

Ride the Wild Horses

Text: I Samuel 2:11-18

One of the sad moments of a young person's life comes, when at the crossroads of a major decision, they chose wrongly due to the blindness of truth caused by the domination of the carnal appetite. Deuteronomy 30:19. The attitude of the wicked sons of Eli is described in I Samuel 2:16b: "...thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force."

Similarly, the attitude of the prodigal is shown to us in Luke 15:12: "And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living."

This attitude prevails among the youth who are overwhelmed by their newfound hormones. The word "hormone" comes to us from the Greek word *hormôn* meaning "setting in motion." This natural occurrence that breaks the bonds of puberty brings the decision, shall I take it now, i.e., act upon the strong desires or deny the flesh and be free from the bondage. Those who chose foolishly "forsake their own mercy." Grace has been provided. If the youth can believe the Lord for strength, he shall be living in freedom.

A young person's early desires are like the wild horses on the plains. No direction. No purpose. What a marvel to behold every March at the Houston rodeo a young man mounting a wild stallion who bucks, leaps, turns and twists. That is entertaining -- but what produces purpose and usefulness is when that same young man takes his ride back to the ranch and stays with the bucking bronco until it stops bucking and it becomes tame and learns how to help the young cowboy herd the cattle, rope a calf and take the young man to his desired location. Oh that our youth may learn the value of riding the wild horses until that pent up energy is harnessed into a life that pleases God.

I. ALL DESIRES SHOULD NOT BE ACTED UPON

Galatians 5:17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

A. Sleep

Sleep is good. Getting up early is good. I like to get up early, before the phone starts ringing or other electronic interruptions commanding

answers to texts or emails. Psalm 5:3: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." Psalm 127:2: "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep."

Sleeping when we should be praying is mentioned in Matthew 26:40; "And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" Two stronger rebukes against being lazy and oversleeping is found in Proverbs 6:9-11; Proverbs 24:30-34.

B. Eating

I Corinthians 10:31; Proverbs 23:20, 21; Proverbs 23:1, 2; Philippians 3:18, 19.

On one hand, we live in a culture where there is no restraint on anything pleasurable. Then we also live in a culture that worships the human anatomy.

C. The Use of Words

Sometimes sinful activity or unwise behavior must be rebuked: Proverbs 27:6: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

James 1:19, 20: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

D. Music

Ephesians 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;" Psalm 100:1, 2: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing."

I Samuel 16:23: "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed [music affects us physically], and was well [music affects us emotionally], and the evil spirit departed from him [music affects us spiritually]."

Exodus 32:15-19. All music takes us somewhere. From the narrative in Exodus we see this music took them down the wicked wrong path. Music is often the soundtrack of your romance. On our wedding day, the song *All My Life* by Ralph Carmichael was sung with "my life," exchanged for "our life." Here are some of the words: "All our life, through the good or bad of

life, Whether we should gain or loose, still we choose to live our life, every moment all for Thee, walking oh so close to Thee...Then all our days, be the guardian of our ways, and we'll know the glory of all Thy Love for all our days." That song became a song of dedication for Mrs. Pope and me. I will ever think of our great love when I hear that song. Certain songs like *Jesus Loves Me* or the *B-I-B-L-E* takes me back to my childhood. When we sing *Great God of Wonders*, I associate the move of God in our service.

II. SOME DESIRES ARE SIMPLY NOT FROM THE LORD

I John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Proverbs 19:21: "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."

We must be willing to say that we may miss the plans of God, even if we are certain our instincts seem to be spot on.

A. The use of tobacco and vaping

I Corinthians 6:19: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

Vapes are the most commonly used tobacco products among teens. About 10% of middle schoolers and 25% of high schoolers use vapes, and the numbers have been growing at an alarming rate. No tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, are safe.

Vaping is marketed as being harmless to young people, but it is not. Most vapes contain addictive nicotine, plus more than 30 harmful chemicals, and dangerous heavy metals. Vape makers add flavorings to vape pods to make them more appealing and these chemicals have been linked to lung disease.

Nicotine is very addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, especially the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.

B. Alcohol

Proverbs 20:1; "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 23:29-35.

C. All Sexual Activity Outside the Bonds of Holy Matrimony

I Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 13:4; Romans 1:26, 27. Along these lines, we are forbidden to take the role of sexual identity outside the perimeters of God's sovereign choice. Matthew 19:4; Deuteronomy 22:5.

III. THERE IS GREAT POWER IN DENYING SELF

Luke 9:23

IV. THERE IS GREAT STRENGTH PROMISED TO THOSE WHO WAIT UPON THE LORD

Isaiah 40:30, 31

V. WHERE WILL YOUR ACTIONS TAKE YOU TEN YEARS FROM NOW?

Ecclesiastes 9:11; Psalm 37:25

VI. WHERE WILL YOUR DECISIONS TAKE YOU IN ETERNITY?

Ecclesiastes 3:11: The word for "world" is translated from the Hebrew word עולם 'ôlâm; i.e. the vanishing point; generally, time out of mind (past or future), eternity.

-Pastor Pope-