *circumspection*. Do you take stock of what's around you and what's on the horizon and adjust accordingly?
 8. You want the child to learn to handle frustration and disappointment with *dignity* and *grace*. Do you “lose it” when a planned outing is cancelled or if something breaks down or if you see someone driving foolishly?
 9. You want the child to learn that life is not defined by material acquisitions.
LUK 12:15.
 - a. Do you have any room left in your garage or closet?
 - b. Do you smother the child with stuff as if you think by that to buy the child's affection or obedience?
 - c. It is much more important to give children something to live for rather than things to live with.
 - d. You don't want the child to think that the world revolves around them.
 10. You want your children to abstain from fornication and develop godly desires for the opposite sex.
 - a. What are they learning from the things they see you reading or watching?
 - b. Is your son learning that women are nothing more than sex objects?
 - c. Is your daughter learning that she has to act and dress like a harlot to get a man?
 - d. When was the last time you meditated on **MAL 2:15**?
 11. In short, you want the child to learn *good values*.
 - a. Values are taught through lifestyles, preferences and priorities---not just words.
 - b. A bad example of values in fathering would be Lot. **GEN 19:8, 14, 30-36.**
- C. The effective father will also lead through verbal communication.
1. Words may build or destroy. **PRO 18:21.**
 2. Fathers are to be managers initiating productivity and creativity. Instruction should be:
 - a. *clear*. Is the instruction expressed as a wish or a command? As a child develops positive patterns, less instruction should be needed.
 - b. *well-defined and within the child's comprehension and ability to perform*. Mind that not every child develops these traits at the same age.
 - c. *certain*. Do not train your child to respond only to increased volume of command. Delayed obedience should be considered disobedience.
 3. Responsible leaders will check for results. **LUK 19:15; 2CO 9:2-3.**
- D. The effective father will use action more than words to get proper action out of children.
1. That which drives foolishness from children is the rod (**PRO 22:15; 23:13**), not the screams or shouts.
 2. Your rebukes and chastisements should be directed at correcting the child for his good.

3. Discipline should not be merely a temper tantrum because of fatigue, pent-up frustrations, irritability or your own irresponsibility.
- E. The effective father will take advantage of opportunities to have a child assist in responsibility. Don't always do things for the child just to get them out of the way.
- F. The effective father will be approachable. Turning away children who want to communicate when they are small will lead to breach of communication when they are older.
- G. The effective father will not perpetuate his own errors of youth!
1. Fathers, were you ever led astray by unnecessary exposure to television?
 2. Fathers, if you had had easy and ungoverned access to the internet in your youth, what would you have been doing?
 3. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” **(1CO 15:33)**.
- H. There are costs to effective fathering.
1. Evaluate children in a long-term perspective. It is easy to reckon other demands of time more important when children are small.
 2. The rich young ruler would not make needed adjustments in his lifestyle. **MAR 10:13-27.**
 3. Personal freedoms such as leisure time, habits, words and phrases and evaluations made in the presence of children may have to go.
 4. Because of a lack of time due to numerous involvements, a father may handle problems in the home with haste and force when patience and understanding would prove more effective.
 5. Effective fathers must have a definition of success different from that of the world. Submission to God's claims relative to fatherhood may be painful and costly.
- I. Fathers, remember Abraham who was praised as a commander of his household. **GEN 18:19.**
1. command: To order, enjoin, bid with authority or influence.
 2. Clearly, the godly father does not let wife or children take the helm.
 3. Mind that commanding includes *bidding with influence*.
 - a. influence: (v) To affect the mind or action of; to move or induce by influence.
 - b. influence: (n) The capacity or faculty of producing effects by insensible means, without the employment of material force, or the exercise of formal authority; ascendancy of a person or social group; moral power over or with a person; ascendancy, sway, control, or authority, not formally or overtly expressed.
 - c. *How* a father lives, acts, reacts, speaks, considers, decides, steers, etc. are powerful influences to youth.
 4. In view of the above, a wise commander will not *overdrive the flock*. **GEN 33:13.**
 - a. Excessive burdens cause futility and rebellion. **1KI 12:14-16.**
 - b. A wise commander will consider the interests of those he commands. **1SAM 25:32-33; 1CH 13:1-4.**
- J. Fathers, ever point your children to, and remind them of, your Father in heaven. **1CH 28:9.**
1. Show them your love of, and trust in God. Praise Him for His goodness, mercy, helps, deliverances and chastening.
 2. Tell your children of the hope you have in God and how His promises are what you cling to in the midst of a difficult, perverse and corrupting world.

