

My Problem

Youth Questions
answered by
Ray L. Straub



Is...

QUESTION:

My question is very personal, but it has me in a real quandery. It is difficult to discuss with someone near me. I have been dating this fellow I like very much (I hesitate to use the word "love," although it might be appropriate), and we have been going together quite a long time. We get along well, and there are no objections from either of our families. About the only real problem we have is, when we're together alone for quite some time, he asks me to prove my love for him by going all the way. I don't think that we should allow our being together to get out of hand, but he insists that other couples do it as a proof of their love to each other. He says that my refusal just proves that I don't love him as much as I should. I would like to show my affection for him, but must I do it his way?

ANSWER:

Your problem is personal, but it is not unique. In fact, I'm sure it is one of the difficult problems a great many young people face. I will do

the best I can to analyze this situation clearly for you so that you, and perhaps others that read this column, can handle it in a way that will bring the most good to everyone concerned. Your understanding of the circumstances will be your most valuable tool in arriving at the right decision.

I am anxious that wherever love exists, it be proven! Does this surprise you? There is a definite way for you to prove your love, and a way in which your boyfriend may prove his love for you. After all, he should be as willing as he expects you to be.

To give proof of love, we must know what it is. The real meaning of love, to my mind, is best expressed in the Bible: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Generally, we use the King James Version for Bible study, and I'm sure you have one. Compare the wording of your text to that given by the J. B. Phillips' translation: "This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience—it

looks for a way of being constructive. It is not possessive: it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.

"Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy. It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all good men when truth prevails.

"Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hopes; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen."

Can you see now why I am anxious that you two should prove your love to each other? Your boyfriend has actually not been asking for proof of love, he simply requests your obedience. This he most certainly does not deserve when he asks you to perform an immoral act! In fact, he has no right to expect *obedience* from you at all before marriage.

The sex appetite is one of our strongest, particularly in the young male. Without fully meaning to, one will deceive and even threaten in order to find satisfaction for this appetite when it is aroused. It is basically selfish, and if not disciplined, will use friends and unfair means to accomplish its own ends. Your boyfriend is not really wanting to express his love to you, he wants to use you, as he uses china and silverware to eat in

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order to satisfy his hunger for food.

Were you to give in, at best he would receive only momentary satisfaction. He would gain surprisingly little, and you would lose so much.

A big loss you face is the loss of respect from your boyfriend who tries to coerce you into this immoral act. Having conquered you, he may wander to new challenges.

You would face the real possibility of pregnancy. This would interrupt plans you have for yourself, and if you married, it would interrupt your boyfriend's plans. You would harshly be thrown into a world of responsibility for which neither of you would be fully prepared. Your families would suffer embarrassment. Instead of delighting those you love, you would be punishing them. This is hardly proof of love.

If you were married later, pregnant or not, the marriage itself would be anti-climax. Instead of its being a dignified affair before God and friends, witnessing the union of two people into one, it would be a mere formal expression of vows by two people who have been using each other. The real thrill of union following ceremony will have been wasted.

Further, you will be living together as two people who have already proven unfaithfulness by indulging in extra-marital activity. Having given into each other before marriage, you will wrestle with the possibility of unfaithfulness after marriage. You will have given in to mere physical attraction once at great loss. What is to prevent its happening again, even though there is risk of further loss?

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plays when they grow older. Don't you think that they will do likewise when they are instructed with the words of God? I answer capital YES! You can remember Timothy as a typical example of that. After he had been trained up by his Mother and Grandmother, he grew up to become a successful minister of God. So was Samuel, if you could remember, and many others whom I am not ready to mention one by one.

Meanwhile, we have come to a stage where the services of the younger ones are seriously needed in the spreading of God's Word. As I go around, many children are responding to the call while many have been deprived by parents who discouraged them, some by the earthly riches and high education of the world. Though I am not criticizing those who have stepped into this line, but encouraging them not to leave others undone; they must fear the Lord which is the beginning of knowledge and not to entangle themselves with the evolutionary science of the universe, for there is no profit to gain the whole world and lose one's life.

Eventually, many ambitious youths are retreating due to bad examples laid by our members, teachers, ministers of the church and associates of identical faith. Paul advised his followers to do as he had done. Why can't we be a good example to our boys, encouraging them to grow up and take the seat after us? Rather we find fault by which they will scatter and disperse into the world; we envied them like Saul to the small David.

O. K., let's see if this would make us any good. In Matthew 18th chapter, vs. 5, read thus: "And he that (who-

so) shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." Verse 6 reads: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

The first verse had pronounced the blessing, it is to receive the little ones not only in our congregation, but elsewhere. What a wonderful reception of receiving our Lord invisibly through the visible reception of the little ones. Don't you want to befriend our Lord Jesus? If you want, try to encourage the children in your congregation, try to help establish a strong FYC Organization in your local Church if you haven't any. If you have, try your possible best to help them achieve success in their projects. Don't try to scatter them by imputing evils on them, by trying to accuse them falsely. For verse 6 had told us the evil that will come upon somebody who tries to scandalize one of them that believes. If you have caused something like that, try to reconcile with them.

Please, as you read, you check yourself if your sons and daughters have fully registered in their local FYC. If you are a teacher, or minister, you check if your behavior will not make the little ones that believe to stumble; thus you become a stumbling block to the congregation. If you are a member, do you talk about the progress of the youth in your localities or in the church in general with ministers? If not, act immediately and think of the serviceable works of the Youth of the Church. If you fail to do your part, it means that you want them to disperse in the

world and get lost. Just see how precious it is to win a single soul.

In conclusion, read Eph. 6:4. This is advice to fathers, mothers, and also anyone who is responsible for the guidance of the children. Ministers, I think, should take the greatest care over them. There are many whose parents are not members of our Church; it should be the duty of the ministers to advise them, even not ministers only, in accordance with Romans 15:1 (which I want you to read yourself), else they scatter into the world, for satan had filled the world with many, many things which will attract the eyes, which the ears would like to listen to their stories, which the mouth would like to talk of and which the hands would eventually like to catch if at all the legs can touch there. The children are ministers of tomorrow, so take them, care for them properly as our Lord did, but don't try to disperse them like the disciples.

