

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Al Denson Show and for tuning in every week to our program. My prayer for you is to be encouraged in your daily walk with God through the words of this booklet. Our hope is that in turn you will tell others of what God is doing through our ministry to youth and parents on TV. I am convinced you will not find another program on any network anywhere that deals with issues today's youth and their parents are facing, and provides answers from a Godly perspective.

Please help us with your donation. Your support will not only keep this program on the air, but will allow us to continue providing these materials on a weekly basis to thousands of people as a gift of encouragement. We need YOU to partner with us. All gifts are tax deductible. Please make your gift payable to Celebration Ministries.

May God bless you and thank you for watching!

Sincerely,



An Outreach of Celebration Ministries

The Al Denson Show
Box 220 Grapevine, TX 76099
Toll Free 1-877-HOPE101
Email: aldenson@aol.com
Web Site: www.aldenson.com

garbage
in
garbage
out



there is no delete key between your ears



When Al Denson speaks to students—more than 2,000,000 face to face — he comes with his own story of struggle and tragedy. In December 1994,

Al's much publicized, near-death experience in the crash of a small aircraft led him to a rare insight about the tenuous nature of earthly life.

With eight albums behind him and a string of #1 songs and awards that includes a Dove for "Best Praise Album of the Year", Denson's songs and messages to students from junior high through college continue to touch an ever-widening audience. In addition to his own performances, Al has been featured at crusades for Dr. Billy Graham, Franklin Graham, Ralph Bell, and Dawson McAllister. His new TV show, "The Al Denson Show", is seen by millions across America. The program targets and involves youth and the issues they face every day.

Write Al at:
Box 220
Grapevine, TX 76099
Email: aldenson@aol.com
Web Site: www.aldenson.com

garbagein garbageout

Computers are wonderful and awesome things. They have the ability to store and process millions and millions of facts. Your brain is also a wonderful and awesome thing that has the ability to store and process unbelievable amounts of information. However, the big difference between your brain and a computer is that your brain has no delete key.

Everything you allow between your ears is going to affect you in one way or the other at some point in your life.

Thousands of Christian teenagers today struggle with an inability to have a consistent walk with God. With all their hearts they want to live godly lives, but for some reason can't seem to do that over the long haul. Most of these fail to realize that with their own eyes and ears they are sabotaging themselves and becoming their own worst enemy. As a result, they are living their lives in defeat and discouragement ruled by habits they can't break, thoughts they can't control, and behavior they can't overcome.

These Christians know nothing of freedom in Christ because they have not accepted the reality that there is a battle being waged against them, and the battle is for their minds. Their minds are so filled with confusion that their walk with Christ is a total discouragement.

They can't sit still long enough to pray and can't concentrate long enough to read their Bibles. They are tormented by bad thoughts, guilt and doubt.

Paul nailed the problem when he said in Ephesians 6:12, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of

this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." In other words, the one battling for the control of the minds of Christians is Satan.

Now that is a bad thing, but what is REALLY bad is that we are the ones who are giving him the ammunition with which to attack us! We do that every time we let down our guard spiritually by allowing our eyes to see things that are ungodly, or our ears to hear things that are ungodly.

It will be impossible to live a holy life if we are giving Satan free access to our minds.

Because of what Christ accomplished through His death and resurrection, the only power Satan has over us and our minds is what we give him. Colossians 2:15 says, "...having disarmed the powers and authorities, He (Jesus) made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." It is our responsibility to choose wisely what we allow ourselves to be exposed to.

Everything
you allow
between your
ears is going
to affect you
in one way or
the other...

...you can't delete from your mind what you have seen or heard.

If we want to be free to live victorious, holy lives we will have to renounce anything in which we are participating that would allow Satan access to our minds. This also would include any of the components of The New Age Movement (human potential movement) or Parapsychology (the study of the occult). Here are a few: Ouija boards, table lifting, mind reading, visualization, spirit guides, tarot cards, astrology, hypnosis, biofeedback, fortune telling, palm reading, seances, clairvoyance, black or white magic, blood pacts, ghosts, mediums, channelers, crystals, pyramids, psychic healing, yoga, and meditation just to name a few.

All of these things have reached every part of our society and have

strongholds in the arts, in the entertainment industry, the media, politics, education and the marketplace.

The Bible says in I Thessalonians 5:22, "Abstain from all APPEARANCES of evil." God says that something doesn't even have to BE wrong, only the fact that it may APPEAR wrong is enough reason for us to avoid it. If you begin to dabble in things that have an

appearance or a "link" to evil, before you know it one thing will lead to another and Satan will have your mind trapped under his influence and control.

In II Corinthians 10:3-5 Paul says, "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.

