

## 17

# What Girls Ask

*Opportunities are rarely given to our young people in the Church to ask questions which bother them. They therefore turn to wrong sources and gather ungodly information. During the question-answer session in one of our young girls camp, the delegates flooded my Mom, Dr. Lilian Stanley and me with a barrage of questions. They testified how the answers were enlightening and edifying. For the benefit of young girls everywhere, we give here the answers to some of the questions.*

**1. I trusted a boy. He ditched me. Now I am unable to trust anyone. I feel all men are bad.**

Forgive him. Only that will heal your hurt. You should be wise and not trust everyone blindly. At the same time it is wrong to be suspicious all the time. That will hinder your choice of your life-partner. It is natural that you find it difficult to love another boy. Though it takes time you will gradually come out of it. Develop healthy friendships with all respecting their humaneness. Ask God

to lead you to the right person. Take your parents into confidence in this matter.

***2. I stay in a hostel. I love a girl in an unnatural way and she also discloses a similar interest in me.***

Many young girls starved of parental love and affection fall for such unhealthy relationships and develop a sense of false security. Don't get hooked. Avoid that girl completely, and get involved in physical activities like sports and exercises. Fill your mind with the Word of God. Discourage idleness in yourself. To deal with your loneliness develop good friendships and hobbies. See that you go to bed tired. Do not encourage possessive or controlling relationships. You may seek help from a trusted elderly lady or a lady counsellor (Rom 1:26,27).

***3. Can I go out with friends?***

First of all your parents must know your friends and where you are going. Inform them when you will return. Then parents will happily let you go if they are convinced about your safety. Many young girls do not involve themselves in home affairs and therefore their parents are reluctant to send them with friends. Make outing with friends a time of constructive pastime towards release, relaxation and overall personality development. Review often if your friends are making you a better person.

***4. When a close friend commits sin or goes in the wrong path, how can I help her?***

First of all pray for her and then lovingly and clearly explain to her her faults. Continue your friendship. You

have opened her eyes and now it is her responsibility and her choice. Gently ask her if she would like to receive help. If your friend does not heed your advice your natural reaction will be anger and hatred. Condemn her sin, not her. Let not your aim be to make her feel guilty; she already does. Condemning her will only hinder her change. Do not ever change your friendly attitude. Allow her to make her own decision. It is her life. You don't need to feel guilty if she disregards your counsel and destroys her life. She is responsible for her life, not you. You can only do your best (Prov 27:5,6).

### ***5. How can I give up my bad habits?***

Take one bad habit at a time and start with it right now. Deal with bad habits one by one. Some bad habits are overcome overnight by a firm decision and sticking to it. Others may take days, weeks, months or even years. So don't ever get discouraged by failures. Keep at it and you'll steadily grow out of it. Ask God for help and tell Him you wish to change.

Make a firm decision to give it up with God's help. Confess and start all over again whenever you fail. Analyse your failure and learn. Seek the help of trustworthy friends who can stand with you and guide you. Maintain a diary of your progress. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you (Phil 4:13).

### ***6. Can we watch movies?***

Movies and many TV serials are full of violence, extramarital affairs, rape, indecency, immorality and what not. This generation is getting desensitized to evil by seeing it everyday for hours together. Youth are motivated to follow

the models they see in the TV. Films like *Gandhi*, *Jurassic Park* and *Sound of Music* are exceptions.

Every human being is endowed with a conscience which must be trained by the Word of God. It is your responsibility to obey your conscience and answer God on that great and terrible day of Judgment. You have the freedom and access to everything; but you are answerable to God for the choices you make (Eccl 11:9; 1 Cor 6:12). Seriously consider what you watch, the time involved, your age and your addiction.

***7. An aunty said that there must be five feet distance between me and any man. What should I do in the bus?***

Do not take the advice literally. Look at the spirit of the statement. It only means you must maintain a safe physical and emotional distance with the opposite sex in your relationships.

***8. Is it wrong to pray to Mother Mary?***

Mary was a godly channel for Jesus to be born in this world but Jesus alone is God. It is He who came in human form to save us and to die that we may have life eternal. Jesus Himself said that whatever we ask the Father in "His Name" we will get. The three wise men came to the house and worshipped the Baby Jesus only, not Mary (Mt 2:11; 1 Tim 2:5).

