

Throwing it all away

A maths teacher runs away with one of his students. Why?

As a result of this Jeremy Forrest (pictured right) has walked out on his wife, destroyed his career (and possibly employment in any sphere for a long time to come), risked prison and probably will be on the sex offenders' register too.

It's good news that the couple have been found, that the story has not ended more tragically. But what made him do it, and why didn't he stop himself?

The Bible says *There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.* Proverbs 16:25

What that's saying is that conscience alone, without the impact of God's Word or His Spirit, leads us down the wrong path. In his own blog Forrest wrote: *"if you can look at yourself in the mirror and know that, under all the front, you are a good person, that (you) should have faith in your own judgement"*.

Instead of scripture, Forrest's philosophy comes (it seems) from the lyrics of his favourite band *Nirvana*. Not having ever listened to them, I just looked up some of their lyrics. These include lines such as *"I need an easy friend"*, *"Rape me"* and *"She'd take me anywhere, As long as she stays with me"*.

It's all about feelings leading to actions, and mostly about sexual fulfilment. Somewhere along the line Foster's sexual urges blotted out his sense of right and wrong, numbed his conscience and set him on a path that hurt those around him (his parents, wife, family, colleagues and friends), the one he thought he loved (Megan, her family and her future) and he 'flipped'.



How do we stop ourselves from doing things like this?

I'm not suggesting anyone reading this is likely to go as far as this guy. But all of us have to deal with and cope with sexual urges and passions that make us do things we regret. Most of the private messages and emails I get are for advice and help with sexual stuff.

The first thing is to understand that *conscience* alone is not

enough. Conscience easily gets squashed by feelings.

Secondly, the modern philosophies are unhelpful. They teach that 'if it feels right for you, then do it'. Nirvana's lyrics say that (from my quick casual reading) but so do sociologists and other preachers of what was once called New Age Thinking.

We need to protect ourselves against that...by avoiding listening to it and increasing what we hear of God's Word. We also need to *choose* to do it God's way. Job said *"I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman."* (Job 31:1). He made a decision to do it God's way.

It's an important starting point, it doesn't mean the end of temptation. But it does redraw the line of trenches on the battleground. If you are fighting at the point of *not looking lustfully* then the battle rarely gets to *not going to be with someone*. Job fought the enemy where Job wanted the battle to be, not where the enemy did. If he lost a few battles, it meant he had some lustful thoughts, not that he had slept with someone he shouldn't have.

God made sex a powerful force so that it would become a powerful bond between a man and his wife. But for it to be that, it needs to be properly handled at all times. Superglue normally comes in two containers, kept apart until the right time.

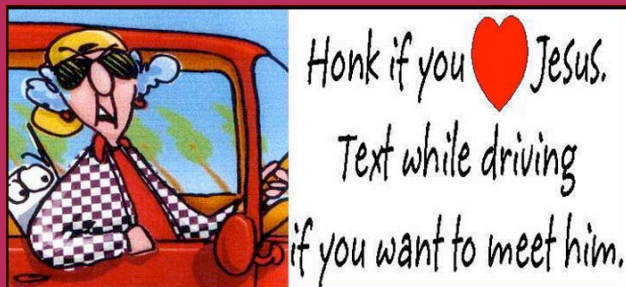
It's helpful to make a commitment to God like the one Job made (adjusting the actual words to meet your particular weakness perhaps) and then do what he did...tell your friends.

That way you can be accountable to each other.

Training For Guys

Is it OK to have a girlfriend who isn't a Christian?

Yes, of course it is. Unless you are a Christian.



OK, here's a longer answer to that question. But I'm going to start with a question.

What do you want a girlfriend for? You may well have a list for an answer, its not just one or two reasons. Somewhere on that list there may well be something like "to enjoy good times with", "to share important things with". Surely some of those good times, for you, are with other Christians, worshipping? Is not your life with Jesus an important thing?

You cannot share or enjoy your life as a Christian with someone who does not share it and who would not enjoy it.

In the end the only reasons for having a non-Christian girlfriend is 'because she is fit', or because it is good for your ego to have a girlfriend rather than not to.

And in these days, if she is not a Christian, it is very unlikely that 'no sex until marriage' is part of her belief system. Therefore you are putting extra pressure on yourself. It's hard enough keeping to that when *both* of you want to do so, but if it's only one of you then in the

Here comes October... the 8th month Back in the day, when the year began in March, the Roman Senate named a month after Julius Caesar - before this July had been Quintillis or 'month 5'.

Along comes Julius's great nephew Augustus who also wanted a month named after him too, in the summer, and so Sextilis was named Augustus. However, Septilis, Octilis and so on have never been renamed. Which is unfortunate perhaps, because Julius C also rearranged the calendar to start the year in January not March - so we are left with the fact that month 8 comes tenth in the year!

end you will either be driven apart or driven to bed.

I deliberately did not start with 2 Corinthians 6:14 (*'do not be yoked with unbelievers'*) because that passage speaks about all sorts of relationships, including business partnerships and the like. In other words, if even in those areas we should beware partnerships with those who do not believe we should surely not be considering it for something intimate.

But what if you are already in such a relationship? Should you just 'dump' her. NO! We are called to show the love of God in all things we do. 'Dumping' people does not sound loving! You will need to reflect on where your relationship is and how it is affecting you as a Christian and then talk it through. Paul wrote to those who became Christians when already married to unbelievers and said it was not for them to divorce their wife if she was willing to stay with them (1 Corinthians 7:12). Do not compromise your faith in order to please her, but treat her with respect and love.

"She's a nice girl and if I go out with her I can bring her to Jesus". That's an excuse to do what you want to do and very unlikely to be what God is calling you to do. It's never good evangelism to want to save people who are nice. What is 'nice' anyway? In God's eyes people are either sinners or saved. The heart of evangelism is to bring glory to Jesus, is that truly the reason you want to ask this girl out?

So I think, reading between the lines, I'm sort of saying no to that question. But what do others think? Post your thoughts to this anything else covered on the Facebook group.....:)



**Podcast this week:
Colossians 2: 20 to 23**

We've died with Christ to the world, so let's not live like we haven't!

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