3. Tell them about God's longsuffering and forbearance with sinners and that he is willing to forgive, being full of mercy. **PSA 86:5; MIC 7:18; 1TI 1:15-16.**
 - a. Make sure they know that God considers the broken nature of man and is pitiful. **PSA 103:13-14.**
 - b. Remember how God has been longsuffering and forbearing with you; do likewise with your children.
4. Hold fast to the doctrine you have learned and encourage them to do likewise. Warn them about the implications and consequences of false doctrine.
5. Present Jesus Christ to them as the answer to all life's problems and the Judge of all things. Make sure they know that by folly they will escape His blessings but they will not escape His scrutiny or His judgments.

X. Mothers! You play a vital role in the training of children towards godly maturity.

- A. Children are to obey their parentS. **EPH 6:1; LUK 2:51.**
 1. The *law of the mother* is not to be forsaken. **PRO 6:20.**
 2. law: A rule of conduct imposed by authority.
 3. The godly mother will therefore exercise authority over her brood by law and enforcement of law.
 4. The godly mother will not let the children rule the house or ruin themselves in her husband's absence.
- B. The mother is to *guide* (conduct the affairs of, manage) the house. **1TI 5:14.**
- C. She is to be a teacher and a keeper at home. **TIT 2:3-5.**
 1. keeper: One who has charge, care, or oversight of any person or thing; a guardian, warden, custodian.
 2. She therefore has a great sphere of influence for good or bad. **2CH 22:1-3.**
- D. There can be no doubt that the mother is generally the parent to whose rule, morals and example the children are most exposed. Therefore, mothers, consider your ways.
 1. Your teaching by word and example will have a profound influence upon children.
 - a. Do they know you to have regular prayer time or Bible reading? Do you prioritize God's house? Do you magnify or diminish the pastor's leadership in their presence?
 - b. Do they hear from you wisdom and kindness or silliness and gossip? **PRO 31:26.**
 - c. What kind of work ethic do they see in you? **PRO 31:27.**
 - d. Do they see you honoring and reverencing your husband's person and leadership while he is there and while he is out?
 - e. Do you want them to learn from your example that the only rule to submit to is flawless rule? **1PE 3:1.**
 - f. Do you view your children as your allies against your husband?
 - g. Is it obvious to them that they mean more to you than your husband?
 - h. Do you view your children as your personal pets or dolls, or as arrows to be sharpened and feathered for your husband's quiver? **PSA 127:3-5.**
 - i. Do you give them the impression that maternal and domestic life is a good thing?
 - j. Do you cave to their demands when you know you shouldn't because you can't bear the thought of them not loving you?
 2. Mothers with daughters, what is your long-term goal for them? Does it accord with what Paul set forth in **TIT 2:4-5**?

3. Mothers with sons, what is your long-term goal for them?
 - a. Do you want to stifle their masculinity or encourage it? Do you want them to be men or feminized metro-sexuals?
 - b. Do you want them to see that having a wife is a good thing for a man? What message are you giving them in this area?

XI. Parents, take heed!

- A. In your guidance and influence of your children, steer them towards good choices in mates, careers, entertainments, etc. Deep down, most every child is looking for guidance.
 1. You don't need to mandate every choice they make as long as they live under your roof, for then they would never actually be making a choice. And remember: maturity is about learning to make wise choices!
 2. Gauge the options available to them according to their age and maturity. As a child shows increasing reliability in making sound choices, increase the range of options within a sphere with which you are comfortable.
- B. You need to restrict your children's association with youth who are bad influences.
 1. Companions of fools will be destroyed. **PRO 13:20.**
 2. Do not assume that just because you are in a Christian-school or a home-schooling organization that everybody shares your family and moral values. I know otherwise!
 3. Solomon pointedly warned his son about associating with the wrong crowd. **PRO 1:10-16; 4:14-17.**
- C. There may have to be separation from youth who will not be controlled.
 1. Moses' law had a very hard outlook on rebellious offspring. **DEU 21:18-21.**
 - a. Mind that this was a law that was fulfilled by love. **ROM 13:9-10.**
 - b. Love is defined in **1JO 5:3.**
 2. The child that habitually rejects parental instruction and rebuke is a scorner that needs to be cast out. **PRO 13:1 c/w PRO 22:10.**
 3. It is ungodly to responsibly subsidize rebellion and ungodliness.
 - a. No one has the right to condemn the civil government for subsidizing ungodliness with welfare programs when he does the same in the home.
 - b. True love does not support injustice. **PHIL 1:9-10; 1CO 13:6.**

