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1 THESSALONIANS 5:21-22

Series: Real Christians in Challenging Times

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I thank you for your work in my life this week and the privilege I've had to talk to several people this week in this age group of adolescence. I just pray, Lord, that you'd give me wisdom as I share and that this would touch some of the young people listening. That they would be willing to think through very carefully the decisions they're making and the things that are going on and evaluating life in a way that's most beneficial for them and honoring to you. Bless this time, Father, as we look at your word. In Jesus' name, amen.

Well I want to talk today to young people between the ages of 10-25 years of age. Now that's a big spread, 10-25. Twenty-five year olds are nothing like 10 year olds. Well why do I choose that age? Because we call that age the age of adolescence. Why do we start at 10 years old? Well it's not just because puberty is starting earlier, but 10 years old is often the time when young people are coming into more contact with the culture. Whether it's the fact that they're at school and they're interacting with other people or it's some of them have a cell phone. I'm not suggesting that's a good idea, but sometimes they have a cell phone or they have access to the internet or they're just watching YouTube videos. They come in contact with the culture. And as they come in contact with the culture they start thinking and engaging in ways that have to address adult issues. So we generally think now that adolescence is starting earlier, probably about 10 years old and then it goes on through about age 25.

I know some young people think that they're an adult when they're 18 years old, but the reality is that an adult is someone who's functioning independently and isn't relying or doesn't have to rely on other people. We do rely on each other even as adults, but there's this independence that takes place in an adolescent's life that makes them an adult, and that usually doesn't take place nowadays until the later twenties. I'm going to say 25, but it could be even later than that when a person has their own ability to manage themselves and be able to function independently.

So between that age of 10-25 there are several stages, which we're not going to get into now. But what I'd like to do is I'd like to talk about that stage. It's a very important stage and often young people have a perception of that stage that the mission and the goal of adolescence is to have fun. I think it's a dangerous perception. I think it's wrong. What we want to do is understand that if we have a view of just having fun, we're going to end up in some places where you don't want to be. It may be the 12-year-old who resists chores because he wants to play on the video games and anything that gets in the way of that needs to be avoided. So there's this sense of pleasure over work. Or it could be the 20-year-old who's at a college and wants to party. Those are examples of young people who believe their job description in adolescence is to have fun. It's a

dangerous way to think. And really what needs to happen is in adolescence when a person is moving from childhood to adulthood adolescence is a preparation time, it's a mission time, it's a time of work in order to live in an adult world.

How are you going to live in an adult world is a very important question. You need life skills, you need abilities to be able to do that, and there's lots of them. So God has placed adolescence in families – families that have challenging people living with them so they can work out some of the life skills that they need and they can develop them in ways that are most helpful.

I want to talk to you about the choices that are made during adolescence because a lot of people make choices during adolescence that affect them for the rest of their lives in negative ways. In fact during the period of time between 10 years old and 25 years old decisions are made that often cripple a person and then they spend years and years trying to recover from those decisions that they make in adolescence. Sometimes they don't even realize the danger of their decisions. So I want to talk to you today about those decisions and how to think about adolescence in a way that's being a little bit more cautious and careful and to protect you from the dangers, but to maximize the benefits that can come from those special years in a person's life.

To do that, I want to go to the Bible and I want to look at what the Bible has to say about life. I want to take you to a passage of scripture that we see in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22. Notice that it says this: *Hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.* What the scriptures do in this particular passage is they divide choices into two categories. They divide them into good and evil. Now if we ask the question why do people choose evil anyway? Why would anyone want to choose evil? If there's good and evil, certainly you would want to choose good because that's what's going to be genuine, nutritious, it's going to help you in life. Well why would anybody choose evil? Evil represents danger and it's actually crippling and destructive in a person's life.

Let me give you an example using a food example. Let's say it's time to come to dinner and there are two plates that you can choose from. One plate is a plate that has some food on it, good food that you generally like. But the other plate has your favorite food on it, things you really like. Let's say on the favorite plate there's some lasagna. Maybe you like lasagna. Let's imagine you do. And it is really good looking lasagna and oh you think that's great. Two choices, two plates. But as you get close to the lasagna you see that on top of the lasagna there's little maggots on top moving around, worms, and you go, "Ooh that is terrible. I don't want that. I don't want to eat that food." So now you have good and you have something that represents evil. Two plates. Which are you going to choose from?