On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." The "strongholds" that Paul is talking about here are actually bad habits and sinful thought patterns that we have allowed to

take up residence in our minds. Remember, Satan is always trying to promote his lies and fill your thoughts with his thoughts. He knows that if he can control your thoughts, he can control your behavior. The Bible says in I Corinthians 2:16, "We have the mind of Christ." That's God's part. He gave us a new mind when He saved us. Philippians 2:5 says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in



Christ Jesus." That is our part, to guard, control and use that which God has given us.

You may be watching a movie, a video, television, reading a magazine, or you may be listening to music and perhaps what you are listening to or watching seems fairly harmless. But sprinkled into the lyrics or story line are things that are against what God's Word says is right. Now most of the time Satan is too smart to let those things look evil. Have you noticed that he almost always uses young, sexy, attractive, funny people to deliver his message? If he can get you to laugh about something, or get your curiosity or hormones aroused, then he can get you to begin to rationalize what is happening and before you know it, you have compromised. You think, "No big deal, I may not completely agree with that, but it isn't affecting me."

What you don't understand is that you can't delete from your mind what you have seen or heard. Each time an ungodly picture, word, thought or concept enters your mind it is like a brick. One brick may not seem like a problem in and of itself. However, when those bricks are stacked one on top of another, it is not long before you have built a stronghold in your life. You must guard your mind. You, and you alone, must decide what you will and will not let into your mind. There is a commercial that says, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." This is so true because a wasted mind is also a wasted life.

Philippians 4:8 says, "...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things." This verse is actually a test that we can apply to what we listen to, watch and read to see whether we should allow the thing in question access into our minds.

Based on this verse, here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- Does this thing line up with the truth of God's Word?
- Does this thing suggest that I do something honorable?
- Is this thing right in God's eyes?
- Is this thing pure according to His Word?
- Will this thing result in something lovely or admirable?
- Will this thing contribute to excellence in my life?
- Is this thing something for which I can praise God?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, then don't allow it access into your mind.

If you believe that you can allow ungodly, or even doubtful things in your life without any consequences, the Bible says that you are "deceived." Galatians 6:7 says, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." Too many times because we see no immediate consequences for our decisions we think there are no consequences.

We cross over the line, we go against God's Word and when nothing happens right away we develop this mind set that says: "There is nothing wrong with this; Just this once; I can get away with this; I'll be careful; I can walk the fence and not fall off; I won't let this get out of hand. Yeah, I know what God says, but since I don't see any consequences in my life right now there must not be any consequences." To all of us that believe this God says: "Don't be stupid, don't be tricked, no one can ignore My Word and get by with it." When God warns us in Galatians not to be deceived, He does so because being deceived by Satan is what we do best.

If you continue reading this verse, you'll see that the reason God warns us not to be

deceived is because "a man sows what he reaps." These are agricultural terms and this is an illustration taken from the natural world. There are two simple, yet important truths about sowing (planting) and reaping (harvesting) you need to know:

We all know that whatever a farmer plants in the ground is what will come up. He can't plant peanuts and expect to grow beans.

That same farmer wouldn't plant one day and expect to harvest his crop the next. He knows it takes time for what he puts in the ground to show up above the ground.

Well, the same is true in the spiritual world. Whatever we sow (plant) in our lives now, will show up down the road at some point. It may not be tomorrow, or next week, or even next year, but it will show up. There are also two other principles about sowing and reaping of which we need to be aware:

1. Sowing and reaping are all inclusive.

What does that mean? Simply that EVERYTHING we put in our lives will affect us and will surface at some point.

2. The second principle of sowing and reaping is that it will happen regardless of our intentions or understanding.

The farmer may make a mistake and pick up the wrong bag of seeds. He may have the best of intentions and sincerely want a

crop of peanuts, but if he plant beans, that is what he will get.

You might say "Well, this is unfair. I didn't understand the connection when I was making all those decisions." That doesn't change the principle that whatever you put in your life will eventually surface whether you understand it or not.

The Bible goes on to say in Galatians 4:8 that there are two directions in which you can sow.

In other words, your life has two

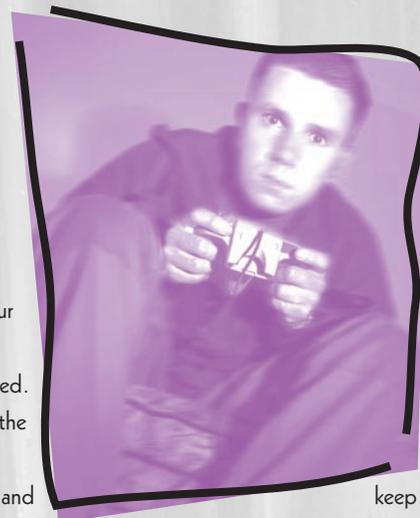
different fields in which you can plant. You can plant in the field of the flesh with ungodly things. If you choose to do this you will

eventually see your conscience, then your integrity, then your relationships, then your reputation, and then your health be damaged.