XII. Parents make mistakes. However, young people:

- A. You are responsible to obey every good thing your parents taught you no matter how bad your parents may have been. **MAT 23:1-3.**
- B. If you are smart enough to know your parents' mistakes and what they should have done, then you are smart enough to realize your own mistakes and what you should do.
- C. You are not justified in ruining your own life because of the mistakes of others. You cannot perpetually blame your failures on your parents when you know better.
 1. Blaming a parent for one's own failure has been popular since Adam blamed God for his failure (**GEN 3:12**). You are only proving your Adamic nature by doing so.
 2. Blame-shifters have been known to justify their own failure because:
 - a. the parents were poor and deprived the child of stuff that would have made him happy or given him better esteem in the eyes of his peers.
 - b. the parents were rich and smothered the child with stuff and never taught him values.
 - c. the parent was emotionally distant, which made the child feel unwanted.

- d. the parent was too “touchy-feely” and “clued-in,” which made the child feel smothered.
 - e. the parent was always working and never around.
 - f. the parent was always around and never gave the child space.
 - g. the parent was too lax on discipline.
 - h. the parent was too much of a disciplinarian.
 - i. the parent was a hypocrite whose flaws made submission impossible.
 - j. the parent was so perfect that the child couldn't possibly be that good.
 - k. the parent favored a sibling, which made the child jealous and bitter.
 - l. the parent favored the child, which made the child prideful.
 - m. the parent was not protective enough and let the child get hurt.
 - n. the parent was over-protective and never let the child develop character.
 - o. the parent was a drinker, which emboldened the child to become a drunkard.
 - p. the parent made drink taboo, which animated the child's curiosity in alcohol.
 - q. the parent was too spiritually-minded and out of touch with “the real world.”
 - r. the parent was too worldly, which made for a worldly child.
- 3. Israel was wont to blame their troubles on their ancestors but God wasn't buying that. **EZE 18:1-4, 14-20.**
 - 4. Your parents will suffer for their wrongs. You will suffer for YOURS!
- D. The height of immaturity is refusing to accept responsibility for your actions.
ECC 11:9-10; 12:13-14.

XIII. Young people: you are living in a very wicked time in American history. You are in the midst of a culture which is at war with God and which does not have your best interests at heart. In fact, its great goal is to exploit you for its own selfish purposes.

- A. Don't ever get to thinking that the fashion industry or the entertainment industry (movies, television, music, etc.) exists for your good to improve you as a person and bring you to the fullness that has been addressed in these messages.
 - 1. These industries have one great love. And it's not you. **1TI 6:10.**
 - 2. These industries know that lust sells because human nature desires it. **EPH 4:22.**
 - 3. The more they degrade you, the more lust they can sell you.
 - 4. These industries are seldom even friendly to the models and entertainers that are in the public eye.
 - a. The models and entertainers are themselves often in those industries because of a prideful desire for attention or vain fame and the industries exploit them through their desire.
 - b. When the models and entertainers are no longer popular, they are of little value to the industries that profited by them.
- B. God's children can survive in such a society and be true stars.
PHIL 2:14-15; MAT 5:14-16.
- C. It is possible to escape *the corruption that is in the world through lust*. **2PE 1:4.**
 - 1. It is NOT by going along with the crowd and doing what they're doing.
EPH 5:3-7; EXO 23:2.
 - 2. It is NOT by opening yourselves up to allow your lusts to be exploited.
ROM 13:14; PSA 101:3.
 - 3. It is NOT by having pleasure in those who live ungodly. **ROM 1:32; PRO 2:14.**
 - 4. It is by walking in the Spirit, which is following the teaching of the Spirit as given in the Bible. **GAL 5:16; PSA 119:1-3, 9-11.**

5. The real issue is whether you even desire to not be a slave to your lusts.
6. The real issue is whether you want to be a true Christian or if you just want the show of Christianity to appease parents and pastor but your true interest is your lust.