***9. Is it wrong to marry my uncle?***

Consanguinous marriages, as they are called, are not healthy. It has been medically proved that many hereditary diseases affect the offspring of such couples. Avoid such

alliances. Sometimes marriage is decided by elders even when the candidates are quite young. They force it on their children when they grow up even though it may be a miss-match. To preserve family property too such alliances are made. Marriage should not be decided on these grounds. Be courageous to break such shackles and marry the man of God's choice.

***10. Our parents are employed. When we are alone at home cousins, uncles and other male relatives misbehave with us. I have tried to hint it to my mother but she does not take it seriously.***

You must be wise and disclose it to your parents. Be plain, open and give them all the details so that they will take it seriously. Do not fear that family relationships will be affected. Do not worry as to what they would think of you or if they would accuse you. Do not feel you are accusing your relatives. Your virginity is most important. Truth must come out to avoid subsequent disasters (2 Sam 13).

***11. How to share God's love with a Hindu friend?***

Do not thrust on her all that you wish to communicate. First listen to her and make her feel she is respected as an individual and accepted as she is (Rom 5:8). Friendship precedes sharing. Degrading her religion or way of worship will not help. This will create a block. Share with her the plan of God's salvation and your testimony. Keep praying for her. Don't get angry or sad if she doesn't show interest. Give her time to believe. Use simple language, not the KJV English! Help her to see God in commonplace. Don't manipulate with false promises and hopes such as healing and miracles. God will bless your words at the

right time. Your job is to present the Gospel. Salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit. Learn to go in God's pace. Give her *Great Bible Truths* or the New Testament in a modern translation to read. Continue to be her good supportive friend.

***12. My friends have boy friends and they compel me to choose a boy.***

Do not fall a victim to peer pressure even when it is too embarrassing to do the right. A story that combines humour and wisdom runs like this. When Jesus drove away the demons from a man they entered pigs. As the herd dashed away, one pig asked another, "Where are we running?" The other pig replied, "I don't know. All are running, so let's also run." We know their fate. They all perished in the ocean. Do not ruin your life by listening to friends. Train yourself to always choose to obey God rather than to seek others' approval and acceptance. If you don't begin to be assertive now, you will never learn to stand by your own convictions and it will affect your major decisions of life as you grow into adulthood. Never let circumstances or people's expectations control you. Refuse to compromise on God's standards. Dare to be a Daniel.

***13. Is using nailpolish a sin? Can I grow my nails? Is it bad if we try to appear attractive?***

In the adolescent age the need for attention is natural and normal. You love your looks. Use a natural colour nail polish. Minimum make-up is always good. Excessive use of face powder, lipstick, etc., destroys natural beauty. Regard your culture and be attractive within the boundary of modesty. Don't grow your nails too long. Keep them clean and be careful not to injure anyone!

#### ***14. How to maintain good friendships?***

Problems creep up in all relationships. When they do, try to discern where the problems lie. Bring them out openly and discuss how to solve. Reconcile and decide not to allow the problem to repeat (Mt 5:23,24). With some give-and-take genuine friendships can be maintained for a lifetime. Understand the uniqueness of personalities, learn to appreciate differences, respect confidentiality and love your friend as yourself.

#### ***15. I study hard. But I forget some points in the examination.***

Apostle James says that God will give us wisdom if we ask Him (Js 1:5). Prepare well and God will give you the victory (Prov 21:31). Learn the lessons repeatedly and write the answers several times on rough sheets till you become thorough with them. This will help you remember. There will be some dull students in your class. Teach them what you study. You may teach an imaginary student also! Whatever you teach will be embedded in your memory. Studying in groups helps concentration. Be calm before the examination. Stop studying half an hour before the exam. Ask God to help you recall the answers. Then write with confidence. If you have a specific problem with memory don't condemn yourself. Do your best and trust God to remind you in the hall. Give your mind rest with sleep for atleast 6-8 hours. Other reasons for memory loss can be stress due to family problems and anxiety about future (Phil 4:6).

#### ***16. Can I cut my hair?***

You can cut your hair to suit your face but make sure that you look like a girl.

***17. Why do I get crazy thoughts when I see a young man ?***

Around the age of twelve your pituitary gland starts releasing certain hormones into your bloodstream. These cause physical and emotional changes. You want to look attractive and you are attracted to men. This is natural and not a sin. But if there is no restraint this can lead to sinful acts. Sexual thoughts are not sin in themselves. They become lustful or sinful when you plan to act by them. This is where temptation crosses over to sin. So learn to hold your thoughts in control. Master your instincts and refuse to be driven by them. Laziness leads to idle thoughts. So keep yourself busy in some work in the area of your interest. Ultimately it is this beautiful sexual emotion that will lead you to marriage. Regularly pray that God will lead you to the right life partner. This will focus your emotions and allow you not to run after every Tom, Dick and Harry!

***18. How do I react when boys follow me ?***

Reach home safe. You don't need to react in anyway.

***19. Is it a sin to fall in love? Please explain in detail.***

The Bible does not say falling in love is sin. However till atleast 20 your emotions are too unstable to choose the right partner. It is best not to fall in love before you complete your basic education. As many arranged marriages fail as love marriages. Western parents feel Indian youth are fortunate that their parents fix the marriage for them. An Indian lady remarked to a German mother of five teenagers that in India parents don't believe their grown-up sons and daughters are capable of finding

their life partners. The German lady replied in split second, "They are right." May be the West is learning from us. Being together for life is more important than beautiful romance. The romance dies shortly after marriage and then the commitment gradually blooms into love over a lifetime. This period tests your love in everyway. Parents have this in mind when they look for a partner for you. Many who disregard parental advice and the counsel of elders and fall in love following the dictates of their emotions suffer for the rest of their lives. Beware! Marriage is a union for life and must be decided by yourself, parents or guardians and elders. This does not mean parents are more responsible. You have equal responsibility over this life's decision. You must be happy about the person you are going to marry. Pray and choose the person according to God's will.

***20. How do we behave when situation forces us to be alone in the house with a man or men?***

All men are not bad. If the person tries to take advantage behave in a way that will make him understand that you are not a girl of easy virtue. Be very careful. If he misbehaves you must defend yourself, raise your voice, scream for help and run out of the house. Sometimes when help is available in the next room a girl surrenders to him out of fear. He may even threaten you to keep quiet. But don't ever be silent (Dt 22:22-27). Inform your parents whatever happened.

If strangers or even familiar men whom you cannot trust come to your house in your parents' absence do not open the door. Speak to them through the window. Do not let them know that you are alone in the house. Call out your brother's / father's name in pretence so they would

think they are at home. If they do know you are alone, do not disclose to them your parents will be away for long. Tell them it's time for their return.

### ***21. How to start and organise a campus prayer cell?***

A big number is not necessary to start a prayer cell. Start praying for a friend with whom you can pray atleast half an hour. Be approachable. When you get a friend start immediately. Even if the friend does not turn up at times spend the half hour praying for her and others. Start inviting classmates and friends to pray for their families, their problems and studies. Never wait for a good number to arrive. Start at gun time. On no account should the prayer gathering stop. After an interesting singing time share a portion of the Bible for ten or fifteen minutes and start praying. Invite prayer points from the participants and pray over them. Close on time. The leader should be a model to others. Form a curriculum interesting for youth which includes Bible study, group discussion of life aspects like Diet, AIDS, Smoking, Drugs, Affairs, etc., Debate, Quiz, Picnic and Outreach. Don't be rigid and traditional about the functioning style of the prayer cell, maintaining reverence and order however (Mt 9:17).

### ***22. Should we cover our heads in the Church?***

During the days of the apostles it was a Jewish custom for women to cover their heads. Grecian believer women used to deck their heads elaborately. So in the Church Paul admonished them to cover their heads so as not to distract others. In North India most women cover their heads especially in villages. It is however a disappearing custom. It is good for women to cover their heads while praying, preaching, prophesying and in Church

especially when men are present. This is symbolic of a man's leadership over woman. However don't hairsplit if someone doesn't cover her head. It is not such a major issue (1 Cor 11:3-16).

### ***23. Can we touch the opposite sex in our ordinary relationship?***

A man gave a banana to a monkey to be kept safe for a while. First the monkey kept looking at it saying, "It's not a sin to see." Then he smelt it. Then he licked it and finally ate it. These are step by step temptations leading to sin. Fantasies and wrong desires lead to touch. Touch leads you to further intimacy. You touch, then embrace, then kiss and then indulge in heavy petting, ultimately falling for sex. So it is best to avoid touching the opposite sex. Neither should you allow touches (Js 1:13-15).

### ***24. When my friends and I pray together in school we are mocked at.***

Do not be discouraged. This is to be expected. Keep at it and God will shower His blessings on you in due time.