THANK YOU— FYC'ERS

for responding to the plea for the typewriter for the Ahoada, Nigeria, office. Response has at last, been fruitful! We have just about got enough pledges to enable the purchase to be made before too long! For this, we thank the Lord. YOUR HELP is still solicited! We could still use more pledges! MAKE YOUR PLEDGE THE NEXT ONE! WRITE TODAY TO: 903 East Boone, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464!

—Jewell Linville
* * *

"Riches consist not in the extent of your possessions, but in the fewness of your wants."

MY PROBLEM IS . . .

(Continued from page 17)

If there is any love between you and your boyfriend at all, this love will seek no other way than that of patience until you are married. It will then continue its growth in terms of respectability, sacrifice, and seeking the welfare of others.

So, the next time your boyfriend asks you to prove your love for him, ask him to prove his for you. He will do so by respecting your dignity. If he cannot offer this evidence of love, you would be making the most shameful of mistakes by giving in where such a tremendously high price is paid—for nothing gained.

I urge you to stay away from situations where you and your friend are strongly aroused sexually. Love does not grow in these tempting situations. These are broad highways leading to serious difficulty. Once they are traveled too far, there is no turning back.

I hope you two really are in love. If this is true, love will assure control of physical appetites which are satisfied only at the great expense of others. Love is really kind of funny; the more you have, the easier it is to show it. The more you express it, the more it grows. Only real love behaves this way.

* * *

OPERATION F-A-I-T-H

Plans for a summer tour to youth groups is still moving forward, so Project F-A-I-T-H is still in need of your support. Referring to February AIM, you will recall that each letter of the word, FAITH, represents \$20. "F" is now completed. A total of \$100 is needed. Will you help with the next step?

My Problem

Youth Questions
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Is...

QUESTION:

I would like to become a professional musician, a singer. I love to sing, and I've been told that I'm quite good at it. My parents tend to discourage me through their advice to be cautious about any planning in this direction. They are sympathetic, but not encouraging. I deeply respect my parents' advice, but I would enjoy work in the field of music. Both my parents and I want to know what you think about the possibility of my training to become a professional musician.

ANSWER:

While your question presents a sizeable problem, it was a joy to receive it because it testifies to an excellent family relationship. You are advantaged to have parents that surely have been wise, and this is reflected in having a youth with just about the right combination of enthusiasm and parental respect. Also, you deserve an orchid for recognizing the value of wise parents, even

when they disagree with you.

There is little doubt but that you and your parents will eventually arrive at the best decision in this matter that is obviously of great importance to you. While you continue your consideration and discussion there are thoughts I might call to your attention for what they may be worth.

There are certainly many important values to weigh in making your decision—many more than I can list here. I will attempt to present some.

Good music is a form of art. While I am unfortunate in not living in the world of the artist, I applaud anyone's confidence in his own ability to enter it. This artist's world is one of souls possessing enough sensitivity to communicate on the level of soul-communication. When one artist expresses himself to another through some artistic medium, he speaks a

language that some of us "clods" miss completely. If it is well-disciplined, the artist surely lives a fuller life. Many of us hope that one day our senses will awaken to allow us to understand more fully the artist's expressions and revelations.

I would find it hard to discourage any young person aspiring to enter a field of art. It would seem to be an attempt to deny him an essential part of his life. One ought to be encouraged to live a rich, full, revealing and exciting life. This is an allurements of Christianity—the invitation to a more abundant life by the birth of the Spirit of Christ in our lives. Similarly, fuller life can be achieved by participation in constructive soul-communication.

However, there are pitfalls against which every aspiring artist should brace himself. There are few artistic people in this world which suggests that there are not many who can fully appreciate artistic accomplishments. Consequently, the demand for the professional people in this field is comparatively small. A small demand makes competition all the more fierce. So, the possibility or likelihood of success as a professional in any artistic endeavor is distressingly small.

It is this threatening disappointment that your parents undoubtedly wish to save you from. It is probable that the greater awareness you recognize here, the less reluctance your parents will feel about your training to become a musician.

To merely give assent to the fact that disappointment may come is not enough recognition. There is more to be done. It would seem wise for anyone studying to become a professional musician to also consider training for

some other vocation. If severe competition brings serious delay or interruptions, you will still be qualified to carry your normal responsibilities. Too many artists grow impatient and withdraw from responsibility. Instead of giving the valuable contribution to life that their endowments might, they become a nuisance to those close to them, simply because they did not prepare to face the basic realities. Even though you travel the road to becoming a professional musician, be prepared to detour wherever a "crash" or "washout" lures ahead.

You should recognize that others who do not receive the satisfaction from music that you do cannot possibly share your enthusiasm for it. In trying to give your talents and ambitions the attention you feel they deserve, those around you must be generously understanding. You must be understanding, too. Where willingness to do such is absent, conflict easily arises.

If it should be considered wise to postpone training in your chosen field for awhile, do not give up your interest in music. It can develop along with other worthwhile interests. Life has much to offer and numerous ways are available through which our deeper feelings may be expressed. It is not limited to one field. Keep your heart and mind open to other avenues of development, but do not be discouraged and lose your desire to progress in your musical training.

I am sure that through continued discussion, careful consideration to the feelings of others, and through prayer, that you will arrive at just the right decision for you. I wish you thrilling success in whatever endeavor you choose.

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Is . . .

PROBLEM:

My mother and father think that it is wrong for me to attend teen-age dances, and we have some pretty warm arguments over it. They don't give me any satisfactory answers as to why I shouldn't go. They just insist that it's not right, and they get pretty upset when I let them know how very much I want to attend some dances.

ANSWER:

You have every right to expect answers to the question, "Why can't I attend dances?" However, it is difficult for me to know what you might consider a satisfactory answer. Practically all lively young people want reasons for being denied an activity which attracts them. I sincerely hope that all parents, youth leaders, and church leaders come to recognize more the right of our youth to hear reasons behind the various im-

portant standards of our church. If they have value, surely they can be defended.