XIV. Young people! This culture is waging a war for the control of your minds.

- A. This war is being prosecuted by many forces: politics, education, entertainment, technology, mass media, ignorant relatives and friends, false religion, etc. which advance false messages that oppose God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, decency and common sense.
- B. Consider some of the false messages that are out there:
 1. There is no God and therefore no absolute standard of good, nor accountability to God.
 2. There was no divine Creation; all things evolved by blind chance without purpose.
 3. If there is a God, he is whatever you think he is.
 4. If there is a God, he is pleased with whatever you believe or do and by any manner of service to himself.
 5. The Bible is mostly myth and legend, not factual, and the source of all hatred.
 6. Jesus Christ, if He even existed, was just a man who is still dead.
 7. Debt is a good thing. Never save to purchase what you could borrow and get now.
 8. Money and power are the most important things in life.
 9. Homosexuality is good and normal.
 10. Fornication (pre-marital sex in any form) is good and natural. Everyone does it.
 11. Pornography is harmless.
 12. Friends pressuring you into drunkenness, illegal drugs, theft, foul language, etc.
 13. Friends corrupting good manners such as respecting parents, adults and authority in general.
 14. Friends telling you your parents' church is a cult and you should get away from it.
 15. Girls are defined by their sexiness. Sexually alluring speech and apparel are the way to be superior to other girls, get attention and snag a guy.
 16. Girls should think that a professional career is better than being a wife and mother.
 17. Guys should think of girls as nothing more than sex objects.
 18. Manliness is defined by drunkenness, violence and sexual conquests.
 19. Marriage is anything: man/woman, man/man, woman/woman, man/women.
 20. Marriage is nothing. It's fine to shack up with someone without commitment.
 21. Marriage is easily dissolved. Divorce is an easy way out of your commitment.
 22. This life is all there is so live it up. YOLO!
- C. The above are the ways of the carnal mind, the ways of death, not life and peace. **ROM 8:6, 13.**
 1. They are the ways of self-destruction. You will reap what you sow. **GAL 6:7-8.**
 2. They are the ways of destroying others. If you want to ruin others' lives as well as your own, then embrace these ways.
 3. They are ungodliness that shall not stand in the day of judgment. **JUDE 1:14-15.**
- D. The counter to this cultural battle for your minds is the gospel. **2CO 10:4-5.**
 1. The gospel has power to save them that govern their minds by it. **1CO 15:1-2; 1TI 4:16.**
 2. You CAN be saved from this *untoward* (unrestrained, unruly, perverse) *generation*. **ACT 2:40.**
 3. But again I ask, "Do you really even want to be saved from it, from its vices, its principles, its fate?"

- E. This war for the mind underscores the need for discretion/discernment when listening to teachers, other adults, relatives, friends, etc. **PRO 2:10-22.**
1. The Bible is our standard by which everyone else's ideas are measured and, if necessary, condemned as invalid. **PSA 119:128; MAT 4:4.**
 2. It is our flashlight in the dark to save us from stumbling. **PRO 6:20-23; PSA 119:105.**
 3. We must compare whatever message others are giving us with what the Bible says to see if that message agrees with God. If it doesn't, they are wrong. **ISA 8:20.**
 4. If someone is telling you something that is different than what the Bible says is right, you know it's wrong and should be avoided. **PRO 19:27; 14:7.**
 5. If it is an adult that teaches you something that is wrong, be respectful towards them in your disagreement.

XV. A big concern for youth is peer pressure. The influences of those with whom youth associate play a large role in the shaping of their mind and values.

- A. Discretion is needed in social relationships because we ARE influenced by the company we keep. **DEU 20:8; PSA 106:34-35; PRO 13:20; 1CO 15:33.**
1. Discretion is needed in the *selection of friends*. Parents will have to be pro-active in this area, encouraging positive friendships and discouraging negative ones.
 2. Discretion is needed in one's *conduct towards friends*. Young people: you have been taught the fear of God and the way of righteousness---don't be a negative influence in the lives of your companions.
 3. We will be influenced for good or evil by others outside of ourselves. Therefore follow that which is good. **3JO 1:11 c/w 2PE 2:2.**
 4. Because of this susceptibility to influence, we are told to avoid bad company. **PRO 9:6; 22:24-25; 23:20; 24:1; PSA 1:1.**
 5. Companions who plant negative thoughts in your hearts about godly people should be avoided. Beware of letting your minds be adversely affected by those who despise good people. **ACT 14:2; 2TI 3:3.**
 6. Running with the wrong crowd can have deadly consequences. **2KI 2:23-24.**
 7. Young people! The world around you is sufficient danger for you to deal with.
 - a. Don't add to that by making friends with worldly people.
 - b. And if you are yourself becoming too worldly, don't corrupt others with your worldliness---especially younger children. You don't need to be a threat to a younger child's well-being and you don't want a curse on yourself! **LUK 17:1-2.**
- B. Young people! You will experience negative peer pressure from your companions, especially those who lack good principles.
1. You will likely be pressured into sinful things like fornication, theft, drunkenness, drugs, filthy language, disobedience to parents, disregard of lawful authority, etc.
 2. You will likely hear things like, "Come on, everybody does this."
 3. Remember what God says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (**EXO 23:2**).
 4. Remember that following the crowd was what nailed Jesus Christ to the cross. **MAT 27:22-23.**
 5. If sinners entice you (stir you up, lure you by appeals to your lusts), don't go along with them. **PRO 1:10.**
 6. Stand firm on good principles like Joshua. **JOS 24:15.**