Now there are a lot of young people who happen to choose the maggot food to eat. Why do they do that? I want you to understand what's attractive about the maggot food so that you get it and you can apply this to the choices that you make in your life.

There are two big things that draw people toward this plate. One is things inside of us. You have to understand this on a theological level. So I want to explain some theology to you, what the Bible teaches about a person, so that you understand what's so attractive about the maggot food for a person.

You see God has created us in creation a very special way. There are so many special and unique things about our personality, about our design, about who we are that are very special. But every one of us has inside of us a sin nature. Now the words 'sin nature' refer to something that's present inside of every person. When they're born they're born with a sin nature. You can't imagine that some people are born good. That's not what the Bible teaches. Nor are we born with a blank slate. We're born with a sin nature and that sin nature is a magnetic pull toward selfishness, pleasure, and toward doing the wrong thing. So there's inside of us this magnetic pull to go into the wrong direction. You have to understand that about yourself. Because sometimes you have this deception inside, thinking, "Oh I'm fine. Everything is going great." But you must realize that inside the very core of you is this magnetic pull toward sin or destruction inside of you. It's there. It's in everyone. In adults, it's in children, it's in everyone. There's this sin nature that exists inside. It's this magnetic pull. However, this is why people want to become Christians. They recognize I have this thing inside of me I don't want to do.

Paul the apostle described it this way: Inside of me I want to do the right thing, but then I don't do it. Or I know what the right thing is to do and I don't do what's right, I end up doing the wrong thing. That's in Romans 7. And then Romans 8 is this secret ingredient that helps someone move away from this magnetic pull that still exists there, but there's another principle that is you give yourself to Christ. The Holy Spirit empowers you. Just like an airplane when it builds momentum and starts moving fast enough it's able to take off because there's another principle involved. It's the principle of aerodynamics. As with the laws of aerodynamics take place, they overcome the law of gravity. Now in the same way our hearts have this challenge. When you're a Christian and you've accepted Christ into your life you have the ability to not only take off, but to fly above the challenges. You still have this magnetic pull that you have to wrestle with, but you have this other force inside of godliness that God wants to move in order to move you forward.

So what I'm trying to tell help you understand is that inside of you at first there is this magnetic pull toward maggot food in your life. You've got to be careful. You've got to understand.

Let me show you a Bible verse that talks about this idea of this lure inside of us. This comes from James 1:14-15. It says this: *But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by (what?) his own desire.* Notice that it's taking place inside of him. It's this desire that's inside that moves us toward maggot food sometimes. *Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin* (so we end up doing the wrong thing), *and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

Notice we have desire, sin, and then death. So we have these three different things that take place. It's desires. Now desires aren't bad. We have desires inside of us that are good. And those good desires that we have are what sometimes take us over the line. We end up crossing the line of parental values or societal values or even against the law to do something in order to find something we're looking for. It's very dangerous when that takes place and there are land mines all over the place that people trip into and they end up being damaged.

But let's go back and look at this idea of the desires that we have. I want to show you some desires and all of these desires are good desires. Desires that start out as good things. There's the desire for pleasure or relationship or wealth or influence. A desire to win a game or win in life. A

desire to love. All of those are good desires, but sometimes they can lead to things that are bad. So I want you to understand desires themselves are not wrong, but sometimes desires when they start taking over turn into temptations to cross the line. And when they cross the line then they're in extreme danger and that's where the land mines are and we get ourselves into trouble. The passage says desires lead to sin, and sin to death or destruction.

So let's go back and look at this chart and see how some of these pleasures play out. Let's take the first one. Pleasure can lead to all kinds of things. Let's say pleasure sometimes leads a person to try substances. Because often during adolescence this is when a person starts to try a substance. If you ask a 40-year-old or adult, you say to them, "When did you start smoking?" many of them would say it was during adolescence. See during adolescence people start to sometimes test out substances because of pleasure. Sometimes they'll say, "I'm going to try something here because it will make me feel good." So the idea of trying these substances, "I'll just try a little bit," they'll say, but then it gets them hooked and then they're in trouble for the rest of their lives or at least for a long period of time trying to overcome those things.

