

est, they would all admit being embarrassed about some flaw that becomes a burden to carry throughout life. But it is unnecessary to worry! We all have great human worth, regardless of how we look. And that's the beautiful thing about Christianity. Jesus loves me, not because I am fantastically intelligent or handsome; he loves me simply because I *am*! What a comforting message! I don't have to do anything to earn his love. It is available to everyone as a free gift. For the person who has been damaged by feelings of inferiority that's quite a message.

The Emotions of an Adolescent

Perhaps the best way to begin acquainting you with the emotions of adolescence is to relate a personal story about the saddest day of my own childhood. It began at eleven o'clock one morning when I was thirteen years old. I was sitting in my school classroom when a boy near me motioned towards the door. I looked in that direction and saw my father beckoning me to come outside. He said we were going home and that I would not be returning to school that day. He didn't explain why.

As we walked to the car, I knew that my dad must have something awful to tell me. I could see the tension in his eyes, but I was afraid to ask him what had happened. Finally he turned to me and said, 'Jim, I have some bad news for you and I want you to take it like a man.'

I said, 'Is it my mum?'

He replied, 'No.'

I said, 'Then it's my dog, isn't it?'

My father nodded and then began to tell me the details. He said that my mother had been driving home in our car a few minutes earlier. My little dog (whose name was Pippy) saw her coming and ran into the street to greet her. He jumped on the side of the car as it passed, but apparently lost his footing and fell under the rear wheel. Mother then felt the sickening thud as the dog was struck and run over. Pippy screamed in pain, eventually lying motionless at the edge of the road.

Mother stopped the car immediately and ran back to where my dog lay. She bent over him and talked softly to the pup. He could not respond because his back was broken, but he could roll his little brown eyes to see who it was. When he recognized her, Pippy wagged his stubby tail in appreciation. He was still wagging that little tail when his eyes grew glassy in death.

Now it may not seem so terrible to lose a dog, but Pippy's death was like the end of the world for me. I simply cannot describe how important he was to me when I was thirteen years old. He was my very special friend whom I loved more than anyone can imagine.

It is important to understand that there have been many more *significant* moments in my life since that day of Pippy's death. There have been more meaningful days, and certainly there have been greater losses than the one I experienced on that cloudy morning. However, there have been few sadder days even to this moment. Why? Because I was thirteen years old when Pippy died. That made it all seem so much worse.

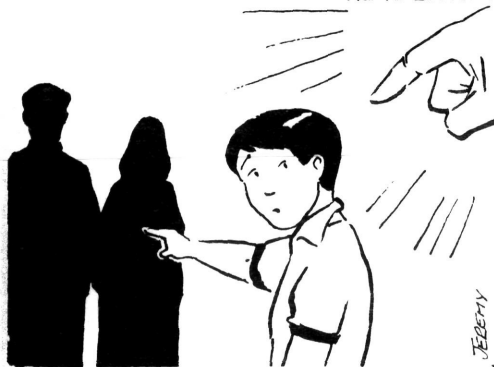
You see, *everything* is felt more strongly during childhood, and especially during adolescence.

My point is that when you're young, the good things seem more astounding and the bad things are more intolerable. That's why the death of Pippy nearly killed me too.

Why have I told you this? What does it mean for your future? It means that your own feelings will probably become even more intense during the next few years. That's just the way adolescence is. Little things that won't bother you later in life will bug you as a teenager. Your fears will be more frightening, your pleasures will be more exciting, your irritations will be more distressing, and your frustrations will be more intolerable. Every experience will appear king-sized during early adolescence. That's why teenagers are often so explosive, why they sometimes do things without thinking and then regret their behaviour later. You'll soon learn that feelings run deep and powerful during the adolescent years.

Teens!--It's Time to Take the Responsibility & the Blame Yourselves!

Maria Letter No. 56, 6/86



1. All teens have problems & most of them at some time or other have some serious problem. But their problems mostly stem from their parents, although not completely. Their parents are the ones that have had the worst problems. The parents or the childcare people—whoever has brought them up are the ones that have usually had the worst problems & where the teens have gotten most of their problems, or if they don't have the same problems, usually their problems stem maybe from resentment against their parents for something or other. In

other words, their problems have come, in some way or another, from their parents, or those that have raised them—either a direct copy of the problems that the parents have had, or rebellion & resentment against the parents have resulted in other problems.