- C. Friends may pressure you to not believe in God or to believe in a false god.
1. They may make fun of you for believing in God and Christ. If so, you are blessed. **MAT 5:10-12.**
 2. There is only one God (**ISA 44:6**), the God of the Bible.
 3. He is a Trinity: one God in three Persons. **1JO 5:7.**
 4. Jesus Christ is God (**JOH 1:14; 1TI 3:16**) and the ONLY way of salvation. **JOH 14:6; ACT 4:12.**
 5. The most important thing in your life is to love and believe in God with all of your being. **MAT 22:37-38.**
 6. Don't give heed to someone who tells you otherwise. **PRO 19:27.**
- D. Friends may pressure you to go to other churches that teach different doctrine, or to not go to church at all.
1. They may pressure you to go to a different church which has more programs, entertainment, groups and friends, etc., and where religion is easy.
 2. Church is for the praise of God *in spirit and truth* (**JOH 4:23-24**), for the feeding of sheep, not the amusing of goats. And true religion was never meant to be "easy." **MAT 7:13-14.**
 3. Hold fast to the faith you have been taught in church and at home. **1CO 15:58.**
 4. Be discerning, always measuring what you are taught by the Scriptures (**ACT 17:11**); don't forsake assembling with a godly church for personal reasons. **HEB 10:23-25.**
 5. Remember Moses who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. **HEB 11:24-27.**
- E. Friends may pressure you to disobey, disrespect or mock your parents.
1. God commands you to obey your parents. **EPH 6:1.**
 - a. You are to obey them *in all things*. **COL 3:20.**
 - (1) You need to give them the benefit of the doubt in the rules they set down for you.
 - (2) Unless they are requiring you to do something that you know is sinful, you should not rebel against their rule.
 - (3) If you are convinced that what they are demanding of you is sinful, respectfully tell them that. If the problem continues, tell the pastor.
 - b. You need to honor your parents that it may go well with you. **EPH 6:2-3.**
 - c. Mocking your parents is not a joking matter. **PRO 30:17.**
 2. You should also respect your elders in general. **LEV 19:32 c/w ISA 3:5.**
- F. Friends may pressure you to get drunk or to use illegal drugs or abuse otherwise lawful products as intoxicants.
1. Drunkenness is a sin as murder is a sin. **GAL 5:21.**
 - a. drunkenness: The state of being drunk; intoxication; the habit of being drunken or addicted to excessive drinking.
 - b. drunk: That has drunk intoxicating liquor to an extent which affects steady self-control; intoxicated, inebriated; overcome by alcoholic liquor.
 - c. intoxicate: To stupefy, render unconscious or delirious, to madden or deprive of the ordinary use of the senses or reason, with a drug or alcoholic liquor, to inebriate, make drunk.
 2. Intoxicating oneself by any means other than alcoholic liquor falls under the censure of drunkenness by virtue of the words, "...and such like..." (**GAL 5:21**).
 3. Drunkenness will cause you to lose control of yourself and commit other sins.

PRO 23:29-35.