But I don't think young people only participate in substances (substances are things like alcohol, smoking, vaping, taking drugs) for pleasure, but many times they do it to cope with stress, the challenges that are faced in life. So if I ask a young person, "Why do you smoke?" Sometimes, "Oh it calms me down because my life is really stressful." The problem is that a person who latches onto some kind of a substance to manage their stress becomes addicted not only to that, but then they can't live without some other things to deal with stress. The best thing you can do is to understand and learn how to deal with stress without going to substances in order to maximize your health later on.

There are a lot of these. Let's just go through some of them. Another danger is relationship, a girl might say, "I know he's not a Christian, but I really like him and he seems to be such a good person. I'm going to have a relationship with him," and she compromises her values and ends up in a place where she doesn't want to be. Bad things start happening. It's not good and it can damage her when she thinks she's getting into something good.

Another is wealth. Wealth isn't bad. But sometimes they get involved in money-making so much that they discard relationships or they even trample on relationships in order to get the wealth that they want.

Another is influence. People want to be influential. So they choose the wrong friends in order to get ahead and get what they want. And then sometimes those friends have a negative influence and bad things start happening and they end up in destructive patterns.

The next one is to win. There's nothing wrong with winning. Winning is great. But some people want to win so much that then they end up cheating. And then they start developing inside of their heart this dishonest lifestyle, this lack of integrity in order to get ahead and to win.

Another one is love. They want love and so they participate in sex outside of marriage. One of the dangers of casual sex is that it's viewed just as some biological act. But the reality is that sex is a spiritual issue. It's connecting something spiritual between two people. And when it's

violated by just treating it casually then it damages a person's spirit and often hinders their ability to have a close relationship with their marriage partner later on or even to have sex later on and enjoy it because of the damage that took place early on.

I want you to see that the desires themselves are not bad, but when desires take us to cross the line then we're in trouble. It's often the desires that prompt us to want to cross that line of right and wrong. Instead of holding fast to what's good, sometimes people go after evil because they think it's going to satisfy a desire that they have inside. And that's pretty dangerous. That gets them into a lot of trouble in their lives.

Now what I've said first of all here is you've got to be careful of yourself. You may not realize that inside of you there is this desire that's taking you in the wrong direction. You have two choices of food – good food and you've got maggot food. Even then when you have desires, you look at that maggot food and you wouldn't eat that. Which leads me to the second factor that plays a part in a young person's desires to eat maggot food. Let me explain to you what that looks like.

Because what happens is besides just the sin nature and the internal stuff you have to deal with there is a world system. What I mean by that, the Bible says there is a world system that tries to get you sucked in to destroy you. That is what the world system does.

Now what is the world system? The world system is a set of values. It's a set of what's important in life. You learn about the world system. You can learn about it at school. You can learn it about it from friends that you have that are connected to the world, they'll tell you things that they think are important. You'll learn about the world system by watching movies or watching YouTube videos. Because the world says maggot food is good. In fact during adolescence there's all these different pitfalls that you could run into, all of these land mines that could damage you and the world says this: This is adolescence. Have fun. You'll deal with all the results of this later on.

Unfortunately, what happens is that a person who participates in things that damage them now during adolescence end up hindering their life going forward. So there's this world system that's created by our culture that says you're not a normal teenager if you don't try some of these things. That normal teenagers experiment with all of these things. That's what teenagers do. If you buy that, you're buying into the world system.

The world system looks at the maggot-filled food and says this: Oh you're not going to eat it with maggots on it. Here's what we're going to do. We're going to flip over the lasagna. Now you can't tell that it has maggots. It doesn't look like it has maggots and you love lasagna. What a great opportunity to eat lasagna. You have no idea.

Now you have two choices of food. You've got food that's good and you've got food that looks good. Food that's good and food that looks good. How do you know the difference between the two? Many times you don't. One of the challenges of adolescence, one of the things you lack in adolescence is this: life experience. See life experience gives you the ability to know... Sometimes you know you know what, that looks pretty good, but something looks wrong with

that. You might not know that as a young person, so others may. So that's the value of authority in a person's life, whether it's police or parents or teachers or other authorities help you know good versus bad. That's one of their jobs is to help you realize that and recognize that.

