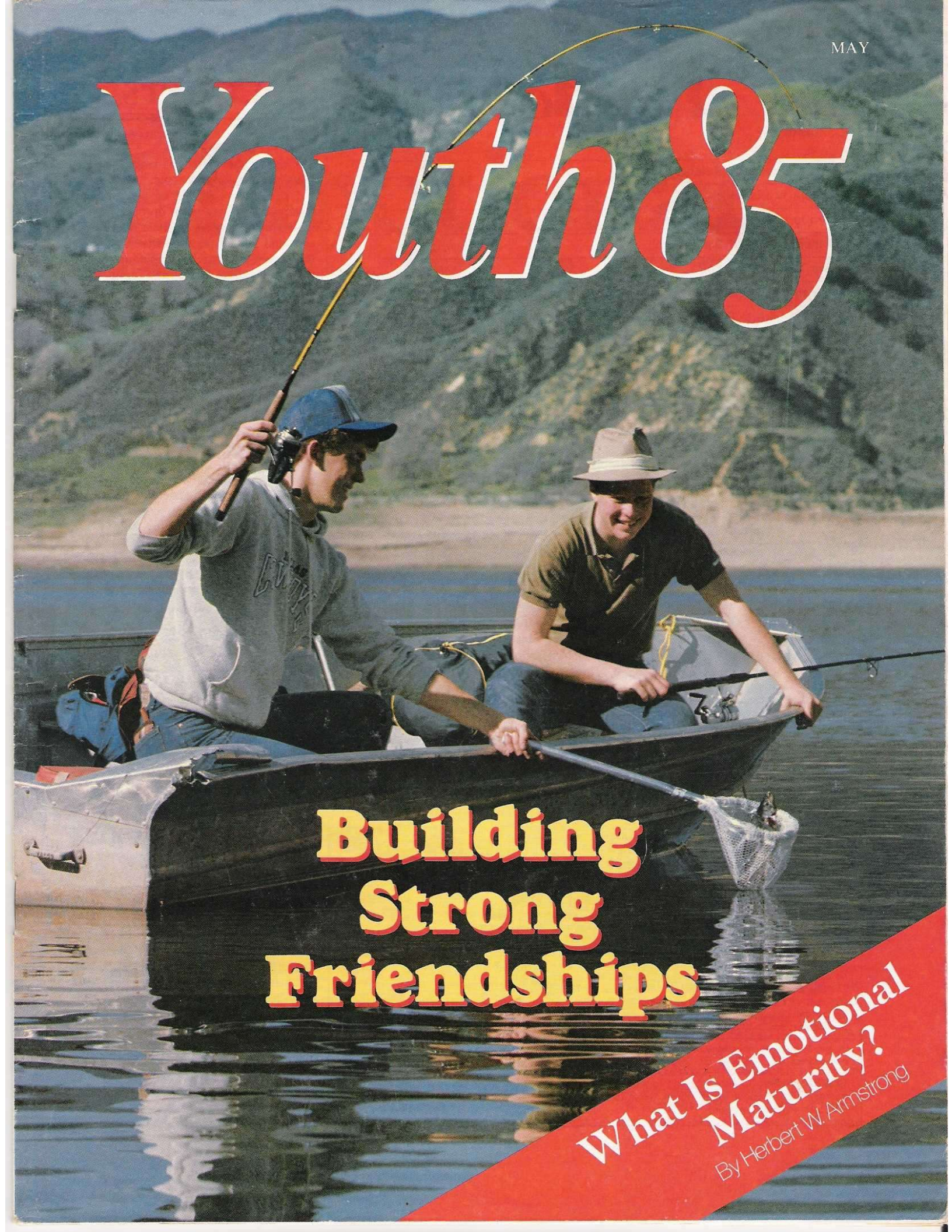


MAY

# Youth 85



**Building  
Strong  
Friendships**

**What Is Emotional  
Maturity?**

By Herbert W. Armstrong

# What Is Emotional Maturity?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

**D**o you feel *deeply* about things or circumstances that are *moving* or important?

Did you ever check your emotional response to know whether you have attained emotional maturity and stability?

Most people give little or no thought to this matter of emotions. We humans start life as little babies. We have to grow up. But to fulfill life's real PURPOSE and mission, we must grow up not only physically, but mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

Did you ever stop to realize how many people think primarily only of attaining physical maturity? If it were not for compulsory public school education for children in our Western world, how many would take the initiative to develop their minds? How many, in each hundred, have done so in other countries?

