

FILTER OUT THE BAD

SCRIPTURE:

But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. These are the things which defile the man... (Matthew 15: 18-20a)

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (2 Timothy 2: 22)

MATERIALS LIST:

- (1) clean air filter
- (1) dirty air filter

MAIN MESSAGE:

Be it in the movies, the television shows, the language, or the immodest dress of today's society, there's bad all around us. We must filter that out of our hearts so that bad actions do not come out in our lives.

SONG: "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"

LESSON:

One walk through the local mall and you'll become all too aware of the "bad" that is in our society. The language that is thrown around, God's name treated as if it is valueless, immodest clothing not just on some of the women walking around but also on the figures in the shopping windows are just some of the hurdles placed in your path. The "family hour" on TV has become a display for immorality, increased details in violence, and godless belief systems. Evolution seems to be the accepted norm, as some schools indoctrinate the humanistic values which have served for some time as the building blocks for education. Yes sir, our society has plenty of "bad"; however, God still expects us to be the light and the salt in this polluted pool called culture. But how can we influence without being influenced? This is where the air filter comes into play.

When one inspects the dirty air filter, the first thing that pops out is the dirt that has collected - of course, there might be a dust-bunny or two as well. How did that dirt get there? Why is it that the dirt is only on one side of the filter? These questions would be great to ask your children at this time. Let them try to explain to you that the air flows from one side, through the filter, and out the other side. The dirty air that is pulled from the house is filtered so that what you breath in is actually cleaner air. It's this process of filtration that allows your home to remain a safer and healthier place.

There is a strong point that Jesus makes in Matthew chapter 15 concerning where "bad" behavior comes from - the heart. He is showing the false view of the Pharisees as to what defiles a man, or what makes him unclean. The point is made very clearly, what comes out of the heart makes the man defiled. So it would make sense that if we don't want the "bad" to come out of us, we had better make sure our filters are working. Satan wants the dirt and filth of this world to enter our homes and our lives. He wants us to be sick with sin; however, God does not. God wants us to protect our hearts, realizing that what we see and hear will influence how we think and feel - and really how we behave. That's why it's so important not to ingest movies with foul language, detailed violence, immodest dress, and immorality. We should flee from the "bad" and surround ourselves with the "good" - all the while making sure our filter is working properly.

PRAYER: Give our family the courage to filter out the bad and set our hearts to be completely devoted to God.