

Hey, Teenager!

Wait a minute! I know that you are in a hurry to go somewhere, but could you slow down long enough to give me about three minutes of your time? Teenagers seem to be so busy much of the time - always in a hurry to go somewhere or do something, and that's what I'd like to talk to you about, just for a moment.

Perhaps you are not aware of it, but as you hurry to go somewhere in life, there are those who, under the disguise of "friend", would seek to lead you astray. You may say, "Come on, mister, my 'friends' would never do that to me." But...all too often it does happen. In fact, the Bible tells of one such case. In 2 Samuel 13:3-5 we read where Amnon, one of the sons of King David had a "friend" named Jonadab who gave some bad advise to Amnon. Amnon had a half-sister named Tamar, and he desired to have a sexual relation with her. Jonadab, the "friend", gave a suggestion on how to arrange it. In the end we find Tamar disgraced and Amnon dead as a result.

As a teenager undoubtedly you have many friends, and that in itself is not bad. The question is, **"What kind of friends are they?"** Just as Amnon's "friend" Jonadab gave bad advice, you, too, may have a "friend" who gives bad advice. Your "friend" may invite you to smoke a joint, "just for kicks." Or perhaps to drop acid or other chemicals. Another "friend" may suggest booze of some kind - one drug always leads to another. You don't believe me? Then visit the jails or prisons, the mental institutions, or better still, ask Elvis, or Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, John Belushi, etc. Booze and drugs brought an end to their lives. Your "friend" may suggest some other *fun* such as shoplifting, mugging, hot-rodding, etc. And if that's not enough, a suggestion may be made to participate in premarital sex or the so-called alternative lifestyle - homosexuality. The list could go on forever. Is all of this worth the risk of becoming infected with a disease like AIDS?

Teenager, don't allow yourself to be drawn away from that which is right. Perhaps you have been drawn into some of these problems (sins), or are being tempted to and you're wondering, "What can I do?" Young person, you need not remain in the grip of these evils - a slave as it were, nor do you need to succumb to the temptation to be drawn into them. So you ask, "Mister, how do I get free from it?" It's like this, young person, each one of us is born with a sinful nature (Ro. 3:23) which we inherited from Adam (Ge. 3:1-12; Ro. 5:12), and out of that nature we commit the acts of sin. During our life we may bear the pain and agony of our sins, but eventually the end result is eternal damnation in Hell (Ro. 6:23; Re. 20:15; 21:8). Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God shed His blood and died on the cross of Calvary, and in so doing paid the price for our sins in His own body - the shed blood was the full and final payment (He. 9:11-14, 26, 28; 10:28). He is not in a grave somewhere for He is risen (Jn. 20:1-31; Ro. 4:25), proof positive that God has accepted the shed blood of Christ as payment for our sin debt. When an individual, young or old, recognizes the fact that he is a sinner and in need of salvation, and repents of his sins and turns to Jesus Christ in faith believing and asks for His forgiveness and for Him to come into his heart and save him, He will do it (Ro. 10:13; Jn. 6:37).

In God's Word, the Bible, we have the promise and assurance that the one who receives Christ as personal Saviour can know right now that he is saved. It's not just a feeling; it's a fact, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 Jn. 5:13).

If you want to be free from the power of sin in your life; if you want to have the forgiveness of sin and eternal life in Christ, then receive Christ as your personal Saviour today - right now! Start your life over as a born-again child of God. You may pray a prayer similar to this: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I know I've sinned, and I want my life to change. I'm asking for your forgiveness and for Jesus Christ to come into my heart and save me, and to make that change in my life for Jesus' sake. Amen."

To help you become grounded in your walk for Christ, seek out a good independent, fundamental, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching church and attend it regularly. Make new friends, Christian friends, spend time in prayer, and above all, read God's Word every day.

Thank you, teenager, for allowing me these few moments with you.

~ Richard A. Ciarrocca