But what about *spiritual* development? The average person, the world around, automatically accepts the established religion of his parents and his country. Why do most people of India follow the Hindu religion? Why do most of the Japanese embrace Shintoism or Buddhism?

Why do most Arab peoples follow the Islamic religion; most Jews follow Judaism; most Ital-

ians, Spaniards and Frenchmen — as well as South Americans — embrace Roman Catholicism; a majority of northern Europeans, Britons and Americans call themselves Protestant Christians? How many give any real thought to *why* they believe the religious ideas they hold sacred?

Do these run-of-the-mill hundreds of millions of people ever give serious thought to *spiritual growth*? Yet no person attains true maturity unless he attains spiritual maturity, as well as physical growth.

But fewer still ever give so much as a passing thought to the need for *emotional* development.

## Secret of happiness

Just what do we *mean* — EMOTIONAL MATURITY? Few know the meaning of the term. Do *YOU*? Yet it is one of the real secrets of human happiness.

But, if none is truly *grown up* — really mature — until he or she attains not only physical, mental and spiritual adulthood, but *emotional* maturity as well, *where* will you find it taught?

Do you know any school or college that offers a course in EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT? It most certainly is something we *need* to be taught. Few will ever teach it to themselves.

No one is born with it. It must be learned — developed. We need, continually, to realize that

we are born as helpless little babes, knowing NOTHING at birth. We do not come equipped with instinct, like the dumb animals.

Ever see a little calf born? The mother cow doesn't go to a hospital to have her young delivered by an obstetrical physician, attended by white-capped and gowned nurses. She has no delivery table. No one helps her. The little calf comes into the world by an instinctive, natural process.

Almost immediately it struggles to its feet. It finds its legs a little wobbly — but in a few minutes it stands on all four. No one teaches it to walk — and it doesn't have to wait a year to learn. It starts walking at once.

No one teaches it where to go — it knows! It has *instinct* built automatically into its brain. It goes after its dinner. No one tells it or teaches it *where* the dinner is located. The mother cow simply stands stupidly by, waiting for the calf to find its dinner.

No newborn human knows that much. Yet the human infant has something the dumb animals do not possess — human MIND. Humans, however, have to GROW UP. They have to LEARN — to be TAUGHT.

And one of the basic things every human *needs*, so vitally, to learn, is the right use of the human emotions. So you see, the human

MIND has something vital to do with human emotions. Yet most people never give thought to *controlling* emotions with the mind!

But our emotions need to be *understood*, taught, trained and controlled *by the mind!*

OUR MINDS WERE GIVEN US FOR A PURPOSE!

Where is the logical and proper place to begin such training? It ought to be taught to 1-, 3- and 6-year-olds, and in the early primary grades in school. That means this teaching ought first to be taught by PARENTS in the home. But how can parents teach children when they themselves are still emotionally immature? How can elementary school teachers disseminate what they have never learned, themselves?

Just WHAT IS emotional maturity? One author defines it this way: development from a state of *taking* to a state of *giving and sharing*. There's also a spiritual principle involved — development from natural impulses and responses of human nature to the principle of loving one's neighbor as himself or herself. Few realize it's a recipe for happiness. It is

From childhood we must grow up, not only physically, but mentally, spiritually and emotionally as well.



Photo by G.A. Belluche Jr.

something that must be learned — by the MIND — and developed by self-discipline. As I said, it's something you were not born with. Human nature is totally contrary to it.

GOD'S LAW is based on the

GIVING principle. Its basis is LOVE. Love is outgoing concern. Human nature is a magnet — a PULL, in the direction of *self*. But the way of GOD'S LAW, which is the way to peace, happiness and everything good — ah, that is a way humans must be *taught*. Giving, sharing, serving, helping have to be *learned*.

### What about emotions?

But humans *are* equipped with EMOTIONS. And, from babyhood, all humans are actuated more or less by their emotions. Emotions are *feelings* — disturbances — departures from a calm state of rational right thinking and acting. Emotion is an *impulse* toward action or expression of feeling, unapproved — unless taught and controlled otherwise — by the mind. Among the emotions are such feelings or expressions as fear, anger, resentment, jealousy, hatred, grief, sorrow, surprise, desire, elation, joy.

Emotions have a first cousin — our moods. The emotionally immature usually are moody, and have not learned to control their moods.

More and more I am impressed with a most important TRUTH we humans are prone to overlook. While animals are guided by instinct into the course intended for them by the Creator, man is given powers and potentialities infinitely higher. The spirit in man imparts to the brain the powers of the human MIND — an intellectual and even spiritual quality.