Or you can plant in the field of the spirit by saying "yes" to God and godly things. Verse eight says that when we plant in the field of the spirit that we reap an abundant life. This is a life of peace, love, joy and fulfillment.

Every day of your life, in every video, movie, television show, song, book, magazine, conversation, and thought is a decision to either sow to the spirit or to sow to the flesh. Sound hard? Hard, yes, but not impossible. God never asks His children to do anything impossible or that He won't empower them to do. In Galatians 4:9 God gives us a word of encouragement. He says, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we don't give up." God knows that sometimes His kids just get tired of being good, so He says, "Keep on, keeping on. Don't give up, and do be encouraged because in due time you will see a great harvest of blessing in your life if you will do things my way."

You may be saying to yourself, "I think I'm O.K. I don't allow bad things access to my mind that often. I'm only a little off from where I should be." Well, that is a dangerous line of



thinking for this reason. It is like a man trying to cross a huge lake in a power boat during a storm. He lines the bow of his boat up with the particular point he is trying to reach, but the wind and the waves

keep slapping the side of his boat and knocking him off course.

He can be going at full power, but unless he is constantly making the necessary course corrections, he won't reach his destination. If he only makes a course correction occasionally during his crossing, he will end up a long way from where he wanted to be. Making the necessary corrections more often will put him closer to the harbor, but to miss it two degrees is still to miss it.

If you are going to come to the end of your life being the person you want to be you must continually be guarding against any compromise, and you must be evaluating your life daily to see if there are "course corrections" you need to make.

Every decision you make today, regardless of how large or how small will determine what is on the other side of tomorrow for you. When you begin to realize that your entire future will be affected by the choices you make, then you will also begin to realize how important it is to protect your decision making processes by guarding your mind.

Whatever we sow (plant) in our lives now, will show up down the road at some point.

You must start today to become the person you want to be tomorrow.

One of the most important things you can ever learn about decision making is this: Instead of always asking “what is wrong with this choice,” ask yourself “what is right with this choice?” It will be a real sign of maturity when you develop a habit of starting each day by thinking about the decisions you will make that day, no matter how small they may be, and how those decisions will affect your life.

Remember:

- Wrong is always wrong, even if you don't get caught.
- Wrong is always wrong, even if done for a good cause.
- Wrong is always wrong, even if others are doing worse things.
- Wrong is always wrong, even if it doesn't bother your conscience.
- Wrong is always wrong, even if it is commonly accepted.

You must start today to become the person you want to be tomorrow. The consequences, or the benefits of the decisions we make as teenagers, will stick with us forever. Are you willing to make important, sometimes hard choices today to insure that you have the best that tomorrow has to offer you?

Have you ever noticed that on a sports field the part of the field where the grass is the most worn is the middle? Not close to the boundary lines, but in the middle. That is where the majority of the game is played because athletes recognize that if they are going to be successful at the game they are playing, they must stay as

far away from the boundary lines as they possibly can. The same is true in your life. Christians who live victoriously in this life don't see how close they can get to the line between right and wrong without crossing over, but how far away from that line they can stay.

There has never been a time in history when the world needs to see Jesus any clearer than it does today. And there has also never been a time in history when it has been more difficult than it is now, to distinguish Christians from the rest of the world. If you are saved, what is it that sets you apart from the rest of the world and shows them that you are different? What is different about the way you talk, the places you go, the things to which you listen, watch and read? If you have to honestly say that the only thing different about your life is going to church occasionally, then you don't really know the awesome holiness of God.

In Revelation 4:1 God lets the apostle John look into His throne room. John writes, “After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven.” In this chapter he describes the creatures he saw and in verse eight he writes, “...Day and night they never stop saying: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.” Then John goes on to write about the saints who worship before the throne of God that say, “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