4. Drunkenness can cause you to shame yourself by nakedness. **LAM 4:21.**
5. Drunkenness sets you up for sexual battery. **GEN 19:35; HAB 2:15.**
 - a. Don't be deceived into thinking that parties where intoxicants are used are harmless teenage fun.
 - b. Young ladies especially need to be on guard here!
6. Mind that there is an element of criminality that needs to be considered.
 - a. In Ohio, the legal age for consumption of alcohol without parental presence and supervision is 21. Parents should review Sec. 4301.69 of the Ohio Revised Code, etc.
 - b. Bodily injury, death or property damage caused by someone under the influence of alcohol or some other intoxicant have serious consequences for youth and parents.
 - c. Illegal drugs are not only dangerous but can carry heavy penalties.
7. Our culture thinks drunkenness is a joking matter but sin is no joking matter. **PRO 14:9; ROM 6:23.**
- G. Friends may pressure you into stealing things.
 1. They may think it's cool to shoplift or steal from parents or neighbors and suggest that you try it.
 2. Stealing may be a criminal act in the eyes of the state and is always a sin in the eyes of God. **EXO 20:15; EPH 4:28.**
 3. Stealing may lead to other sins like lying (to cover it up) or swearing that you never stole the thing you stole, which is *blasphemy*. **PRO 30:9.**
- H. Friends may pressure you into using ungodly or filthy language.
 1. Using God's name in vain is utterly forbidden. **EXO 20:7.**
 - a. Remember that Jesus Christ is God (**1TI 3:16**) and therefore His name is not to be taken in vain either.
 - b. Euphemisms like *Jeez*, *Geez*, *Gee-whiz*, *Cripes*, etc. should be avoided.
 2. We are to put off *filthy* (morally foul, polluted, obscene) communication. **COL 3:8.**
 - a. Jokes, stories and such like that make light of or glorify sin, especially sexual sin, are to be avoided. **PRO 14:9.**
 - b. Verbalizing sin or filthiness tends to incentivize sin or filthy actions. **JAM 3:6.**
 - c. The same principle applies to written communication which is a form of speech. **ACT 8:34.**
 3. We are to avoid *cursing* (the utterance of words which consign to spiritual or temporal evil....damning). **JAM 3:9-10.**
 - a. Not all cursing is wrong. **MAR 11:21.**
 - b. As young people, you do not have the discernment to know when it is appropriate and when it is not so you should follow your parents' rules concerning it.
 4. We know we are on safe ground when our speech is *edifying* (upbuilding) and *sound* (without harm or injury). **EPH 4:29; TIT 2:8.**
- I. Friends may pressure you into having sex before you are married.
 1. Such "friends" have plenty of allies in this temptation: Satan who destroys men through their unbridled lusts, a culture which promotes ungodly sexual activity, and your own nature which is "...corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (**EPH 4:22**).
 2. The Bible calls pre-marital sex *fornication* and it is sinful. **1CO 6:18; 1TH 4:3-5.**

- a. fornication: Voluntary sexual intercourse between a man (in restricted use, an unmarried man) and an unmarried woman. In Scripture, extended to adultery.
 - b. intercourse: 2. a. Social communication between individuals; frequent and habitual contact in conversation and action; dealings. d. Sexual connexion.
 - c. connexion: The action of connecting or joining together; the condition of being connected or joined together.
 - d. Fornication is thus the connecting of any part of one person's body (sexual organ, hand, mouth, etc.) to the sexual organ of another person's body for sexual gratification.
 - e. This prohibition is not limited to sexual connection between people of different gender. Don't ever get to thinking that sexual connection with someone of your own gender is an acceptable alternative to sexual connection in marriage to someone of the opposite gender. **ROM 1:26-27.**
3. Pre-marital sex is a defiling thing. **GEN 34:1-7.**
- a. defile: To render morally foul or polluted; to destroy the ideal purity of; to corrupt, taint, sully.
 - b. The Holy Spirit plainly says that what happened between Shechem and Dinah was wrong. **GEN 34:7.**
 - c. The woman who voluntarily had sexual connection before marriage was said to have “played the whore” and was subject to capital punishment. **DEU 22:21.**
 - (1) whore: A woman who prostitutes herself for hire; a prostitute, harlot. b. More generally: An unchaste or lewd woman; a fornicatress or adulteress; *to play the whore* (of a woman), to commit fornication or adultery.
 - (2) The woman who commits fornication for personal gratification may not sell herself sexually for money but has given her body for other commodities which she desires: attention, affection, emotional thrill, etc. and so has *played the whore*, i.e., acted the role of a whore.
 - d. The N.T. makes clear that men who have sexual connection before marriage are sinners also since they are obviously fornicators and/or whoremongers.
 - (1) whoremonger: One who has dealings with whores; one who practises whoredom; a fornicator, lecher.
 - (2) See **EPH 5:5.**
4. Young people: avoid things which open doors to sexual experimentation. Make no provision for your flesh's lusts. **ROM 13:14.**
- a. Avoid entertainment that feeds the desire of the eyes and lusts.
 - b. Avoid reading suggestive material that excites ungodly lusts.
 - c. Avoid conversations with friends, etc. that stir up ungodly lusts.
 - d. Avoid things that break down your inhibitions.
 - e. Young ladies: avoid wearing clothing that is obviously sexually arousing.
 - (1) Dress modestly. **1TI 2:9-10.**
 - (2) Immodest apparel is the uniform of prostitution. **PRO 7:10.**
 - (3) Suggestive clothing sends a universal message: “I am cheap and my sexuality is more important to me than my respect and my virtue.”
 - (4) Breasts are to be reserved for a husband. **EZE 23:2-3; PRO 5:19.**
5. Marriage is the sole venue for blessed sexual connection. **HEB 13:4.**