Dumb brutes cannot appreciate a Gainsborough, a Rembrandt or a Goya painting; a Beethoven sonata or a Schumann concerto; or the literature of great authors. They cannot acquire scientific knowledge, weigh facts, make decisions, render judgments, exercise self-discipline, develop character.

They cannot attain access to and union with Almighty God, become begotten of Him as His very child, enjoy actual communion with the eternal Creator,

have their minds opened and enlightened by His Spirit, come to comprehend spiritual truths and, finally, become BORN as a son of God in His very divine Family!

Man was put on earth to develop and attain to something infinitely higher than animal destiny. Man was intended to develop spiritual CHARACTER — to become like the supreme GOD. This all comes through the marvelous human MIND. One comes to knowledge of God through the mind. One realizes sin and repents of it *in the mind!* God's Spirit entering is the Spirit of a *sound mind!*

Not only spiritual development, but also emotional maturity is developed through the MIND. It comes by right knowledge, creative thinking, right decisions, the use of will, self-discipline. To rightly direct his actions is man's purpose in life.

Yet most people seem to assume humans to be merely the highest of the dumb brutes! They fail utterly to comprehend the magnitude of human potentiality! They allow themselves to act thoughtlessly, on impulse, with feelings, moods, emotions being swayed and buffeted into troubles, tragedies and sufferings, through irrational actions.

### A tragic case

I once knew a tragic example. It was a man highly educated, a teacher, who readily assumed the responsibility of teaching youths when he, himself, had never learned this central truth of life.

His mind was stored with knowledge about *things* — geology, astronomy, mathematics, literature — but he had acquired little knowledge about himself: his moods, feelings, drives, impulses, desires. As a child he had been pampered, petted and spoiled, permitted to have his own way. He had not been taught self-restraint, self-control or how intelligently to divert his moods and desires, and guide them according to wisdom.

He was married to a beautiful and intelligent wife, had a fine  
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## Maturity?

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family, an honored position. But, allowing feelings, impulses, moods, to lead his actions instead of sound judgment and wisdom of mind, his home was broken by divorce; and in the grip of his moods and tendency to run from his problems, instead of facing and solving them, he fled in blind fear from his high position and brilliant future. He wrecked not only his own happiness, but his marriage and his home, and he forced great sorrow, suffering and

unhappiness on many others.

He had allowed his emotions and moods, instead of his mind, to lead his actions. He had come to see circumstances through the eyes of his feelings, and his understanding had become warped and distorted. He had grown up physically. He had developed mentally. But emotionally he was still a very young child — and, as a sad accompaniment, his spiritual age was no older.

One is not really mature until emotionally and spiritually grown up, as well as physically and mentally. Parents should realize it is their responsibility to STUDY

their own children — teach them right direction and control over tempers, impulses, feelings, anger, moods. Teach restraint of selfishness and vanity. Teach love and outgoing concern for others. Teach *giving*, instead of *taking*.

### Not emotionless maturity

But emotional maturity does *not* mean *emotionless* maturity. The truly emotionally mature *control* the emotions. **THEY DO NOT ANESTHETIZE THEM!** They *do* express, at the right time, and in proper degree, enthusiasm, happiness, joy. They *do* feel deep gratitude for blessings, and also

## READER BY-LINE

# Sportsmanship— More Than a Handshake

By Martie Barrett

At the end of a tennis tournament, a young fellow walks up to his opponent, the winner, and shakes his hand.

The people watching this young man probably think he is

while shaking the winner's hand, was cussing his opponent under his breath? No matter how big his smile or how hearty his handshake, he would not have good sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship is not just how well a person acts after losing a game. The attitude of a player is far more important than the outward conduct. If a player has a good attitude, his conduct won't be a problem.

The right kind of sportsmanship is not only to be shown after the game. It should be present from the first greeting until the last good-bye.

The players should approach

the game with the goal of playing their best, and hoping the best for their opponents. Wishing the worst on the opponents and trying to tear them down is not what you would call good sportsmanship!

Real sportsmanship is not only to be shown by the loser. The winner should not make it hard for his opponents. He should encourage his opponents to go on and do their best.

With good sportsmanship, both winner and loser should be able to walk away from the game with a feeling of satisfaction, having done their best.

Having good sportsmanship is better than being the best athlete in the world, but having a bad attitude. The best athlete achieves a hard-earned title and temporary fame. But having the right kind of sportsmanship, you can achieve much more.