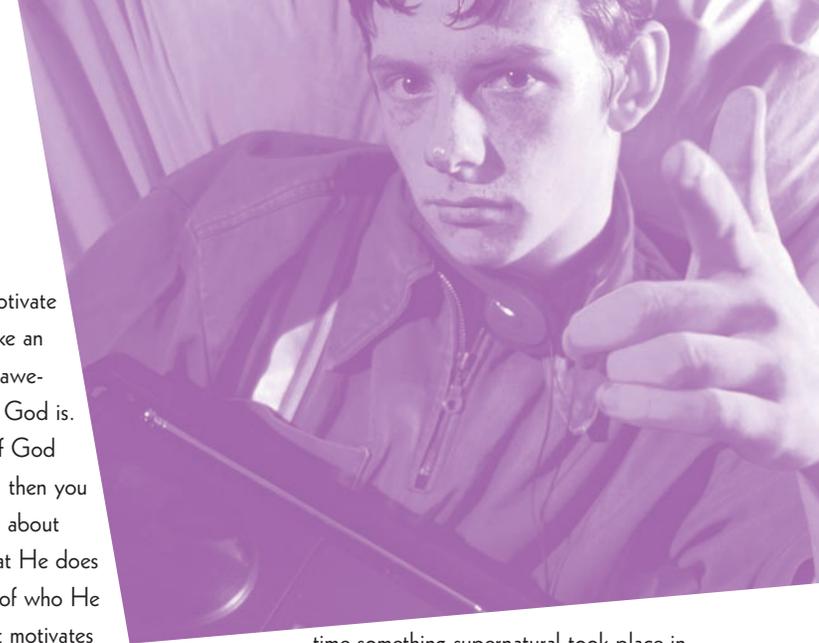
Nothing will motivate you to holiness like an awareness of the awesomeness of who God is. If all you know of God is what He does, then you don't know much about Him because what He does is only a fraction of who He is. What is it that motivates you to do or not to do certain things? Is it your conscience? Not a good choice because Proverbs 14:12 says, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”

How about the society in which you live, the Christian culture around you, or even your parents? No, because all of these are imperfect, can be unstable, and sometimes faulty gauges of right and wrong. God has not called us to be like those around us. He has called us to be like Himself. Christians need a measuring stick for right and wrong that is perfect and never changes, and that is, and can only be, the Word of God.

Leviticus 11:44 says, “I am the Lord your God; consecrate (sanctify) yourselves and be holy, because I am holy.” This is not a suggestion from God to His people, it is a commandment. As far as God is concerned holiness is not an option. Holiness actually has two parts: God's part and your part. God did His part when He saved you. At the moment of conversion, in a split second of

time something supernatural took place in your life. The “old” you died, and a “new” you was born in your place. This “new” you may look like the “old” you on the outside, but on the inside everything is totally different. All your sins are gone, as if they never happened. God has declared that you are NOW holy, pure, righteous and blameless because of Jesus. If you have been saved you are holy in your position before God. That is God's part of holiness and you can never do His part. But, you have a responsibility, too, and God will never do your part for you. Your part is what the Bible calls “sanctification.” In other words, being holy in your lifestyle or in your performance, learning to live on the outside like what and who God says you are on the inside. Salvation is an instantaneous, one-time experience, but sanctification is a process that takes a lifetime.

To be holy means to be separated from sin and consecrated to God. I Peter 1:15-16 says, “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”



And I Corinthians 1:2 says, "...to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy..." You and I are made holy in our standing before God through Christ, and we are called to be holy in our daily lives. In other words, we are called by God to act like what we are.

If there is not at least a yearning in our hearts to live a holy life, then we probably need to go back and re-examine our relationship with God. The desire for holiness may only be a faint spark at times, but it should be there. A true salvation experience will always bring the desire for holy living. I John 3:3 says, "Everyone who has within him the hope of eternal life purifies himself just as Christ is pure."

You might be thinking, "but what about my right to live my life as I choose?" Christians have no rights. Those were turned over to Christ at the moment of salvation. If you are more concerned about your right to participate in the things of this world than you are in living a holy life, and if there is not at least a desire in your heart to live this kind of life, then you need to seriously question your relationship with God. The size of your commitment to holiness will be determined by the depth of your love for the Lord, and the level of respect you have for His awesome holiness.

The size of your commitment to holiness is also determined by your understanding of the responsibility you as a child of God have to be holy. It is easy to become so comfortable with sin that you can lapse into a state of peaceful co-existence. But that does not change the fact that God hates sin. Do you understand? God HATES sin. Sin cost Him the life of His only Son. Every sin was a lash on the back of Jesus. Every sin was a thorn in his crown. Every sin,



a blow of the hammer on the nails in His hands and feet. When you understand the awfulness of sin and how it breaks the heart of God, then you will have taken the first step toward living a holy lifestyle.

Yes, you can spend your life anyway you choose, but when you come to the end of your life will you look back on it with regret or satisfaction? Will you look back on a life that made a difference for Christ in this world, or a life that was wasted? If you will begin today, while you are young, to guard the precious gift of your mind that God has given you, you will have the assurance of knowing that you gave your Savior in return the gift of one life well-lived.

The size of your
commitment to holiness
will be determined
by the depth of your
love for the Lord...