2. So you can't really judge the kids too harshly for it. However, when they get to be 12 & 13 & when they're really responsible to the Lord & they understand, & especially when it's set down before them & when they have a chance to really get delivered of their problems personally, & they understand the problem & they understand the solution & they understand their responsibility. Then I would say from then on they are responsible. In a teen training camp, for example, they'll have had ideal opportunity to take the responsibility themselves before the Lord as to what they are going to do with their lives. It's their problem from then on.

3. If they haven't had a real dealing with, in love, or they haven't been made to see the problem or how they can get rid of it, or be helped by desperate united prayer & studies in the Word to overcome it, how can we blame them? But after they're there & they're given that personal face-to-face challenge & opportunity to commit themselves to the Lord & face their problems & get the victory over them, then they're going to be responsible. So whatever their parents have done or still do isn't really going to matter so much because now they're old enough to take the responsibility upon themselves.

4. However, their being able to take responsibility is not only dependent on, or a result of, their becoming 12 or 13. It's not just age only, but it's because & when they're really given an opportunity to get the victory for themselves. I would say it is their responsibility from then on & they can't blame the way they are on their parents any more, even though, like we brought out before, it may have been the parents' fault originally & may have been where the problems stem from. Now when they have an opportunity to get rid of the problem, they can't blame it on their parents any more.

5. That's a problem with kids—all kids I think—blaming things on their parents. I think that's a little talk that the TTC leadership is going to have to have with the kids. Because some of them, no doubt, are going to go there pretty bitter against their parents, you know, "My parents left the Family & as a result, look how far behind I am! I didn't want to leave the Family! I didn't have anything to do with it." Maybe they were only three, four or

five years old. "We didn't want to leave the Family, it wasn't our decision, our parents did it, now look at where we are. And now, if you have to put up with us, with all of our problems, it's not our fault, it's our parents!"—whether they think that consciously or not, I don't know, but I suspect so, because we all like to look around for somebody to blame our problems on.

6. "These other teens here at TTC have been in the Family all the time, they've had good training, some have even been in WS Units. And of course that's why they're more spiritually mature, that's why they have the victory & we don't. And even if our parents were in the Family, they fought all the time & they were jealous of each other & they didn't treat us good & they didn't spend any time with us, they were always out F'ing & witnessing, or they had such bad problems that they had to be excommunicated or they had to be put on babes' status or they didn't read the Word with us like they should have & now here we are & we don't know anything".

7. I mean they could go on & on & on because, let's face it, most of our Family adults have had bad spiritual problems & not been a very good example at some time or other in their lives. So the kids have plenty to complain about & plenty to blame on their parents & their childcare helpers & plenty to be bitter about, or if they're not consciously bitter, at least they have things to murmur about & conclude, "Well, it's not our fault, why blame it on us?"

8. But I think we need to tell them, "Look, everybody can find somebody to blame their problems on if they want to. Look at us adults. We have more to blame on our parents than you have to blame on your parents, at least your parents were in the Family, at least they were saved! Even if they did have their problems, they joined the Family, didn't they? Look at us! Most of our parents didn't even love the Lord, weren't even saved, didn't even go to church, most of them, didn't take us to church, didn't give us any kind of spiritual upbringing or instruction at all, which resulted in our getting on drugs & getting abortions & all kinds of terrible attitudes toward sex & ruining our teeth by letting us eat junk food all our lives." (And many other things you leaders can probably think of.) If anybody has anything to blame on their parents, our generation does. At least your generation were saved. They made a lot of mistakes but at least you grew up knowing the Lord, & that's something! That's a big bonus no matter how bad your parents were!

9. "But all of these things that you're resentful at your parents about & you don't like your parents for, still they knew the Lord & most of them did try to give you some kind of love & some kind of Christian training & good foundation at least in witnessing for awhile, even the ones that left the Family. And some of the ones that left the Family, it wasn't really entirely their fault, conditions were very difficult for them."—In the Chain Days you can't really blame them unless they were real soldiers, unusual hundred-per-centers that were willing to go through anything to survive. They almost naturally fell away because conditions were so difficult for them.)