With good sportsmanship, you can achieve happiness, satisfaction, friends and character that will last longer than any medal. □

*Editor's note: Miss Barrett, now 19, is from Eldorado, Ohio. If you would like to submit an article for this section, send it to: "Reader By-Line," Youth 85, 300 W. Green Street, Pasadena, California, 91129.*



a good sportsman. He may be, but good sportsmanship is more than meets the eye.

What if the losing player,

they deeply *feel* reverence, adoration, in the worship of God. They sincerely feel compassion toward others — a feeling of true outgoing concern. They express sympathy and have mercy.

Emotional maturity does not crucify emotions — it controls and guides them with right knowledge and true wisdom. Emotional maturity develops hand in hand with physical, mental and spiritual growth — the four blending, finally, into the perfect spiritual destiny and the very purpose of life. It can bring very great and rewarding and lasting happiness.

Now, finally, let me describe the three categories into which people generally, and thoughtlessly, fall. And then let us see a few examples of the *correct* use of the emotions.

First, many, especially those of lesser education, let themselves go to an emotional extreme. They are mere babes, emotionally. It never occurs to them to put any check or control on their emotions. They become highly emotional over inconsequential things, like a little child. If these people drove their automobiles as they guide — or fail to guide — their emotions, their cars would run wild and create disaster.

Their *feelings* are worn on their shirt cuffs. They are upset over trifles. Their tempers fly, uncontrolled. They flatter, they gush, they exaggerate their compliments and their praise of others. They gossip, they slander, they speak evil of others behind their backs. They continually *feel* jealousy, resentment or excessive jubilation.

Some religious sects attract deliberately the overly emotional. In religious meetings their preachers work on the emotions of their congregations, encouraging uncontrolled outbursts of emotional response. They work it up — they generate increasingly energetic and noisy displays of out-of-control emotion. But Jesus Christ set no such example. Nor did any of Christ's own original apostles.

Then there are those who go to

the opposite extreme. Often these are the intellectuals and the highly educated — though usually miseducated. They have controlled emotions with their minds to the extent that their emotions have been stifled and put to death. They no longer feel deeply about anything. They are utterly devoid of real sincerity, any depth of gratitude, any feeling of compassion or real sympathy. Their emotions never grew up to maturity — their emotions DIED in infancy.

Then there is the middle ground, equally unprofitable and tragic. These are those who neither choke off their emotions with mental control, nor exert energy generating them. They are just listless — indifferent. They feel no purpose in life. They have no ambition. They have no spark. They do not radiate — they are like dead fish.

In an introduction to another, they extend a cold, clammy, sweaty hand with no grip whatever. They merely let *you* grip *their* hand — and it's like taking hold of a damp, dead fish. They have no personality. They are nonentities. There isn't enough life in them to generate any noticeable emotional response.

WHICH of these three are *YOU*? If you are any one of them, you are wrong.

### Right examples

Now look at some **RIGHT** examples!

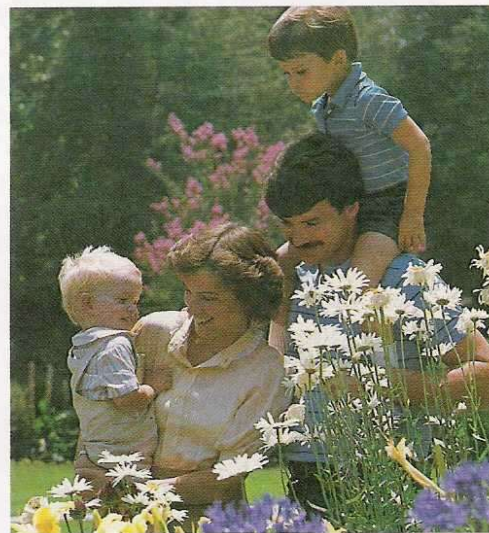
WHERE will you go to find the right teaching on emotional response? You'll find it where you find the true **WAYS OF LIFE** — in **GOD'S WORD TO MAN!**

The Bible teaches us that our relationship with God must completely dominate our lives — until it simply *IS* our life! It teaches us to feel *deeply*, though always intelligently, about it.

God has graciously granted, by astonishing miracles, many answers to my prayers. But never have I received an answer from God except when I prayed earnestly, from the heart. I have never known of a real answer coming from God of a casual,

routine prayer. Yet do not most people pray casually, perhaps as a matter of duty, and without feeling or emotion? Perhaps this makes plain the reason most people have never received an answer to their prayers.

Jesus gave us an example of two men praying. The one a respected Pharisee, the other a hated tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed, without emotion or feeling, in his own self-esteem and vanity: "God, I thank You that I am not like other men — extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess."



