



# IS YOUR FILTER WORKING



## PREVIEW

As we are on the way to becoming more Christlike, it's important that we take time to examine the things and people we have allowed into our lives. It's also important that we look at how those things or people have affected our lives. Ask yourself: Did those people help me become more like Jesus? Did they encourage me as I moved closer to Him? Or did those things help or harm my relationship with Him? If anything was harmful to my relationship, was my filter working?

## PRAISE

Ask the students in your group to share things or people that helped them move closer to Christ.

## PARABLE

Nowadays, hardly anyone drinks tap water. Tap water can be cloudy, have a chlorine odor, and tastes yuck. For these reasons most people prefer bottled water or some other form of purified water. Why do most people prefer purified water? Because it tastes better, doesn't smell like a bleach bottle, and it's clear. Water that has been purified has passed through a series of filters. These filters can remove silt, sediment, dirt, sand, metals, and a variety of other things from the water, giving you a clear-looking great-tasting glass of pure water. God has allowed for us to have a filter in our life. If our filter isn't working, we will be like that yuck-tasting, cloudy, nasty-smelling glass of water. But if our filter is working, we will be like that clear, great-tasting, pure glass of water. Is your filter working?

## PRESENT

Psalm 101 is a psalm of David. The Bible refers to David as a man after God's own heart. As we look at Psalm 101, we see that this person who was very close to God had a working filter in his life. We see that how his filter operated, was entirely up to him. One version of the Bible tells us ten different times in Psalm 101 that David said, "I will."

What was the "I will" about? It was about David making the decision about what he would allow into his life and what would be filtered out of his life.

For example, David said in verse 2, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" (or with a heart of integrity). Then David said in verse 4, "A froward [crooked] heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person."

David wanted to have a clean heart for himself and was determined to walk in that way. As a result, he filtered out those people from his life that had crooked hearts. