

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Devotional 1



I'm installing a water purification system for my Mother-in-law today. Have you noticed the emphasis in our culture on "pure"? We all want purified water, purified air, 100% pure beef in our hamburgers, or pure white meat chicken in our nuggets. Thing is, there seems to be a lot of different definitions for "pure". I recently read a report from the city water company that included a long list of things that could still be in the water in small amounts and the water still be considered "pure" enough to consume. I'm no scientist, but it seems to me that pure water should be, well ... nothing but water!

In a lot of ways, we function as filters, purifiers for our souls. If we want to remain sexually pure, we must start by keeping our soul pure. Information accesses our heart and mind by way of our senses, is processed through the filter of what we consider to be the truth, and is then expressed in the way we live our life. We need to be careful what we will allow to remain a part of our life and still consider ourselves "pure".

We need to examine the three stages of our purification systems 1. Input 2. Processing 3. Output

Let's contemplate the importance of input. You've most likely heard the saying, "garbage in, garbage out." This is popular in the computer world and serves as a basic reminder that if you want your result to be good you must begin with good information or data. So you want to make sure that your data is good BEFORE you enter it into your computer system.

What kind of things do you allow to enter your heart and mind? The entry point for this information is our senses, particularly what we see and hear. Are you careful about your exposure to harmful things? Our culture is over-run by media seeking to introduce you to images and messages that are harmful to your heart and mind. Messages that tell you what you must own, do or say in order to be acceptable in society. Messages to convince you that *God* and *good* are not cool but *worldly* and *evil* are. Messages that say that sexual purity is "old school" and unnatural, but the expression of sexual perversions are to be accepted as the norm.

Music, movies, television, magazines, the internet, advertising...everywhere you turn there is a constant bombardment of your senses that exposes you to the information that aggressively contends for ownership of your soul. The barrage is so great that it can overload your filters until you become overrun like a clogged storm drain in a flood.

You and only you have complete control of what you allow to enter the processing system of your soul. You can choose the Godly and the good and shield out the worldly and evil. Or you can allow the bad to enter and put your processing system to the test. Just remember: "garbage in, garbage out."

### **Parents:**

#### **Read and discuss:**

- ◆ Proverbs 4:11-15
- ◆ Philippians 4:7
- ◆ Matthew 6:22
- ◆ I Corinthians 2:14

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Devotional 2



I learned the hard way about keeping filters clean. Years ago, on a hot summer day, our central air conditioner quit working. It was still blowing air out of the vents but it just was not cold. I was so frustrated and embarrassed when the repairman informed us that our unit had frozen up because the filter had not been changed for a *very long time* and had become so dirty that it could no longer function properly.

A similar thing can happen to our spiritual filters. We must do all we can to keep the "processing" part of our minds clean and pure. We discussed the best way to start this in the first devotional. We need to avoid allowing the "dirt" in to begin with. But what do we do with the trash that gets in? How do we cleanse the filters so our minds function properly?

### **Read 1 John 1:8-9**

God know that the "filters will get dirty" and we will have sin in our lives. That's the reason He made a way for us to be forgiven and cleansed from unrighteousness.

### **Read Romans 12:1-2**

Your mind is an amazing thing. God designed it to be a processor of all the data that you encounter. Once processed, this data is used to control your actions and reactions to the people and events around you. It is constantly changing as new data is received and added to the repository.

When you allow yourself to be exposed to inappropriate information, your mind is in need of renewal and transformation. Until that happens, the bad information gets in the way of our understanding of what God wants us to do and how He expects us to act.

### **Read Philippians 4:8**

God's Word is powerful. When we read it, think about it, memorize it, and meditate on it, our minds will be renewed and our hearts will be cleansed.

Keep the filters clean so your mind will be renewed and your life transformed.

### **Parents:**

Discuss with your student the ways that inappropriate influences invade their lives everyday. Talk about what they can do to prevent that exposure. Pray together for the Holy Spirit to guide you and your student to make good choices when it comes to the things you allow yourselves to be exposed to.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Devotional 3**

**Proverbs 23:7** says, *"As a man thinketh within himself, so is he."*

Ultimately, whatever controls our mind controls our actions. That is why the previous discussions are so critical. But what about our behavior? How does that fit into the equation?

Our behavior becomes the conclusive test for our beliefs. **James 1** says that if we are not "doers of the word" that we are deceiving ourselves. It's one thing to think and to say. It's another thing all together to actually take action.

### **Read Colossians 3:23-25**

If we follow Paul's advice here we can't go wrong. Our actions will always be pleasing to God and helpful to others.

Here are a few practical things that you might consider to make sure that you remain sexually pure in your thoughts and actions.

1. Be careful what you allow yourself to see and hear.
2. Avoid situations that can lead to sexual temptation.

3. Don't allow yourself to be alone with someone of the opposite sex.
4. Commit to discuss sexual topics with no one except your parents.

I'm sure that you can think of others. Talk with your parent and make your own list.

Also, below are a few scripture references that you might like to discuss.

### **1Corinthians 6:18-20**

### **Jeremiah 17:9**

### **Romans 8:5-6**

### ***Parents:***

Commit with your student to set aside future dates to check in with each other to see how they are coping with temptation. The more often you talk about this subject, the more comfortable you and your student will become. End each time with a prayer of protection for your student from the temptations they will continue to face.