

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK SERIES

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Is The Young Man Safe?

2Sam.18:28-33

No soldier on the battlefield, no traveler on dark mountains, no ship on a tempestuous sea, is exposed to greater peril than a young man. Safe from what? From himself, his own heart. Inexperience, susceptibility to impressions, youthful lusts, love of pleasure, excitement, name and fame, impatience of control, self-confidence, presumption, and false friends.

After David reached the height of the glory of his power, he fell on evil days, suffering much anxiety and remorse. He fell into sin and suffered the inevitable consequences. Sin is destructive in the lives of the mighty as well as the humble. It is no respect of persons, attacking the prince as quickly as the pauper. David lived to see many dark days as a result of his sin. In Psa. 51:3, he said "My sin is ever before me." In later years his son Amnon committed fornication with his sister, Tamar, and was killed by his brother Absalom. Then Absalom, fearing his father, fled; but David mourned for his return and when he came back, granted him the job of settling controversies among his subjects. The bible says that "by flattery he stole the people's hearts." 2Sam. 15:6 After turning their minds from David, he usurped his father's throne until David had to flee to the land of Gilead, where a battle was fought between his army and that of Absalom. The king warned the men not to harm his son; but as the conflict raged Absalom's head was caught in an oak as he rode underneath, trying to escape, and he was suspended between heaven and earth. Upon learning this Joab took darts and thrust them through the heart of Absalom until he died. Messengers were sent to David to bring news of the victory, but the only question was: "Is the young man Absalom safe? When told what happened David mourned "Oh my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son, my son!" The king was deeply moved--(heb. word properly refers to agitation of body.) It would appear that a violent trembling seized the king, and, rising he went up to the guard-chamber over the two gates, that he might give free course to his lamentation. What a sight, as this great king slowly made his way up the stairs, his body trembling, as he uttered these words of intense sorrow.

I feel this question is fitting, and one we should all be asking: Is the young man safe?

1. Is The Young Man Physically Safe?

It seems almost foolish to ask such a question. Yet we are reminded of multiple stories that tragically remind us that many of our children are not physically safe. The woman in SC who drove her car into a lake, allowing her children to drown, and the woman in Houston who methodically drowned her five children one by one, or the woman and man who locked a child in a closet for four years in filth, while ill clad and fed.

Reuben, Joseph's brother rebuked his brothers for their ill treatment of Joseph when he said "Spake I not unto you, saying, do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? Therefore, behold also, his blood is required" (Gen.42:22).

Some religious people sin against their children by refusing to get them medical treatment. Those who believe in miracles and healing because they believe that the use of a doctor manifests a lack of faith in God.---Some have actually died.

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that a blood transfusion is a violation of the Bible prohibition against eating blood (Acts 15:29). However, taking a blood transfusion is no more eating blood than having a kidney transplant is eating kidney. On some occasions the children have died.

If we can agree that depriving a child of medical treatment is a sin against the child, we should have no trouble seeing that hiring a doctor to kill an unborn baby is a sin against that unborn child. In America, over 1.5 million babies a year are killed by parents who are without natural affection Romans 1:31.

Some parents sin against their children by physically abusing them. Small children are crushed or thrown to the floor by parents in uncontrolled anger. Little bodies are beaten and bruised, helpless to defend themselves. Children are even used to satisfy perverted sexual urges. Live in lovers and step-fathers are often responsible for this type of abuse. Are our children physically safe? Do we teach them that there are diseases with power to destroy their bodies and befoul their minds? Prov.1:8 "My son hear the instruction of your father and forsake not the law of thy mother."

Are our young people physically safe when they are exposed to popular smoking ads, with the guarantee that with each puff they are becoming more popular and socially acceptable and without the danger of ruining their health? Smoking is responsible for 85% of all lung cancer deaths, 30-40% of deaths from diseases of the heart and blood vessels, and 80-90% of deaths from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Smokers have a 70% higher death rate than non-smokers. It has been estimated that cigarette smoking is annually responsible for 20% of all American deaths, (400,000). That means more deaths annually from smoking than from AIDS, heroin, crack, cocaine, alcohol, fire, and car accidents combined.

Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, we are to glorify God in our body and spirit. 1Cor.6:19-20. ARE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE?

In a recent year in Texas there was enough canned beer drunk to tower one hundred eighty four miles into the air, if placed on top of each other. Is the young man safe from the blight of drinking? Eph. 5:18 "And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess..."

II. Is The Young Man Morally Safe?

The young man is not morally safe, unless he is properly guarded. It is not in a young man to "direct his own steps." Young people often do things without counting the cost. They fail to weigh the consequences before they act. It is the duty of parents to guard vigilantly the lives of their young, until the time when they can, with soberness, shape properly their own destinies. Prov. 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go..." If you leave the mind of a young person alone and without training in this world, it will soon be occupied and crowded with the wrong ideas. There are many sources from which they may receive the wrong kind of training. The press, radio, TV, movies etc. From these, they may receive wrong impressions regarding morality and marriage that run counter to the Christian ideal. Unwholesome recreation awaits around every corner.

Young people should be taught to keep their bodies for that relationship that God recognizes and approves. No one is ever better for tasting the poison of sin. Dissipation will coarsen, not sweeten your life. A destroyed character is hard to rebuild. "No" may well be the most important word a young person learns. "Keep thyself pure" 1Tim.5:22 Live so that no man can "despise thy youth" 1Tim.4:12 "to look down upon or think slightly of." Every sexual relationship before or outside of marriage is wrong. The fornicator "shall not inherit the kingdom of God." 1Cor.6:9

III. Is The Young Man Spiritually Safe?

From the text, it appears that David was concerned about Absalom's everlasting state. He reacts differently to this death, than the one of the child that was born as a result of his sin with Bathsheba. When that child died, he arose, washed his face, took nourishment, and asked "Can I bring him back again?" Knowing that he could not, he resolved to so live that some day he could go and be with him. But regarding Absalom, he wailed with such sorrow that no human voice could comfort. Why, if not over his concern for Absalom's spiritual state. He knew that this child had lived in rebellion to both the kingdom of God and Israel. It is this thought that brings the timeliness of this question to our attention: Is the young man spiritually safe? Some parents, unfortunately encourage their children in doing those things that are detrimental to soul growth and development. Society, calls, making her demands, and the "young man" is encouraged in a direction that puts them one step higher on the ladder of social acceptability, taking them farther away from God and the church. Parents have the job of helping their children select their associates, their recreations, their literature, and everything else that tends to mold them into what they will be in life.

This training can be done:

A. Through instruction.

Establishing them firmly in the truth, and solidly against sectarian error.

They must be trained to know God, Christ, and the bible. Deut. 4:9 "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren."

Young people need to put their talents to work for the Lord, knowing they are losing the best years of their life if it is spent otherwise. "Rejoice, O young man in thy youth...and walk in the ways of thine heart and in sight of thine eyes, but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment; therefore put away evil from thy flesh." Eccl. 11:9 You cannot save your youth. It is being used up. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Lam. 3:27

B. By being examples to them:

The best way to train your child is to train yourself, for what you are he will be. If your hands are morally dirty his life will be made dirty by the handling that he gets. Precept may point the way, but it is silent continuous example conveyed through action, that impresses youth most. The young man is not safe, if you put the church second. If you allow things to come between you and your duty. If you are too busy to serve the Lord. If your life is a sham, or one of hypocrisy.

C. By proper discipline:

Prov. 19:18 "Chasten your child while there is hope"

Prov. 23:13 "Do not withhold correction from a child."

Prov. 29:15 "...a child left to himself brings shame to his mother."

Eli was condemned for his conduct toward his children because he failed to restrain his sons. 1 Sam. 3:13 "For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them." Many parents today make the same mistake. A young man had a placard on his dormitory wall at college. It read: "I am willing to be third." "Christ is always first; others second; I am willing to be third." May this question "Is the young man safe?" ring in our ears until we resolve in our hearts to do something about it. May we realize there can be no safety for us as long as there is none for our youth.