There is also the possibility that one may want to participate in an activity so much that he will not listen to any reasoning which threatens such participation. In this event answers are generally refused. Maturity demands that we know the difference between *wanting answers* and *demanding permission*. Reasoning is for the reasonable; answers are for those asking sincere questions. One who seeks neither answers nor reasoning cannot easily be satisfied by either.

I'm happy that you seek to reason, so let's try to get at it!

Basic Christian discipline invites us to constantly better our lives, with God's help. Anything

that interrupts or disturbs this process should be avoided. Paul puts it this way, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. . . . Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:1, 2). In continuing, he advises, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. . . ." (Verse 5). This latter part suggests that we should gain control over any tendencies or appetites which debase us.

So, we have an excellent guideline in determining what is right for the youthful Christian. Whatever activity is good for us, and that seeks to make us a better, more mature and spiritual personality, should be acceptable. Any activity that arouses desires to do something wrong or unbecoming should be avoided.

What has this to do with dancing? Everything!

Dancing is a kind of activity which arouses the appetites of members of opposite sexes for each other (erotic feelings). I recognize that each time this is suggested, those questioning deny that any such feelings occur in them. In many cases this may be true. Nonetheless, dancing remains the kind of activity that is directed toward questionable stimulation. It is not difficult to prove this. Most adults readily admit it.

Many modern dances are of the non-contact variety. This suggests that they may not be as guilty of arousing feelings as

the kind where two people of the opposite sex move through rhythmic steps while in bodily contact. Under certain circumstances, this argument is well taken. There are two major factors which cast doubt however, on the permissiveness of even the non-contact dances.

First, the various spasmodic movements of the body (particularly the female's), certainly can be arousing. Suggestive gestures are as degrading as bodily contact. This again, is not to insist that all dancers lose control of their thoughts. It merely brands dancing as the kind of activity that beckons one into the wrong direction.

The second objection is that young people do not limit themselves to non-contact dancing. It is likely that anyone who does social dancing will continue with the contact variety.

Some contend that dancing is recreation, as are other sports activities. Actually, one may classify dancing in any way he wishes, but this fails to remove it from its tendency toward erotic behavior. It is not condemned because it is classified as recreation, nor because it is considered enjoyable. There are many recreational activities which are enjoyable and acceptable—possibly some that in cases lend themselves to questionable stimulus. However, few activities are *directed* toward arousing desires for misbehavior as in dancing.

The best test to determine the

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and a social once each month.

Members of the FYC worked hard selling candy and earned about \$44 profit. We have recently purchased some Bibles for use in the local church. We have made participation in our local church services one of our long-term projects. Each week members of our group participate in church services by leading the singing, playing the piano, and presenting "specials."

From the Mailbag

CALIFORNIA—"... Enclosed you will find my first Evangelette Report. I think this is a very good program for all of our young people."

ALABAMA—"I would like the address of a young person in Trinidad. We enjoy our AIM very much. I would like to send our AIM to someone in Trinidad after we have read it." Also, "we have enjoyed the slides you sent very much. Enclosed find a check for \$3.00 for rental of tapes and the remainder as a gift to help the youth department in their audio-visual work."

SPRING VALE ACADEMY—"Enclosed please find a money order for one dollar as a donation for the work of the Young People's Department. (by a student)

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LABOR NOT TO BE RICH

(Continued from page 13)

supplied if we but serve Him, not all our wants."

"Oh, Grandma, I've been so wrong. Always complaining of the things I didn't have. I forgot to notice all the blessings I do have. I've the knowledge that my sins are forgiven. I know Christ has promised me eternal life. Mother and all my brothers and sisters are simply swell. Why, look at Sally. Her parents are divorced and she has no brothers or sisters. She has lots of clothes and money but doesn't know the Lord. Do you think, Grandma, that maybe I could witness to her? Come to think of it, she doesn't really seem deep-down happy. In spite of all she has she's really missing a lot not knowing Christ. Maybe I could introduce her."

"That's a wonderful idea," smiled Grandma. "Why not start by asking her over for supper on Friday night and to go to Young People's with you? After all, it's not impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom!—if you can only get him on his knees!"

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EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 22)

might otherwise be an excellent opportunity. We need to meditate more frequently on the wonders of God's love and mercy toward us. How can we be apologetic and hesitant about the surest thing—and the most joyous thing in the world—God's love and His sure promises?

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 John 2:28).

MY PROBLEM IS...

(Continued from page 15)

value of these observations is for any group of people to arrange dances for one sex only—girls dancing with girls, or boys with boys. Enjoy the exercise. But, when you feel its appeal weakening and recognize that it is only enjoyable with a member of the opposite sex, you prove my arguments.

Sometimes young people point an accusing finger and observe that there are other activities which are far more sexually stimulating that seem to be allowed by the church and parents of it, such as hugging and kissing (petting).

There is much of this kind of activity going on, but it certainly does not have church approval. Too little has been said about the dangers of this, also, and we ought to do better in expressing them. But, let's not make matters worse! One weakness does not give reason for us to become more lax and permis-

sive. Rather, it gives all the more need for our church to insist that questionable activities be avoided. Dancing is simply not geared to better us.

Besides, who needs it? A return to primitive tribal dances, as are many of those today with modern names, will give no reason to hold one's head high. Little can be gained through such indulgence, and so very much can be lost!

Your parents and everyone that love you want what is best for you. Try to remember this. I hope that your parents are aware of the many activities that appeal to any healthy young person, and that they will give wise guidance in helping you choose those consistent with Christian living. And, I also hope that you will wisely recognize the sincere efforts by your parents and others in this direction. Remember, a religion that is not worth giving something up for just isn't worth much at all!

Here is your invitation

Midwest Bible College Graduation

May 22, 1965

There will be an all-day meeting on Sabbath. Graduation is on Saturday night.

Spring Vale Academy Graduation

May 29, 1965

Attend Friday night services, all-day meeting on Sabbath, graduation on Saturday night.