To help you understand this, let me give you another food illustration. Let's say that Dad is making some soup in the kitchen. Oh this is going to be great soup. He's making it for his daughter who's 17 years old. In the soup he's cut up some chicken and puts it in the pot and he made some noodles and they're in the pot. He's put some vegetables and some seasoning because he knows just what his daughter likes. And then she comes in the room. "Hey Dad, what are you doing?"

"I'm making some soup just for you, honey."

She says, "Oh good. What's in it?" So he tells her all the ingredients. She says, "Oh that sounds like great soup, Dad." And then she thinks for a minute. And she says, "Hey Dad, I have an idea. The landscapers were here today and made a beautiful landscape outside. Can we go get some of that dirt and put it in the soup?"

Dad in his mind is saying you've got to be kidding me. We're not putting dirt in the soup. But he doesn't know exactly what to do. What does he do? We don't put dirt in a soup, but what should I do? Should I let her learn from experience that putting some dirt in soup is okay and she'll learn that putting dirt in is really a bad idea? Do I let her put dirt in the soup? But he says, "You know what? We don't put dirt in the soup." So he says to his daughter, "No."

Well in reality it might look like in the home as the 17-year-old daughter comes to Dad and says, "Dad, I want you to know I'm doing well at school. Don't you think?"

"Yeah honey, you're doing great at school."

"And I'm doing well at work." She works at this place where kids are rock-climbing and she helps manage the climbers there and there's a bunch of people there that are good people working.

"Yeah, you're doing a great job at work, hon."

"Well here's what they're going to do at work. We're going to go on a camping event overnight and we're going to go rock-climbing. And here's the people that are going to go. Three girls, three guys are going, and me. I know they're 21 and 22 and 23 and I'm the youngest, but I want to go with them. Can I go with them?"

Dad's going I don't think this is a good idea. This is like the dirt in the soup. He's saying I know bad things can happen in those kinds of situations where it may be something gets started there that carries on afterwards. He's saying I don't feel comfortable about this. This is dangerous thing that's happening here. But what is he supposed to do? Does he say well I guess I let my daughter learn from experience. He says, "No, no, no. We're not going to do that." Because the dangers are so great about doing this.

It's like making the soup and the daughter looking at the soup, "Dad, I want to put dirt in the soup. It's my life, you should let me do it. A little bit won't hurt." Oh a little bit won't hurt. She wants to add a little bit. So when you start saying to yourself that lie that says if I have a little bit of dirt in the soup I'll be able to recover from it, that's the first step toward some bad thing going

on that actually ends up damaging your life. Dad says, “No, I’m sorry. We’re not putting dirt in the soup. We’re not going to do that.”

She says, “Dad, you just don’t trust me.” Have you ever heard that? Have you ever wanted to say that to your parents? “You don’t trust me.” Well it is not a matter of trust. It’s a matter of realizing that here’s a person that doesn’t have life experience that may not be wise enough to know the maggot food from the regular food and may participate in the maggot food and may be damaged and hurt for the rest of their lives. This is not a minor thing that’s taking place. This could end up being a major situation in their lives that will cripple them in their lives. So Dad says, “No, we’re not going to do that.”

So daughter says, “Dad, this is so unreasonable. Everyone is doing it.” It is true there are a lot of parents who allow their young people to put dirt in the soup. Everyone is doing it. I don’t know why they’re all doing it, but yet it’s true that a lot of parents are letting their children put dirt in the soup in order to eat it.

In fact Jesus told us about this. Let me show you a Bible verse that describes what Jesus says about everyone doing it. He says this in Matthew 7:13-14. He says – *For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.* What Jesus is telling the people is this: There is a broad road. Do you know why it’s so broad and trodden out and smooth? It’s because so many people are on it. That’s why everyone’s on that road almost. But that road is going somewhere. You know where it’s going? The Bible says it’s going to destruction. See, that’s the road that has all the land mines on it that damage a person and hinder their ability to move forward. It’s a terrible place. It looks good because everybody’s there. But then people are finding themselves damaged in one way or another.

One of the things I say to young people whether they’re 13 or 17 or 21 or whatever is: I want you to look around at all of the friends that you have right now. I want you to know that most of the people that you know right now after 25 years old or sometime in the future they will be divorced, they will be addicted, they will have major anger problems, emotional challenges, they will be high in debt because they made foolish choices and hit landmines when they were in adolescence. You just need to know that. Most of your friends will damage themselves in life because they made poor choices thinking there’s nothing wrong with this, I’m just going to get on the broad road. And the broad road has all of these land mines that make a person mean. Now God heals people. You’ve got to understand that. But the reality is that sometimes the healing is still going around with only one leg because you’ve been damaged. So you have to live with the pain that is experienced by hitting those land mines.