XVI. Other faulty messages that are at war with God's words are the corruptions of what being a man or woman is all about.

- A. Our culture in general teaches boys the wrong ideas about manliness. Television and movies are particularly loud voices in this area but they are not the only ones. Public education is exerting tremendous influence upon developing males to be other than what God intends for them.
1. One message is that being a man means that one must be a mannerless lout, a discourteous badger, or a tough-guy thug who gets his way through violence, a win-at-all-costs wealth-driven cheater, a great athlete, a sports buff, a womanizer, a woman-user, a vessel into which copious amounts of beer are to be poured, and in general a slave to his own emotions and base desires.
 2. Another bad message is that men should be unassertive, effeminate, incompetent, clueless floor-mats for women to walk all over.
 3. Jesus Christ is the ultimate man (**JOH 19:5; EPH 4:13**) and He was/is none of those things.
 4. Boys especially should consider Jesus Christ the supreme model to follow. We are to be conformed to His image. **ROM 8:29; 1JO 3:2.**
 - a. Jesus was holy, harmless and undefiled. **HEB 7:26.**
 - b. Jesus was meek, lowly; He sought not man's glory. **MAT 11:29; JOH 5:44.**
 - c. Jesus was self-sacrificing. **JOH 10:15; 15:13.**
 - d. Jesus desired God's will and did it. **JOH 5:30; 8:29.**
 - e. Jesus was a man of authority. **MAR 1:22.**
 - f. Jesus controlled His spirit. **1PE 2:22-23.**
 - g. Jesus controlled His desires. **MAT 4:4.**
 - h. Jesus was a man of prayer. **MAR 1:35.**
 - i. Jesus was a man of faith. **HEB 2:13.**
 5. If you are characterized by faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, you will be like Jesus and be a real man. **2PE 1:5-8.**
 6. A real man need not be a married man, as Jesus. Or Paul. **1CO 7:8.**
 7. David summed up a real man in **1KI 2:2-4.** A real man:
 - a. keeps the charge of the Lord his God.
 - b. walks in God's ways.
 - c. keeps God's statutes, commandments, judgments and testimonies as written.
 - d. walks before God in truth with all his soul.
- B. Our culture in general teaches girls the wrong ideas about womanhood. Again, the entertainment industry is a particularly loud voice against God in this area, as is public education.
1. We are deluged with messages of the glories of female empowerment in everything from comic books to Planned Parenthood.
 - a. Planned Parenthood (and such like) has been summed up as being about consequence-free sex for females, married or unmarried, so as to bring them up to the level of men who can have sex and walk away from its consequences (a pregnancy).
 - (1) NOTE: Neither male nor female has the right to consequence-free sex outside of marriage. **HEB 13:4.**
 - (2) Even in marriage, both male and female are never to consider a