My Problem

Youth Questions
answered by
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PROBLEM:

I guess I'm kind of a night owl. At home I am told that nice boys and girls don't stay out until "all hours" of the night. Frankly, I can't see what the time of night has to do with being nice as long as we behave. The time of night that I'm expected to be in seems early to me, and I would like to know what is so awful about being out late. When do you think a respectable teen-ager ought to be in at night?

ANSWER:

It is difficult to know what you or your parents consider to be late. For some young people there is no such hour. For some parents, it becomes late soon after sundown. Both of these viewpoints are extremes, and I do not know where the viewpoints of your family lie between these extremes.

Your question which requests my

Is . . .

opinion about what time of night a teen-age person should be required to be back home is also hard to answer. There are numerous situations which could affect this, such as the type of activity in which one is engaged, the distance from home that must be traveled, the individuals in the company, the ages of the people involved, with their willingness to accept responsibilities, etc.

There are several important considerations involved in this rather difficult question about how late you should be permitted to be out at night. Let's consider some.

I note in your question that you may have reservations about the value of the statement that "nice boys and girls don't stay out until all hours of the night." This actually bears a certain truth which deserves your attention.

One might ask, "Just what does a nice young lady and gentleman do

for some hours after most activities for the evening have ceased? What nice deeds are performed then?"

You see, at night there are a great many questionable activities that go on which would not be done during the daytime. Temptations to go astray quite normally become stronger as the hour grows later.

Parents are aware of the fact that during very late hours, businesses have shut down, most medias of recreation and entertainment have closed; that it is unlikely that you do chores between midnight and sunrise, or that you walk around innocently enjoying the muted sounds of the night. It is easy for parents to become uneasy—and you should be thankful for that!

At night one cannot see very far, due to the darkness. You would do well to remember that this is also true symbolically. There is a tendency to commit deeds that rob untold pleasant hours and comfort from our futures. Foolish acts are done because folks are unable to see ahead to the danger that lures. The wise person learns that darkness can be an enemy of good. In the natural and spiritual sense, nighttime is of advantage to the enemy who creeps up on us during the darkness. Do not dismiss these statements as "old folk" talk, or a mere poor attempt at poetry.

It is to be recognized that there are occasions when you will be attend-

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ing worth-while functions that are some distance away with those whom your parents know. It is presumed that you will be in late. On the other hand, it is reasonable for your parents to estimate a time when your activities for the evening should be ended and expect you in reasonably soon afterwards—quite soon when with someone your parents do not know well, and perhaps not quite as early when you are with someone in whose good discipline your parents have ample confidence.

There is another important consideration on this subject; that of your own health. While it may not seem important to you now, it is quite necessary for any youth to get sufficient rest. Normally, young people need more sleep than do their parents. Without it, it is impossible to be alert during studies or at work. This robs a person of his efficiency. When he does poorly, it is difficult for him to be encouraged about the future. Many attitudes most important to your future happiness and well-being are formed during high school years and those shortly following. Drowsiness and fatigue scratch ugly scars into otherwise bright futures. Many people rest so little at night that they are not awake enough during the day to enjoy it! What a sad predicament to fall into.

Perhaps it cannot be expected that you will always agree with your parents concerning a reasonable time of night to be home. But, I hope that all parents and their sons and daughters recognize that as long as they live together under the same roof, the parents may reasonably expect obedience on this matter. You may dis-

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a collision can stop you—and then it's too late.

3. "I'm glad nobody's around!" It's a pretty safe rule that teenagers should do nothing on their dates that they wouldn't do if Mom and Dad were with them. Perhaps your parents wouldn't hit the ceiling if you indulged in a good-night kiss and some hand-holding, but beyond that—well, you know the answer. If during a date it suddenly hits you, "Boy, I'm glad nobody's around!" then you've had a danger signal and it's time to stop. You can fill your parent's heart with pride by what you do, or you can break their hearts, too. If you and your date start thinking up excuses to get alone, then beware. It's a danger signal! And don't forget that you'll never find a spot where God can't sit in on your date and watch what you're doing!

4. "What about tomorrow?" If you find yourself worrying about the consequences tomorrow, then there's something wrong. Real love can be shared over and over again, and it gets more wonderful all the time. Real love doesn't worry about tomorrow. But the teen-ager who plays with sin is always asking the question, "What's going to happen?" The girl who permits a few moments of pleasure today is only auctioning off tomorrow's happiness at the lowest possible price. Many a teen-ager is wearing the devil's

price tag: "Slightly soiled, greatly reduced in price." It's the old mistake of sacrificing the permanent on the altar of the immediate. So, if you catch yourself asking, "Will I be sorry for this tomorrow?" you've seen a danger signal and you'd better do something about it. Chances are you're degrading and debasing this wonderful thing called sex, and you can't play with fire without getting burned.

How can teen-agers today escape this kind of sin, when sex is exploited on TV, in books and magazines, and almost everywhere they go? How can you keep clean when the very atmosphere around is polluted? The Bible gives a three-fold secret of victory:

Observation: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak" (Mark 14:38) is what Jesus commands. Keep your eyes open, and when you see temptation around the corner, make tracks! "Flee youthful lusts!" Paul warned young Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:22.

Amputation: "And if thy hand offend thee (cause you to stumble), cut it off!" says Jesus in Mark 9:43. What He means is, be drastic when you deal with sin. If some friend, some favorite magazine or occupation, causes you to fall into sin, then cut it out of your life immediately. If you don't kill sin, it will kill you. This may mean saying

"no" to certain dates, or refusing to go to certain places; but it's the only way to keep clean.

Dedication: "For to me to live is Christ." I firmly believe that no teen-ager can get through his teen years unscathed without the power of Jesus Christ in his life. Christ will give you victory over temptation and your life will have a new thrill when He's in control. It isn't enough to make resolutions or have good intentions: you need a power within you to keep you clean. Give your heart and life to Christ today and that power is yours. Spend time daily in the Word of God and you'll find new strength and victory. "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

So, teen-ager, when you're on that next date, don't just look at the stars in the sky or even the stars in your date's eyes. Keep your eyes open for these danger signals. You'll have a lot more fun today—and you'll be glad you did tomorrow.

