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### Questions Youth Are Asking Today

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# Questions Youth Are Asking

## **FORGIVE AND FORGET?**

When you forgive something real mean that someone has done to you, do you have to forget it? All my life I've heard, "Forgive and forget." To forgive seems hard enough, but to forget is impossible. How could a person make himself forget something, even if he wanted to?

The Bible doesn't actually say we should forget, so I don't know that God expects us to, at least not right away. But Jesus taught us to ask God, "Forgive us the wrong we have done, as we have forgiven those who have wronged us." Matthew 6:12, NEB. God has promised to forget our sins as well as forgive them, so I'm sure He would like us to do the same. Hebrews 10:17 says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

How to do it? "Overcome evil with good." Romans 12:21. With Christ's help, think so many constructive, helpful things about the good side of your "enemy," that you crowd out hostile ones. Better yet, burn up the meanness in him—as the Bible says, "Heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20)—by doing nice things for him, like offering to help with his homework, or trading records with him, or teaching him how to play your guitar. You'll probably end up liking him in spite of yourself. And we can all stand a few more friends.

## **THANK YOU SO MUCH**

I just want to tell you how grateful I am for the things you wrote to me in March. I had often heard other people talk about "burdens rolling off their shoulders," but I never really experienced it myself

until you showed me God's wonderful promises in the Bible. I was so wrapped up in my selfish depression. Now I'm working on being able to relive my new life philosophy so it will rub off on others. I've never known such relief. I still have loads of little problems that I could complain about, probably more now than before, but they don't seem like mountains anymore. I still can't pray like I'd like to, and I haven't really developed a good habit of daily studying like I wish. But I have read through "Steps to Christ" by Ellen G. White, as you suggested, and now we have a little study group going in which four of us young wives are studying about Jesus and His righteousness. Oh, the difference from the way things were before! Just being out of the pit of despair makes me want to try hard to overcome. Jesus is my Friend again after that awful time of seeming separation. When I found from the Bible that Jesus really hadn't given up on me as I was so sure He had, everything took on new meaning, and I had a big reason to want to live. It is really impossible to tell you how peaceful and happy I am compared to a few months ago. I am so very grateful.

## **ONCE SAVED, NEVER WORRY?**

I'm deeply in love with a wonderful man. It's real weird the way his wife has turned on him, and they've only been married four months. He's asked me to marry him. You could call it adultery, I guess, and that worries me. But our minister has shown us that once we've been saved we're eternally secure, so maybe it wouldn't be

adultery but just God's way of giving my friend the happiness he deserves.

Or it just could be adultery and the devil's way of getting you the unhappiness you'd deserve if you did it.

Any man who gives up on his wife in four months and asks another woman to marry him, is likely to give up on the second wife the same way. And the third.

As for whether or not you're eternally secure once you have accepted Christ, look at Revelation 2:1-5. Jesus there rebukes the Christians in Ephesus because they have left their first love and grown careless. He does not tell them not to worry because they are eternally secure. Instead He warns them that if they don't repent He will remove them "out of their place."

Jesus didn't die to give us permission to sin but to save us from our sins. Matthew 1:21.

## **THIRTEEN AND SHY**

I am a girl who can talk a lot when I'm around my friends, but I am too shy around boys I like. I am 13 and I go to high school. There's this boy who is in my friend's Spanish class. She introduced us. That was that. Then I saw him on the elevator. I spoke, he spoke, and I went on my way. It seems that every time I see him my heart beats fast, I start to shaking, I get a frog in my throat, and I turn the other way. I don't seem to have confidence in myself. Is it true "good things come to those who wait"? What should I do?

You may continue for some time to be more or less uneasy around





# Today

Answered by Mervyn Maxwell

boys; however, when you discover the right one for you, you will soon find that he is comfortable for you to be with. Besides, when you are ready to go steady, several years from now (I mean it!), you will be more mature, and with maturity will come greater self-confidence.

For now, embarrassing and frustrating as it is, your awkwardness around a boy who means something to you is one of the best things you've got going for you! There's a lot of truth in your proverb; the best fun does come to boys and girls who don't rush things. Thank God for your nervousness. It's excellent protection at your age.

## PICTURES AND FORBIDDEN IMAGES

I often visit the church service held in the State prison where I'm doing time. A discussion has been going on for several weeks about pictures of Jesus. It seems we have a man who insists that such pictures are "graven images" and are thus condemned by the Ten Commandments. Adventists publish a lot of books with pictures of Jesus in them; for example, "The Bible Story" by Arthur S. Maxwell, "My Bible Friends" by Etta B. Degering, and so on. Until I have been taught different, I'll have to believe that graven images prohibited in the Bible are figures made in wood or stone intended to be worshiped.

Don't change your mind. You're right already.

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) do condemn the making of images "of anything" on earth or in heaven—but only eight chapters later (Exodus 28:34) the Bible says that the high priest should wear golden images of pomegranates

hanging from the bottom of his robe!

The explanation is simple. To the prohibition against graven images, the Ten Commandments immediately add, "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them."

So it is not all images that are wrong, but images intended to be worshiped.

A picture could, of course, be worshiped. In India last spring I saw many pictures of Hindu gods hanging in people's homes as objects of worship; but pictures don't need to be worshiped.

In Christ God chose to help us understand what He is like by coming into the world in the form of a vigorous young man. When we print pictures of Jesus, we are only extending this understanding from Christ's day to our own. We are not worshiping the pictures; hence, as you say, we are not breaking the Ten Commandments on this point.

## BE A CHRISTIAN AGAIN?

I am 16 years old. I was a Christian before my friend led me away from Christ. Now I think I sin more than I did before I came to Jesus. I want to know if you can help me become a Christian again. If you think you can, please call me or write me, and let me know. I sure hope you can help me.

Trying to tell us what God is like, Jesus told of a boy who rebelled and wandered away from home. Just as soon as the boy was sorry for what he'd done, his father (God) came running to him—yes, *running*—and welcomed him home! Luke 15.

God loves girls just as much as

He does boys, of course, so the first thing for you to do is to think about how much God loves you rather than about how sinful you are. God wants to forgive you. Jesus died to save you.

So right now, while you're thinking about God's love for you, tell Him how sorry you are and how serious you are about choosing to be His child again. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. (Of course God forgives! That's the kind of God He is.)

Now believe! "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31. Remember that Jesus said, "I will never refuse anyone who comes to Me." John 6:37, Phillips.

Look up other great promises God has made, like Matthew 1:21, Philippians 4:13, Revelation 3:14-22; and read whole chapters like Isaiah 53 and Isaiah 55 and John 6. Go back to church, witness about Jesus whenever you can, choose with God's help to live the new life, and keep on believing. You're a Christian again already. Praise God.

## DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Would you like to ask Mervyn Maxwell to help you find an answer? If so, send your question to

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