### ***25. I am involved in premarital sexual activity. How can I come out of it?***

The very fact that you want to come out of it is a good sign and the first step. Start with prayer. Don't share your thoughts with your illicit partner. He will never agree to it and will only convince you that it is not at all sin. Make a clean break today. Your mind will only focus on what you'll lose if you break up. Instead meditate on what you'll gain. God is on your side and waiting to bless you once you break up. God can forgive whatever has happened. Do not continue in sin now that God has

spoken to you. The risk of pregnancy and venereal diseases cannot be overemphasized. Avoid that person. Never be alone with him. Keep yourself always in safe company. You can share your problem with a trusted friend and request prayer. You are sure to climb out of this pit. The memory of this sin is potential danger to your marital life. So come out of it as early as possible even if he is the person you are going to marry (1 Cor 6:18-20).

## ***26. Is anything wrong in wearing jewels?***

I respect those who have given up jewels for spiritual reasons. Rebekah of Old Testament wore jewels and we read in the New Testament of even men believers wearing rings (Gen 24:22; Js 2:2). Not wearing jewels is mostly associated with widowhood in Indian culture. In issues like this remember three things:

1. Unity in major issues
2. Liberty in minor issues
3. Charity in everything

We must be united in major issues like Creation, Virgin Birth of Jesus, Resurrection , Second Coming, etc. Eating meat, taking medicine, wearing flowers and jewels, clothing, make-up and the like, about which there is no specific doctrinal teaching in the Bible, are all minor issues. Each person can decide these according to her conscience and culture. Have charity (love) in all things. When certain matters baffle you apply this principle and decide. In general, avoid lavishness prioritising inner beauty. I prefer to wear simple jewellery so as not to be a hindrance to young girls among whom I minister (1 Tim 2:9,10).

## **27. How to choose my life partner?**

Start praying about the matter. Don't think of marriage till twenty or till you finish a basic education. Consider the proposals your parents bring. If you like someone let your parents consider it too. Don't go by just external appearance. Give weight to the inner person. See if he loves God, respects his parents and consider his qualification. Don't simply go by prophecy or pressure. Give weight to the counsel of your parents and elders. Use the common sense God has given you. In marriage minimising differences in matters of faith, culture, qualification, age, status, etc., lessen friction (Am 3:3; 2 Cor 6:14-16). (For further guidance read the booklet, *Whom to Marry*, by R. Stanley.)

Young people think of romance but parents think of life after romance. Life is not what you think it is. It is much more than that. It is giving in, sacrifice, forgiveness, adjustment, understanding alongwith the joys of life. You are the person who is going to live with the other person. Put everything together, pray and decide sensibly.

## **28. I am a Hindu who believes in and worships only the Lord Jesus Christ. Do I call myself a Hindu or a Christian?**

That depends on your situation. If you anticipate problems by calling yourself a Christian, abstain from it. You are a young girl and you need parental protection now. When the situation eases and you are bold enough, you can proclaim your faith openly.

## **29. Is wearing bindi a sin?**

*Bindi* is generally known to be the mark of Hindus in our country. So a Christian should avoid having it. But if

you are a Hindu convert you can continue to have the *bindi* till such a time when you can become an open Christian. By refusing to wear the *bindi* you will only antagonize your parents (or husband) and friends. Your testimony to your Hindu family and friends is more important than the *bindi*. They will be encouraged to put their faith on Christ when they see there is no constraint of removing the *bindi*. You can avoid applying *kumkum* or *viboodhi* associated with idols. Even changing your name does not make you more Christian. When forced to go to temples with the family you can always worship the Lord Jesus Christ even there in your mind (2 Ki 5:18,19).

### **30. Can we attend Church during menstruation?**

In the Old Testament times women were considered unclean during menstruation. But Jesus replaced ceremonial cleanliness by spiritual purity. Feel free to worship during these days (Col 2:20-23).

### **31. I was baptized but I fall often. There is no stability in my relationship with God.**

Christian life may not be a steady upward graph always. There are ups and downs. Find out the reason for your failures and try to find practical solution to overcome them. Study your Bible regularly and spend sufficient time meditating it. Ask God to speak to you as you read. Pray. Witness to atleast one person a day. Join a spiritual fellowship. These will help you to steadily grow in Christ. Your backsliding may be related to your difficult life situations and wrong perspectives relating to them. Deal with issues then and there and don't allow them to take root.