Reprinted from *Youth for Christ* magazine.

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QUESTION:

(Continued from page 11)

agree, but you may not disobey—not if you consider yourself a person of good behavior.

Even though these problems cause struggles, be patient. I can practically guarantee that in a short time you will appreciate the opportunity to

be in early, and you will wonder why you had such a yen to stay out late at night.

Feel free to talk with your pastor about this matter. He will understand your circumstances. He knows your immediate situation better than I do, and he will give you answers that will be more reasonable and satisfying to all concerned.

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SCHEDULE OF YOUTH TOUR

July

- 10—Okla. Youth Camp
- 11—Ft. Smith, Ark.
- 12—Conroe-Houston, Tex.
- 13—San Antonio, Tex.
- 14—Okla. City, Okla.
- 15—Claremore, Okla.
- 16—St. Joseph, Mo.
- 17—Kansas City, Mo.
- 17, p.m.—Stanberry, Mo.
- 18—Denver, Colo.
- 20—Calgary, Alta.
- 21—Mission City, B.C.
- 22—Tacoma, Wash.
- 23—Portland, Ore.
- 24—Marion, Ore.
- 24, p.m.—Harrisburg Ore.
- 25—Elmira, Ore.
- 26—Nampa, Idaho
- 27—Sacramento, Calif.
- 28—Lodi-Stockton, Calif.
- 29—Visalia-Fresno, Calif.
- 30—Pomona, Calif.
- 31—Bloomington, Calif.

August

- 2—Fairview, Okla.
- 3—St. Louis, Mo.
- 4—Marion, Iowa

My

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Is . . .

PROBLEM:

Our pastor is always suggesting that we should come to him with our personal problems. I notice that you feel we should be doing this, too. Why do you ministers always want us to come to you with our problems when all you give us is a preacher's viewpoint instead of a teenager's? Let's face it, we don't think alike!

ANSWER:

Your question offers a fair challenge. You certainly have a right to know what help you may expect, if any, by counseling with a minister. I must admit that your inquiry is not easy to answer, but I must try!

Most ministers recognize that their viewpoint is that of a minister. I think that people come to them for advice and/or counseling because they seek the views of a pastor. If one wanted

the opinions of a teenager, he ought to go to a teenager. You should understand quite readily that if a preacher did not give a minister's viewpoint, he would hardly be doing his duty.

A logical question follows: what good is a preacher's viewpoint to a teenager?

While the teens are exciting years, they are also accompanied by numerous pitfalls. As I sit here at a typewriter, looking out the window I see a raging fire. It is really quite ferocious, making loud crackling sounds and sending up billows of smoke. The neighborhood is aware of the fire because of the sight and smell of smoke and the sound of fire. Fortunately, the fire is under control, burning the weeds alongside a nearby railroad track.

The years of our teens are quite like this fire. These fast, lively, important years can bring immeasurable good if properly used. However, if wrongly used and uncontrolled, they bring a lifetime that is damaged and regrettable.

The minister should be able to give help during these formative years by presenting some of the deeper values in life. Other than your parents and close relatives, he should be the most concerned about you as a personality—he may be more concerned than any other individual. Most pastors are genuinely trying to direct the truest of values into youthful lives. They want what is best for you.

Also, as we mature, assuming more and more responsibility, moral values become important. The more responsible a person becomes, the more he must be concerned with what is right and wrong. If someone has little regard for moral values, he definitely is not equipped to take a responsible place amongst others. A moral analysis is important, and the minister is trained to help arrive at wise conclusions, consistent with clean, peaceful, helpful living.

It is not being too liberal to suggest that your pastor recog-

nizes that in many instances he is giving a viewpoint, nothing more. He is no doubt convinced that it is a good one, worth serious consideration—but it is nevertheless an opinion. Few ministers will consider their opinions to be outright instructions to those who come only for viewpoints.

When I am asked for an opinion, and I feel that I have one to give, I do so. Having shared it, I do not feel that the person has to do what I suggest, nor do I suppose that he owes me any explanation if he decides on some other course of action. It is a minister's responsibility to give wise, compassionate answers. It is the individual's responsibility to make proper use of the advice without fearing the disapproval or condemnation from the minister.

The most important part of this answer has been saved until last. You must understand that in many instances what a minister has to tell you is far more than mere opinion and viewpoint. Statements will come from the pastor's lips that are not personal ideas but observations that have repeatedly been proven to be accurate and worth paying attention to.

For instance, when one indulges in anti-social behavior, he may expect to receive an anti-social reaction. This is no mere opinion. It is an accurate axiom of life that ignorance cannot change. If one walks down a street and impulsively socks someone on the nose for no

Do you have a special problem, or a matter in which you wish extra advice? You are invited to write to Elder Straub for his counseling. Send to: Aim, Box 158, Stanberry, Missouri 64489.

reason, he will get quite an unkind reaction—probably a solid punch on his own nose!

It is also true that the emotion of hatred is harmful to the one doing the hating. He may feel that he has reason to hate—I'm sure he does. But, the emotion itself will disease, weaken and eventually destroy a personality, and it does not matter in the least who it is. This is no opinion. If you hate, of if I hate, it matters little; whoever does it suffers because of it. There is no escape.

When one is told that very youthful marriages stand little chance of succeeding to the degree that a marriage between more mature people does, he receives no mere viewpoint. Statistics continually prove this. A minister can quickly give you reasons for this, some of these reasons reflecting his own viewpoint. However, the statement that most teenage marriages do not work out is true.

A pastor may tell a counselee that lack of obedience reflects a lack of self-control. Again, this is no mere viewpoint. This is a truth that neither of us can disprove. One who is not controlled in the home cannot be controlled by either himself or society after he leaves home. Lack of discipline will always plague him until our loving God delivers him from his chains of weakness and sin.

I leave a challenge with you. Why not stop considering the source of the advice and give

wise, mature consideration to the value of the advice?

The Apostle Paul made an interesting observation. He noted that when the moral Law of God manifested itself to him, it exposed sin and the influence of carnality in him. He wisely recognized that the sin was not in the law but in himself.

