

Leaving Home

by Bill Crews

The most fascinating, enjoyable, perplexing, complex and challenging time of life is **youth**. A part of youth is leaving home, temporarily at first, and then permanently. All too soon to most parents and not soon enough to most young people, children grow up and leave home, ready or not, prepared or unprepared, and face one of life's greatest trials. Some leave home for an education; some for marriage; some for military service; and some for a job. Many of these young people are Christians who have parents (one or both) who are Christians. Have the parents done their work well? Will the young people stand the test.

If you are a young person who will soon take this venture, what does leaving home mean to you? Does it mean greater responsibility? Opportunity? Challenge? Are you resolved to make it a step toward maturity? Seriousness of purpose? Making a life of your own? Or does leaving home mean to you freedom from the "restraining" influence of your parents? That you will be your own boss and can finally do as you please? No doubt, leaving home means to some that they can, at last, start doing some things they were not permitted to do and stop doing some things they were made to do. Some will choose a college away from home, not because of the better quality of education, but merely to get away from home. Some will volunteer for military service or even get married for the same reason, a foolish reason for doing either.

More than likely you are going to appreciate home and your parents and other blessings more than you ever did before – after you have been away awhile. If when you were 16 or 17, your parents seemed to be so ignorant, by the time you are 19 or 20, you will be amazed at how much they have learned in just two or three years. We take so much for granted, and we fail to have and show gratitude while we are young and at home. "You never miss the water till the well runs dry."

If you leave home for a job, you will have to pay all of your own way – the bills will all be yours: rent, utilities, groceries, clothes, gasoline, pleasures, health costs, repairs. If you leave home for marriage, you will be entirely on your own, and you will soon come to understand all that your parents did for you. Of course, you will be sharing your life with another (you will have to learn to get along), and you may soon have children to care for, which will change everything. If you leave home for military service, you will not be your own boss at all; you will rather be under rigid discipline (but not a rigid moral standard) unlike anything you have ever known. Yet, many of the young sign up for military service because they are tired of their parents telling them what to do! Out of the frying pan and into the fire! Parents, home, school and other things will be seen in a new light and will be appreciated more than ever. If you leave home for college, you will not be under a compulsory education; you will be under a "it's-largely-up-to-you" education. It will be very costly to your parents or put you into a very deep debt, and you must not waste that cost or your time.

After you leave home, temptations are going to be greatly increased. There will be temptations to run with the wrong crowd, to seek the wrong companions, to make friends of the wrong people. "Be not deceived; evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Corinthians 15:33). There will be temptations to commit sins you have previously resisted. "Be sober, be watchful; your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18). "Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). There will be temptations to become unfaithful or negligent as a Christian. Many young people, the majority in fact, leave home and leave the Lord,

concluded on page 354603

354602