- pregnancy as a disposable nuisance. **PSA 127:3.**
- b. Parents would do well to thoroughly investigate the likes of the Girl Scouts and not assume that the current values are the values of Grandma's Girl Scout days.
2. Our culture's message is that men and women are equal in every way.
 - a. God says that women are "...the weaker vessel..." (**1PE 3:7**).
 - b. God says that wives should submit to and obey their husbands. **1PE 3:1, 6.**
 - c. God says that a society where women rule is in trouble. **ISA 3:12.**
 - d. It is much more than body parts that distinguishes men from women.
 3. Our culture says that a professional career for a woman is superior to domestic life.
 - a. God says that younger women should marry, have children and guide the house. **1TI 5:14; TIT 2:3-5.**
 - b. The older women and mothers in the church should be teaching this to the girls.
 - c. Being a *keeper at home* (**TIT 2:5**) does not mean that you are chained to a sink.
 - (1) The virtuous woman of **PRO 31** is a model of ingenuity and industry who brought food for the family from afar (**v. 14**), bought a field and planted a vineyard (**v. 16**), and made fine linen and girdles for sale to the merchant (**v. 24**).
 - (2) Though not locked inside all the time, all that she did was with an eye to her husband and household. **vs. 11, 27.**
 - d. Economic or health circumstances or death of a husband may require a woman to work outside of the home.
 - (1) What if a young widow with children has no extended family for support and there is neither an available or willing suitor? **1TI 5:1-16.**
 - (2) Such would be a case of *necessity*. Saints in general are to "...learn to maintain good works for necessary uses..." (**TIT 3:14**).
 - (3) A learned skill set could be a prudent foresight. **PRO 22:3; 19:14.**
 - (4) Special circumstances, though, are not the rule any more than David's eating of the shewbread made such eating a universal rule. **MAT 12:3-4.**
 - (5) The general fate of *latch-key children* is witness to the importance of a mother being in the home. **PRO 29:15.**

XVII. Another false message from our culture is the "advantage" of debt.

- A. debt: That which is owed or due; anything (as money, goods, or service) which one person is under obligation to pay or render to another: a. a sum of money or a material thing.
- B. Our entire financial system is one of *debt-monetization*. Our money is not based upon a commodity but rather upon an unpaid obligation.
- C. A *credit card* is really a *debt card*, especially if you have not already allocated funds for whatever is put on the card.
- D. God does not want us to be in debt.
 1. Sin is called debt. **LUK 11:4.**
 2. We are to owe no man anything. **ROM 13:8.**
 3. You are the servant of the person to whom you owe money. **PRO 22:7.**
 4. We are to strive for freedom, not bondage. **1CO 7:21.**

- XVIII. God is very aware and considerate of children, childhood, youth and immaturity.
- A. Children are an heritage of the LORD. **PSA 127:3.**
 - B. A sign of His blessing and favor in reviving Jerusalem was boys and girls playing in the streets. **ZEC 8:5.**
 - C. It was with an eye to little children that God spared Nineveh. **JON 4:11.**
 - D. It was the children of a disobedient generation that God shepherded safely to Canaan. **NUM 14:31.**
 - E. Jesus even used children in the market as a parable of gospel appeals. **MAT 11:16-19.**
 - F. A prophecy of Messiah's time was that "...a little child shall lead them" (**ISA 11:6**).
 1. Jesus was such a child, a leader even in youth. **ISA 9:6; LUK 2:46-52.**
 2. Citizenship in His kingdom is attained by child-like submission and simplicity. **MAT 18:3; 11:25-26.**
 - G. Young believers are under the particular care of heaven. **MAT 18:6-11.**
 - H. Wise men recognize that youth is generally a time of emotion-driven, sense-driven, carefree living. **ECC 11:9; 1CO 13:11.**
 - I. Wise men also call upon youth to remember their Creator. **ECC 12:1; PRO 8:17.**
 1. There is more to childhood and youth than carefree playing, emotion and sensuality. Mark it well: you will be known by your doings! **PRO 20:11.**
 2. The saying, "Too soon old; too late wise" is not written in stone. A childhood that balances natural childishness with sober consideration of God and His ways tends towards successful living early in adult life.
 3. The Psalmist was an instructed youth of faith. **PSA 71:5, 17.**
 4. Leaders tend to show themselves such early in life.
 - a. David was bold through God in youth. **1SAM 17:32-37.**
 - b. Samuel stood out as a God-fearing child. **1SAM 2:18.**
 - c. Josiah sought God early in life and was a great king. **2CH 34:1-3.**
 - d. John the Baptist began to show strength of spirit early. **LUK 1:80.**
 - e. Paul's stalwart devoutness was known from his youth. **ACT 26:4-5.**
 - f. Timothy knew the Scriptures as a youth. **2TI 3:15.**
 - g. It is good that youth bear the yoke of godly trust. **LAM 3:25-27.**
 5. Forget not your good teachers' instructions, be they parents, pastor or especially the Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture. **PRO 5:11-13.**
 6. By seeking God through prayer and Scripture, hearkening unto godly counsel from your elders, not being ruled by your fears or your feelings, and trusting God to guide you, uphold you and protect you, you can face life successfully and "...shine as lights in the world" (**PHIL 2:15**), and not have to live with haunting memories of your childhood. **PSA 25:7.**