

## Youthful Indiscretion?

### **Ready:**

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."

-1 Timothy 4:12

### **Set**

Michael Phelps, exposed in a British tabloid by a photo showing him smoking marijuana, came clean and admitted that the picture was authentic. He said, "I engaged in behavior that was regrettable and demonstrated bad judgment. I'm 23 years old and, despite the successes I've had in the pool, I acted in a youthful and inappropriate way, not in a manner people have come to expect from me."

Officials in the USOC expressed their disappointment because he is a role model for millions of young athletes. But others thought it would not affect his sponsorships or other marketing relationships because it was "only marijuana." They would simply have him "lay low" for a while to let people forget about it.

While Michael Phelps may not lose money from his lucrative endorsement deals, he has lost something far more valuable: a good name. See Proverbs 21:1, which says, "A good name is more desirable than great riches."

As a dad and a coach, I used this as an opportunity to show my kids how important it is to make wise decisions. But how do we teach our young people that their actions have consequences when company executives, as in the case of Phelps and his sponsors, continually look the other way in the name of money and sacrifice principle for profit?

If Michael Phelps had asked himself one simple question, the outcome may have been different: Is this wise?

We can ask ourselves the same question to evaluate our own decisions. Given the following factors, is what I'm about to do a wise decision:

1. My relationship with Christ.
2. My past circumstances.
3. My present responsibilities.
4. My future hopes and dreams.

Is this wise?

Everyone makes mistakes, and thankfully God is full of grace and mercy when we do. But there are also consequences for the decisions we make.

Young people, God implores you to "be an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). Don't make the excuse that you were simply acting in a youthful way! Show Michael Phelps and other great athletes the real meaning of the word "champion" as you live to please God!

## **Go**

1. Have you ever used your "youthful age" as an excuse for immoral behavior or to act irresponsibly?
2. What standard does God use for young people?
3. Ask yourself before you make your choice: "Is this wise?"

## **Workout**

Proverbs 3:3-4

Proverbs 22:1

Matthew 16:26

## **Bible Reference:**

1 Timothy 4



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