This suggests that when the values taught by our pastors reflect unworthy opinions in us, we must take great care not to blame the preacher because he shines light our way. Rather, if we want to acquire any worth at all, we must recognize our own shortcomings, accept the blame for them, and proceed quickly and definitely to correct them.

It is not the advice of the minister that causes one to feel uncomfortable and out of step. It is our own lack of understanding and willingness to accept moral responsibilities that dwarf us. Sympathy from another brooding, self-justifying teen-ager will add nothing to our stature.

It does not matter so much whether the viewpoint given is that of a teenager, preacher, doctor, lawyer, teacher. It matters most whether the opinion is a good one. If it is good, prize it. If it is not, be patient. There will always be more. Viewpoints are easy to get!

* * *

Not he that reads most, but he that meditates most on divine truth, proves the wisest, choicest Christian.

A Gift -- Worth Striving For

By Jerry Boor, 1965 SVA graduate

One of the greatest lacks today is the absence of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit of God. There are very few miraculous healings, there is very little prophesying or speaking in tongues.

The reason is simple.

Christians are not devoting their all to God, nor are they striving for the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Not all Christians are intended to receive the same gifts. But wouldn't it seem logical that in order to have the gift or baptism of the Holy Ghost, one would have to be blessed with at least one of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit? How many of us have the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, or the interpretation of tongues? The answer is that not very many have even one of these gifts because they have not striven for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian should strive for the baptism of the Holy Ghost because, really, his Christian life is not complete without it. And there isn't a Christian alive who devotes his all to God who cannot receive it.

It is not for us individually to decide just what the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is, nor how it will manifest itself in our own personal life. But we must be so dedicated to God and His purpose, with a real hunger for His good gifts—that we are ready to seek and receive from Him what He wants to give us.

"Then Peter said unto them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'" This verse does not say 'a few of you,' it says 'every one of you.' "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38, 39). That includes every follower of Christ who has ever lived since Pentecost.



My

Problem

Youth Questions
answered by
Ray L. Straub



Is . . .

PROBLEM:

Last spring I graduated from high school, and I am thinking about going to college. I doubt that I would like to go for four or five years, though, because I would like to get married before that. My parents don't mind if I go, but they aren't encouraging me much, either. They won't help support my going, I'm sure. I really don't know what to do.

ANSWER:

By the time this reaches you, the decision as to whether or not you go to college may already have been made. If you have not decided, it is, of course, too late to enroll this Fall, but you may plan to do so at mid-term, or the beginning of the next quarter, depending upon the term arrangements the school has which you wish to attend.

I find myself at a loss in attempting to fully impress upon young people the importance of obtaining a college education. It is as necessary as a high

school education was a very few years ago.

This society in which we live and earn a living is becoming more and more specialized. People are doing more—and learning more. In this scientific age with the world shrunken by our complex communications and with its space race, a good education for young people is necessary in order to obtain a respectable position in one's work, and in order to feel somewhat informed when among his friends. Let's face it, ignorance is rapidly becoming obsolete!

Not too long ago, the quicker a youth quit school and settled down to some employment and got married, the more quickly he became a "man of the world." Now, if a person goes into some unskilled work without plans to prepare for more specialized work, it is merely concluded that he lacks incentive to make something worth-

while of himself. It is difficult to sit by year after year, watching others of your age group advance while you work harder than they do and earn only a fraction of the wages. It is also difficult to be completely happy with a very subnormal standard of living pronounced upon you by impatience and lack of incentive.

This is not to suggest that every youth will do well in academic subjects. There are trade schools for numerous types of jobs that will quickly and expertly train someone to do well in his future employment.

It is quite natural for a high school student to contemplate marriage within four or five years. So what? Marriage is no valid replacement for knowledge, nor will it excuse ignorance!

Once in awhile I get the impression that some people think that unless a youth graduates, the years he spends in college are of no value. This is illogical, to put it kindly. Energy spent in learning is never wasted. It always retains its value. While I enjoyed the opportunity to attend college, I never finished enough college work to graduate. The years spent studying were not wasted. Instead, I have taken advantage of these and added to them by taking various college courses through the years, and I hope to do more of it. Although it certainly may be the wise decision to make, going to college does not neces-

You are invited to send in your problems and questions. The answer need not necessarily be for publication, if you seek private counsel. Write to: AIM, Box 158, Stanberry, Missouri 64489.

sarily mean that you are postponing marriage.

You may suppose that if you marry you will not have need for a better education. This is not necessarily true. Chances are that even if you do not extend your education, you would be happy to marry one who is educated—perhaps a professional man such as a teacher, lawyer, doctor, minister. In this event, a lack of college experience would make your marriage adjustment more difficult. Your marriage would require that you become acquainted with and relate to other people of the professions. Most of these men and women will be better educated, and you will find yourself wishing that you had more education, even though your responsibility is to be a good wife and maintain a good home.

Your parents apparently show little enthusiasm for your attending college. You did not state why. Perhaps they feel that they ought to help financially and cannot. Others note the many teachings contrary to Scriptures that young people are exposed to in college. Others fear that their young people might be exposed to questionable company or may be tempted to compromise their religion by engaging in school activities that occur on Friday night, etc. One cannot blame parents for being concerned about these matters, but worries of this nature should not prevent young people from having the valuable experience of attending college.

Subject matter, questionable friends, and activities which are in keeping with our beliefs will be no problem if young people attend our own Midwest Bible College. It is growing and has more and more of value to give

to our church young people seeking to continue their education.

Should it not be possible to attend Midwest Bible College, there is no reason why a youth of college age should not be able to attend a secular college, and, with proper guidance, retain his faith. A college student should become a close friend of his pastor. They should visit together often to compare the teachings of college to the teachings of the Scriptures.