10. "So we all can blame things on other people & rightfully so, In a way, because it was their fault & it was our parents' fault & it was your parents' fault. But when we came to the point where we had to make the decision for the Lord, we were shown what the answer was, then it was our decision & our responsibility. It didn't matter what our parents had done, we had the choice & we alone were faced with the responsibility of making the right choice, getting victories over our drug-taking & our rebelliousness & our spoiled-child behaviour & all kinds of things. We had to decide to leave them behind. Even though maybe our problems were caused by our parents in the beginning, still it was our responsibility to get the victory. We could no longer blame it on our parents even though it probably was their fault.

11. "We had to forgive. See, you have to come to a point where you forgive whoever has done you wrong & you see that now you have to take the responsibility for what you did or for what you are doing from now on & that you can get the victory & your parents' sins don't have to rule your lives. They've affected you, yes, but they don't have to be the thing that determines what you are going to do in life. And forgiveness is a big part of it! You've got to forgive, like we had to forgive our parents!"

12. Some of these poor kids, their parents were in terrible condition & they have to forgive them because the Lord requires it if they want to be forgiven for their sins, or get the victory over their problems. If they don't forgive, they can't go on to really take the responsibility themselves & get the victory themselves, because if you don't forgive then you're still laying the blame on someone else.

13. "So even you kids, 12 & 13-year-olds, you've got a lot that you can blame your parents for & rightfully so, I blame your parents too but now you've got to forgive your parents & you've got to see

that now you have the opportunity to take the responsibility yourselves, from now on it is your responsibility & you can get the victory & your parents' sins don't have to affect you any longer. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin". Like Dad said—From your sins, your parents' sins, every sin, other people's, your childcare helper's sins with you or whatever. People will of course blame everything they can on someone else. "So-&-so did it to me!" So you're just going to have to get the victory over that."

14. So that's an important point that I think we need to tell our teens. Say, "Look, you're responsible now. We know your parents did this & were bad samples, but some of them weren't even to blame for their problems, other people were to blame for their problems. But in a way, they were. They should have gotten the victory, but if they didn't get the victory, if they're still having problems, it is up to you now to get the victory over your problems. You can't keep blaming other people."

15. (Sara: Just like Paul & Falthy, who were a part of the Chain, now go all the way to the States & apologise & ask forgiveness to the same people in these meetings that they might have stumbled before in the Chain. Paul & Falthy had to forgive their leaders & those in the meetings had to forgive Paul & Falthy. Everyone had to forgive in order to be forgiven, & now the kids have to do the same thing.)

16. Yes, I'm hoping that those in the States are taking the responsibility for their own sins, & that Paul & Falthy are not taking too much of the responsibility, along with the other leadership. Paul said in one of his reports, "Although we've been apologising to everybody everywhere, it does seem that some of these people are responsible for their own sins." Even if the leadership had been 100% perfect, some people would still be in sad shape. But whether they went out & dug up their own problems or whether leadership threw some at them, now they're all responsible.

17. As long as they say, "Yes, Paul, that's right. Yes, Falthy, that's right, you & the Chain were to blame & so we'll keep blaming it on you", then they won't get the victory. They have to know that they themselves were partly responsible & even if they weren't at the time, now they are fully responsible, because now they've been given the opportunity to get the victory.

18. These people are going to have to realise that they are responsible now, from this time on they are fully responsible because the apologies were made, everything was done for them & now they're responsible for their own sins, whether they get the

victory or not. Maybe some of them were caused by other people, that's true. We all are a product of what has been done to us & what we have done, a combination of what others have done to us & what we have done ourselves, but it gets to the point where when we're faced with it, we have to take the responsibility for everything. We are

ultimately responsible for our problems, whoever they were caused by or whatever they are, whether we did it ourselves or whether somebody did it to us. We are responsible. Rom.14:12—"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God!" That's a very good Scripture on this subject for teens to know!



Every one of us shall give account of himself to God!

✧(A Teen Poster for your wall!)



WEALTH IN THE WORD IS WISDOM!