Animals have instinct, but humans must be taught everything. One thing we vitally need to learn is the right use of emotions.

The other, pounding his breast in his earnest, heartrending, deep-feeling remorse and repentance, choked with emotion, could only say, amid his tears, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Of this latter, Jesus said, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other" — the self-exalting Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14).

Jesus Christ is our example. Can you comprehend what extreme deep feeling Jesus experienced when He looked out over the city of Jerusalem, whose deceived, erring, wrongdoing people He loved, and cried out:  
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## Your Wall

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of John Wayne sitting on a horse. To me, John Wayne was a great hero. By no means did I idolize him or think he was a perfect person. But for some reason, having his poster on the back of my door added a sense of stability to my life.

Another poster I put up was in my bathroom. It was a giant, smiling mouth — and in the middle of the smile was the word *CHEESE*. This poster's message was a constant and daily reminder to brush my teeth and start the day off with a smile.

I've seen a lot of funny posters, some that remind you not to be lazy and some that remind you to do your homework or clean up your room. I especially like sports, so a poster of a skier, roller skater or gymnast is especially attractive to me. These types of posters are a source of inspiration and are uplifting.

Are you an animal lover? Maybe a poster of horses, monkeys, dogs or cats would be your choice.

### What your walls say about you

In my opinion, using a poster or two to decorate your room in an attractive way can be fun. But remember, your room tells a lot about you and your character, so the posters you choose to surround yourself with should be chosen carefully. Take a few minutes and think about what you want your room to say about you.

Even if a poster is all right in its content, you must consider what your parents think. Look at it from their point of view. They provide you your room. They may have painted the walls or at least provided the paint. Also, maybe they don't really want holes in the walls from tacks or tape causing the paint to peel off. Ask them for their reasons so that you can have a better understanding of each other's viewpoints.

If your parents don't want you

to put up posters because of damage they might do to the walls, see about putting them in frames. Poster art is popular now, and posters stay much neater when they're behind glass.

Also, you might see about getting some small (say postcard size) pictures of the things you like so you can put them on your desk or dresser.

The question about the right or wrong of posters boils down to: What does that particular poster make me feel like doing?

If you honestly answer that question, your decision about whether a poster is right or wrong is easy. If the poster makes you feel like breaking any of God's laws, it's wrong. If the poster makes you feel like living God's way, it's right.

Occasionally we must ask ourselves some serious questions. Why not stop and ask yourself these?

How does your hero, male or female, affect your life? Do you find yourself neglecting important things you need to accomplish? Like your schoolwork or chores? Are you beginning to develop habits or traits that you or your parents or friends are not proud of?

Idols can come from many aspects of life, whether physical or spiritual. If we are not careful, they can begin to block our view of God and become too powerful.

Remember, God warns us in the Ten Commandments, "You shall have no other gods before Me." Read these words in Exodus 20 for yourself. We have a free booklet on the Ten Commandments if you would like to do more study on this important subject. Just write or call and ask for it.

Are you going against God's commands? The apostle Paul gives us good advice, "Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry" (I Corinthians 10:14, New International Version). Flee means to run as you would from danger. Keep everything in the right perspective. Don't let hero worship ruin your life. □

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## Maturity?

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"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37). Here was emotion expressed. But it was *intelligent* expression of feeling — not unthinking, unguided sensual impulse. It was filled with deep MEANING!

Of course Jesus had the divine power; He could have gathered the people of Jerusalem to Him BY FORCE! But, had He brought them to Him by FORCE, His whole purpose of character building by free choice and free moral agency would have been defeated — so He *willed* that they, themselves, should make their own decisions. And He was grieved through His whole being that they rejected TRUTH and HAPPINESS and SALVATION and ETERNAL LIFE, and chose curses and suffering and death.

Should we ever feel deeply about things? About things that *should* be felt deeply about, we certainly should. JESUS DID! Just before the Judas-led murdering mob came to lead Him to trial and death, Jesus went apart from His disciples and prayed. "And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

If we do learn to live by "every word of God" — by GOD'S INSTRUCTION BOOK — we will learn to guide emotions intelligently — but we shall not suppress them, neither let them run rampant and uncontrolled where they ought not.

Jesus Christ, at age 33½, was the most perfectly developed man, physically, mentally, spiritually *and emotionally*, who ever lived. He was fully MATURE, these four blending harmoniously into the one PERFECT WHOLE MAN.

Let us study His life, follow His example, live as He lived. □