I am always slightly disappointed when someone unwittingly suggests

that one must remain ignorant in order to be a good Christian. This is most certainly not true! Very few men have ever shared more of their intelligence with the world than did the Apostle Paul. No one has nor ever will expound more valuable teachings than did Jesus. No wisdom of this world can convincingly discount them. If men of faith are going to be able to give reasonable answers to men of the world, they will need to know what it is that is being taught. A youth entering college should be determined that his education will

Principle for

Two small boys had one apple to share. The one that did the cutting took the big "half" and gave the small "half" to his friend. The little fellow felt cheated—

"You gave *me* the smallest piece," he complained.

"Well," said the unjust divider, "If *you* had done the dividing, which piece would you have given *me*?"

The little fellow retorted, "I would have given *you* the *big* piece; and *I* would have taken the small piece!"

"Well," reasoned the unjust youngster, "you have what you want, then. Since you would have given me the big piece and kept the small piece for yourself, then you have just the piece you would have had anyway. So why fuss?"

This comical incident points out

our SELFishness. By nature we are for SELF first.

Recently I read a small booklet, "What Made You Cross?" by J. H. Horsburgh. In this booklet the author points out that our crossness, our irritability, our SELFishness is caused by following a principle that is the opposite to one which Christ followed. Jesus Christ "came NOT to be ministered unto, but to minister . . ." He came to SERVE others and not Himself.

The booklet pointed out that if we feel slighted by someone, if we get hurt feelings because someone does not give us proper consideration, then we have "come to be ministered unto" rather than to minister to or serve others.

The following paragraphs are quot-

strengthen his faith and not fear weakly that it will rob it.

Perhaps your parents cannot support you due to lack of sufficient funds. This is often true. Your living at home will be of some cost to them, unless you work and share with expenses. Perhaps they would agree to continue giving you the approximate amount that your living at home would cost (assuming that you will be leaving home to attend college).

Many students are forced to find employment to support themselves. It

can and is being done. You can do it, too. While college years may not be the most pleasant from every standpoint, they are often the most enjoyable, fullest, and valuable in a lifetime.

My advice is that you try in every way you reasonably can to attend college. Even if you go for one year only, it will be of value to you for the remainder of your life. To advise someone to continue his education is some of the best and surest advice anyone can give!

a Happy Life

ed from this booklet. Putting this principle into action will make your life happier.

You Are Jealous?

Consider that most hateful thing, Jealousy. What is it? Another is praised or put before you. Another does better than you. Another is more fortunate than you. The honor, the success, the money, the popularity, the reward has gone to him. You wanted it for yourself. You came to be ministered unto. And because he has been ministered unto, and not you, you are jealous!

"But it was not right," you say. "He had no business to ignore me, to snub me, to treat me as he did. And it was most unjust; that other

person ought not to have been placed over my head."

That may be perfectly true, and we make no excuse for wrong and injustice. But you are a disciple of Jesus . . . and I ask you—if you had come, like your Master, "NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO but to minister," would you be feeling so sore and angry and jealous? The trouble is, you came to be ministered unto.

Not Praised?

You have been kind to someone. You have rendered him a service. It has cost you something to do it. Naturally you thought your goodness would be appreciated. And it wasn't, at least not as much as you think it ought to have been. You expected

Youth Questions

answered by

Ray L. Straub



Tell Me, Please

QUESTION:

Do you think that young people should go steady?

ANSWER:

It depends upon the ages and the circumstances. Generally, there is too much going steady at an early age. Going steady too young has two great faults. It keeps young people from mixing with others to broaden their very valuable social experiences. Those going steady tend to withdraw from larger groups, trying to find some obscure place to slip into. Young people like this think they are behaving more like adults, but they are actually dwarfing themselves.

Secondly, going steady invites danger of two young people becoming too familiar with each other. This invites experimenta-

Dear Readers:

Until now we have been submitting one question per month with its rather lengthy answer. This time several questions will be listed along with shorter opinions.

These questions were asked at a Youth Camp during a session in which dating, courtship and marriage were discussed. Some of you may recognize them. They are typical, interesting, and worth sharing with others via this column.

tion which is in itself a signal that someone better begin searching for their right senses again.

If one is old enough to begin serious courtship that may eventually and deliberately lead to engagement and marriage, going steady is natural and meaningful.

Going steady too early is like discovering you like hamburger and refusing to try anything better even though all kinds of steaks, roasts and other delicious dishes are available.

QUESTION:

Should a girl get married before she is 18, if she is really in love?

ANSWER:

Generally, no. It probably is

not love that is causing youth at such a young age to consider marriage. It is physical attraction. Love has patience and can wait until sufficient maturity can give more assurance that a marriage is well-advised.

Young people would be better off if they would quit thinking about the possibility of an early marriage until they are old enough. Please remember that you deny yourself much more when you marry too early, than what you deny when you delay marriage for two or three years.

QUESTION:

What is wrong with kissing on your first date, even if you do not know the friend too well?

ANSWER:

What's right about it? This question suggests that you would rather like to kiss everyone you go out with. Soon your handshake will show more affection than your kisses!

Contrary to what many youth assume, it is *not* good to be too experienced in the various activities preparatory to love-making. The more experience you show, the less of a prize you are. The biggest bums in the necking crowd are those who know most about it. You may not believe it now, but six months after your marriage (probably much sooner), you'll be wanting to join us in cautioning other youths about this matter.

QUESTION:

How old should a person be before he begins necking?

ANSWER:

Old enough to know better. Necking is a natural expression of a legitimate affection. It is no way to become affectionate, nor does this activity belong to those who like necking better than the person they are squeezing.

Forget about necking. Find a person you can appreciate and like. Be dignified and grown up in your growing friendship. Be considerate, courteous, unselfish. Culture a respectable relationship that you can let anyone watch without fear or shame. In these moments you will feel tall, clean and adult. Too many youths are getting no more than their necks wrung by necking.

QUESTION:

Do you think a boy should tell things to a girl that he really does not mean?

ANSWER:

It depends on what he is telling. If he is insulting, it would help if he did not mean it. On the other hand, if he is professing love too quickly and making all kinds of promises, look out! This guy is aware of his base appetites and he is clawing to devour you. Remember that there are a lot of ways in which a fellow can show love and keep his promises. If he is serious, he will try to keep you from a shameful compromise.