I say to young people I can help you get to age 25 without hitting those land mines. You could be so far ahead of other people and enjoy life so much more. That’s what the narrow road is about that Jesus talks about. He said – *There is a narrow road and only a few find it.* Only a few. Are you going to be one of those few people that find it? It’s a treasure to be on the narrow road because when you’re on it it leads to somewhere. It leads to life.

Life or destruction. Back and forth we go between good and evil. Between good food and maggot food. Between good soup and dirt in the soup. We go back and forth between the choices. God says there is a path to life. I would love for you to be on that path and enjoy the blessings of being on that path. Good things can happen.

Well there are two forces that prompt a person to eat maggot food. One of those is those internal desires that we don't even realize are leading us in the wrong direction and the other is the world system that's driving us and taking us in a direction that we don't want to go. We've got to know both of those are in play.

Let's look more at what the Bible has to say about this same idea. Because it's not just in our passage in 1 Thessalonians 5. We also see it in Romans 12:9. It says – *Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.* You see? *Hate what is evil and cling to what is good.*

Psalms 34:14 says – *Turn from evil and do good.* Multiple places in the Bible. This is one of the big messages of the Bible to warn young people and to take us to where we need to be. Because we have to understand that there's evil and there's good and we need to be moving toward the good and avoiding the evil.

Let's go to one more passage there in 1 Timothy 6. Notice that Paul is going to talk to Timothy, who is a young man, and he's going to give him some advice. Just look at the first sentence there and then we'll look at the rest. He says – *Godliness with contentment is great gain.* In 1 Timothy 6:6-12. *Godliness with contentment is great gain.* Let's talk about this.

Godliness is that ability to follow the Lord and do what He says and to move forward in the right kind of way following God. Contentment is the ability to live within limits without having to go outside of the boundaries. When someone has to go past the boundaries, past the limits that are there then we know that they are going to get themselves into trouble. It's a problem. Contentment is the ability to live within limits and to enjoy the life within the limits instead of passing societal boundaries or family boundaries or governmental boundaries or laws or whatever to stay in the right place and do what's right. *Godliness with contentment is great gain,* he says to Timothy.

Now he's going to zero in on a particular problem. One of the desires that moves us forward is this desire for riches. He says – *For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.* Now he's going to talk about this one about riches. So when he's talking about those riches, he uses the word *trap*. That there's a trap. It's not wrong to move toward wealth, but there's a trap involved in that. Now I know that traps have bait in them. And those come from our desires. We want something.

Recently I had a groundhog in my backyard at the beginning of the year and I wanted to get rid of him, so I decided that I would use a trap. I got a Havahart trap to capture him. You know what groundhogs like to eat? They like to eat cantaloupe. Of all things, they like cantaloupe. So I put a trail of cantaloupe into the Havahart trap and I put the cantaloupe there. When the groundhog

goes in, he steps on the trap and then he's trapped in there and I can take him to Mercer County Park about ten miles away.

Well I put the cantaloupe in the trap and the groundhog came into the trap to get it and he was captured and I took him over to Mercer County Park and let him go. Then I came back to my house and the next day there's another groundhog in my backyard. So I set up the trap and I set up the cantaloupe. Sure enough, here comes another groundhog. You know I have done that five times now? I have caught five groundhogs. Someone told me the other day it's probably just one groundhog. He's just determined to be in your backyard and he runs ten miles across the streets and everything to get back to your house. I don't think that's true. I think I've caught five different groundhogs over a period of time and they have been trapped.

That's the idea that's spoken of in this passage when it's talking about a trap. Notice it says that there are *many foolish and harmful desires* (those are the things inside of us), *that plunge people into ruin and destruction*. It's the same idea that they're moved into destruction. We understand that. That's where they're going and bad things happen there.

Let's just read the rest of that passage. It says – *For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs*. It's the same idea of destruction that's taking place. It says though – *But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith*.

