

THE FOLLOW UP

*Be sure to get these **FOUR** devos and the Quiet Time Challenge done*



*Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.
~ Proverbs 4:23*

DEVO #1—Don't Be a Poopy Head

READ: Proverbs 4:18-27; Proverbs 27:19

Don't you think it is interesting how most of us would NOT eat a cupcake dabbed with a little poo because we don't want poop in our stomachs, yet, at the same time, most of us don't care about poop in our hearts and minds through movies, music, TV, internet, video games, and more. Why is it alright to have poop in our hearts and minds but not in our stomach? Our hearts and minds are, after all, much more crucial when it comes to determining the course of our lives.

As Proverbs 27:19 says, our hearts reflect the real us. So, whatever we allow into our hearts will determine who we will be. Just like it says in Proverbs 4:23—what's in your heart will determine the course of your life. So, how about it? What direction are your entertainment and life choices taking you?

1. Verses 4:18-19 talk about two groups of people moving in two different directions based on their choices. One group is moving closer to God (righteousness), the other group closer to the devil (darkness). As was asked above, which direction are your choices taking you?
2. Verses 4:23-27 command us to watch out for four things—what we say, what we take into our hearts and minds, where we go, and who we follow? How are you doing in each of those areas? Explain:
3. Verse 4:23 says, ABOVE ALL, guard your heart. Are you guarding your heart against the poo of the culture, or are you actively taking it in? If taking it in, what must you do about that?

PRAYER

- ~Thank God for His Word and His truth
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, having one standard for your stomach and a different one for your heart and mind
- ~Ask God to help you keep poo out of your heart and mind

ADDITIONAL NOTE SPACE

POSSIBLE ACTION STEPS

- ◆ Review how you spent your time over the past week. How much time did you spend with the things of the culture? How much time did you spend with the things of God?
- ◆ Ask people close to you if they think you are spending too much time with a particular person, with TV, with the internet, with video games, and more
- ◆ During the small group time, you were asked to look through your entertainment choices and see if they matched up with what God's Word has to say about sexuality, foul language, blasphemy, violence, and time. If you have not finished this, be sure to do so
- ◆ As you look over these things, pray and ask God what needs to change

QUIET TIME CHALLENGE

NOTE:

The *Quiet Time Challenge* is NOT a devotional in itself. It is designed for you to do separately apart from your daily devotional time.

HOW IT WORKS:

Find a quiet place with no distractions. Make this between just you and God. Clear your mind then read the Bible verse(s). After doing so, work through the questions. At the end, spend five to ten minutes in "listening mode." Just ask God to speak to you and then be quiet and seek to hear His voice.

PART 1 — READ: 1 Corinthians 15:33

PART 2 — QUESTIONS

Explain this verse in your own words:

What kind of company are you keeping with your entertainment standards? What might need to change?

PART 3 — LISTEN

Ask God to examine your heart and show you where wrong company has corrupted your life. Then seek to hear His voice speak to your soul. (Feel free to jot down anything you hear.)

DEVO #2 — Character Formation

READ: Mark 7:14-23; Luke 6:43-49

During the lesson, you learned the Character Formation Formula, which goes something like this:

- What you put into your heart and mind is what you think about
- What you think about is what you do
- What you do becomes your behavior
- Your behavior becomes your character
- Your character is who you are

So, who you are, and who you will become, is determined way back at the beginning of that Character Formation Formula by what you allow into your heart and mind. This is why Jesus says that the things we allow into our hearts and minds can ruin us because they effect who we are.

1. What is Jesus saying in Mark 7:15 and Luke 6:43-45?
2. We often like to make excuses for our entertainment choices—the movie looks cool, the game's graphics are awesome, the song has a great beat, etc. But why can't we allow ourselves to make these excuses?
3. What are some things that you can fill your heart and mind with that will help you be someone who honors and pleases God?
4. Are you doing all the things you listed above? If not, when will you start consistently doing them?

PRAYER

- ~Thank God for His great love for you
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, filling your heart and mind with things that are more like the culture than like Christ
- ~Ask God to help strengthen your desire to read His Word, pray often, listen to worship music, and more

DEVO #3 — The Devil Made Me Do It

READ: Genesis 3

During the lesson, we said that you can take it to the bank that if what is in your heart determines the course of your life, then Satan is going to try to get whatever he can in there. Of course, he knows he would never attract us with things that are dull and boring. No, instead, he makes it all seem good by surrounding it with big budget Hollywood special effects, a funny script, great graphics, a catchy tune, etc. It's really no different than when Eve took the apple because the devil made it look so "pleasing to the eye."

1. How did the devil make the apple look according to verse 6?
2. What was the ultimate consequence for Adam and Eve's sin according to verses 22-24
3. How has Satan used the blind spot of entertainment standards to affect the character of our culture?
4. Just as the ultimate punishment for Adam and Eve was a loss of close fellowship with God, how can poor entertainment choices cause us to lose a closeness with God?
5. What can you do to guard against this?

PRAYER

- ~Thank God for His desire to have a closeness with you
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, allowing Satan to draw you away from that closeness
- ~Ask God to strengthen you to resist Satan's temptations

DEVO #4 — Real Life or the Shadowlands

READ: Colossians 3:1-10

Most of us make decisions based on what we want not on what God wants. Because of this, we regularly indulge in entertainment that the Lord would have us avoid. When questioned about these choices, the most common reply is, "Well, after all, it's just showing 'real life.'"

But what Hollywood offers is nothing close to real life. Real life is found in Christ. This world, as CS Lewis famously pointed out, is just the Shadowlands. The Bible says that real life is found in the Lord and that, as Christians, we are citizens of heaven. We have to decide if we want to veer off into the Shadows with the stuff that never ultimately satisfies, or if we want to choose the rich green pastures of God's kingdom.

1. What do verses 1-4 say about where "real life" is found?
2. To experience the fullness of this life, what do verses 4-9 say we must do?
3. According to verse 10, what is our ultimate goal?
4. As you move toward this goal, what is going well? What needs some work?

PRAYER

- ~Thank Jesus for the real life that He offers
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, seeking the Shadowlands more than seeking real life
- ~Ask God to guide you down the right paths