Youth Questions

answered by

Ray L. Straub



Tell Me, Please

QUESTION:

Why do young people like to kiss?

ANSWER:

They are not the only ones! Even President Johnson likes to kiss the ladies, according to press reports.

All of us have basic appetites, the sex appetite being strongly registered among them. A kiss is a display of affection that represents feelings for another that go beyond that of casual friendship. When repeated and intense, it incites basic passions which call for the satisfying of an appetite. It is a bit like following the scent of good food when you are hungry. Contrary to the food appetite, one has no right to engage in sexual activity until qualified by legal marriage to do so. Consequently, ev-

en though kissing may give pleasant sensations, it is also dangerous.

No doubt young people also indulge in this because it has come to be a status amongst those of the age group. It reflects an accomplishment to them in this adult world. It is "getting away with something" that parents and adults do not entirely approve of and yet are quite helpless to put an end to.

QUESTION:

Should young people of our church date young people who do not belong to the church?

ANSWER:

In numerous localities there would be no dating by our young people if they could not date someone outside the church. Occasional dating outside the church, though not ideal, must be expected. A youth would do well to keep his head and remember that under these circumstances, no serious courtship should develop until the matter of religious differences is resolved. If it cannot be resolved when interest in each other is new, it surely cannot be resolved more easily when the differences cause greater hurt.

Young people who have no other youth of their church to date should make special efforts to attend church events which bring our young people from various areas together, such as summer camps, camp meetings, church schools, etc. These offer excellent opportunity to meet

others of their age group who are of the same Faith.

QUESTION:

Where should young people go on a date?

ANSWER:

See your pastor about this, or drop me a line. It is difficult to make suggestions for every area. There are a few general principles you may keep in mind.

Church is an excellent place to take a date. You may not think so offhand, but it has the advantage of bringing out the best in each other. It will find you thinking and doing more worth-while things. When you part after the evening's activities, you will feel cleaner and happier.

Also, consider activities that will satisfy your better selves, such as musical concerts (good music), and other media of dignified nature. These will mature you, enlighten you, and make you feel delightful together. When young people go on dates and carry on activities that are doubtful and demoralizing, they end up feeling miserable. If you do something worth-while, you and your date will like each other better, and you will feel the date has been of value to you.

QUESTION:

When my girl and I are parked in a beautiful spot, do I kiss her first, does she kiss

me first, or do we just sit there looking stupid?

ANSWER:

I get the message! Now I have one for you. Just sitting there is being less stupid than this necking you are wanting someone to approve. If you feel a bit silly just sitting in a parked car, get the car moving.

If your girl is quick to kiss you first, you had better forget about the parking and run for it! You are on your way to serious trouble. In this explosive activity of intense hugging and kissing, it must remain the girl's responsibility to see that progress does not get out of hand. An aggressive girl would probably do little to keep things under control. Once you get out of control, you've had it!

QUESTION:

What do you consider to be a proper length of engagement?

ANSWER:

The proper length of time is from the day a couple decides to get married until the day they are sure they are ready to be married. Some very short engagements are adequate; some long ones were not long enough.

The engagement is a period of time when a couple should use their heads as well as their hearts in determining how right they are for each other. Any threats to their marriage, such as religious differences (no couple should get this far with reli-

gious differences, but it happens), background differences (in-laws), vocational plans, tastes, should be worked out, if necessary.

Engagement is *not* a time when a couple may be free to express overly compassionate af-

fection for each other, nor simply a matter of "tying each other down." Rather, it should be wisely used to seriously and carefully consider suitability for marriage. Once this is accomplished the engagement has been long enough.

"Behold, What Manner of Love"

By Mary Holbert

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God..." (1 John 3:1). From this verse we may conclude there are different manners of love.

Man has one kind, which considers others with a warm interest of approval as long as they favor them. This warmth of approval is difficult for man to maintain in the face of disapproval and antagonism.

God's love is of another kind. When man turned away from God to serve His greatest enemy, God did not desert him. Instead, He gave man an opportunity to repent, left him comforting words of instruction, and gave the Holy Spirit to help man live up to God's standard.

The greatest evidence of

God's superior love is found in John 3:16. "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" God's justice caused Him to punish man for his sins, but His love caused Him to send His Son to die for mankind. Jesus paid the penalty for our sin on Calvary. At the cross, God's love for us was revealed.

Psalm 85:10 describes that moment, "*Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*"

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Psalm 147:5). God knows our every deed, our every thought, yet He loves us. This love of God does not compro-

mise with iniquity. He weighs the deeds of man on an exact scale. We need not fear to have our deeds judged if we respond to God's love with love for Him. "...God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:16, 17).

Our love for God should be a strong love, not a lukewarm one. Jesus says we are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. See Matthew 22:37. If we possess such love in our hearts for God there will be noticeable effects.

In Proverbs 10:12 we are told that love covereth all sins. In 1 Corinthians the thirteenth chapter, we find many effects of love. A person possessing the love of God and the love of his fellow man in his heart will be longsuffering, and kind; he will not envy, behave unseemly, or become puffed up.

I know now, looking back, that in the living room of my home that day, in the simple act of believing that Jesus died for me, the power of God's Word began to work. I saw, for the first time really, that a live, flesh-and-blood Person had suffered an agonizing death because of love for a boy named Robert Richardson.

In that moment a tiny flame of desire was kindled in me, a desire to know this Man, to follow Him, to show Him my gratitude. And though there have been detours along the way, that flame has never gone out.

Bobby Richardson in THE BOBBY RICHARDSON STORY
(Fleming H. Revell Company)

This persons will
think no evil —
rejoice in truth—
bear all things—
believe all things—
hope all things—
endure all things.

Another profound effect of love in our lives will be our obedience to God. Repeatedly Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." See John 14:15. In fact, 2 John 6 gives a definition of love in terms of obedience. "And this is love that we walk after his commandments..." The love of God is perfected in us if we keep His Word. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 John 2:5).

If we need a test to see if we possess love for God we can apply the one in John 4:21, "And this commandment have we from him that he who loveth God loveth his brother also."