As Paul is talking to Timothy, he wants him to be successful. He wants him to enjoy the benefits of the Christian life. He wants him to know that there are good things that can happen in his life, so he's sharing those good things with him. What Paul is saying to Timothy other places in this same book is *flee youthful lust*. Why are they youthful desires? Because during adolescence there are a lot of desires that drive you to leave and go out past the boundaries to do things that are wrong and they turn into landmines that create problems for you ongoing.

I talked to a man this week who's 23 years old. He's trying to put his life back together. He is in huge debt in his life. He doesn't have a car, he's living in a motel, working at Burger King. But three weeks ago he got sick and God is doing some important things in his life. There is going to be a transformation that we're going to watch in this young man's life at 23 years old.

So we were talking this week about these very things as I kind of preached my sermon to him in the process. So as I'm talking to him and working with him and understanding what that looks like, he is hearing some of these very same truths that we are talking about. That there are desires that we have inside that take us in the wrong direction. That the world system is moving. I said there's a verse in the Bible for you. I said in Psalm 119:9 it asks this very question that you're asking that you want. It says – *How can a young man keep his way pure?* Very good question. That's what he needed to know.

I'm going to share with you the whole passage where that comes from in just a moment because I think it's so strategic for you to understand the answer to that question. *How can a young man keep his way pure?* That is not getting involved in all the land mines, the problems that are out

there. The Bible tells us the answer for that and the answer is found in Psalm 119. I want to take you to that passage and show you what it looks like. I'm going to start at the beginning because I want to take us to verse 19 where the question is. But listen to what the Bible says.

It says – How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord. How blessed are those who observe his testimonies, who seek him with all their heart. They also do no unrighteousness: They walk in his ways. You have ordained your precepts, that we should keep them diligently. Oh that my ways may be established to keep your statutes! Then I shall not be ashamed when I look upon all your commandments. I shall give thanks to you with uprightness of heart, when I learn your righteous judgements. I shall keep your statutes; do not forsake me utterly!

All of these statements how blessed it is. The first verse – *How blessed are those who walk is blameless*, who don't fall into these pitfalls. Their life is blessed. Good things happen to them. Then we get to the big question in verse 9 and in that question it says this: *How can a young man keep his way pure?* He can do that *by keeping it according to your word*. See God has established His word as a tool for us to understand the right path, to do the right thing. He says – *With all my heart I have sought you; do not let wander from your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart (or hidden in my heart), that I may not sin against you.*

The Bible is this great tool that helps us to know what the right choices are, to do the right thing. The Bible is this instruction manual that God has given to us so that we know how to live life, how to respond to life situation. He's given us that. It's this instruction manual.

But be careful because sometimes as a young person what you end up doing is you end up saying, "I don't need the instruction manual. I know how to live life. I'm going to do this on my own." It's like putting together imagine a go-kart. You're trying to put together a go-kart and you're saying, "I don't need the instruction manual. I'm just going to put this together myself." So you do. You start putting these pieces together, and these wheels on this way, and so on. And you end up with something that looks like a go-kart, but you have all these pieces left over. So what happens? It doesn't run very well. It runs like a broken-down car. It doesn't run as well as it could. That's what happens when you rely on yourself instead of following the instruction manual to build your life and to do what needs to be done.

I want to encourage you to think about your life and how it could be so powerful, but you can't just think about the moment. It's one of the dangers of adolescence. You tend to think about the moment and you don't think about the future. That's why God has placed parents and other authorities in your life to help you get through adolescence without damage.

But it's not just about avoiding the bad things. Because some people will look at the Christian life and say, "Oh that's boring. I don't want to be part of the Christian life." You know what that tells me? That tells me they're missing out on the most important understanding of what God has for them. Do you know the Christian life is the greatest adventure that a person could ever have? When you are working along with what God wants to do in your life, when you're watching God work, and when you go through adolescence allowing God to work and you see things that are going on and you see the wholesomeness about that, your life can be filled with joy and blessing

that God has for you. I just encourage you today to think about what God has for you in your life. Make the right choice. Choose the right kind of food. Don't put the dirt in the soup. Obey what God has for you and many good things will take place in your life.

Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I pray right now that you would bless young people that are listening to this message. Use it powerfully in people's lives, we ask. I ask that you would be directing the lives of young people, that you'd make yourself real and powerful. Guide young people to understand the bigger picture of who you are and what you want to do in their lives. In Jesus' name, amen.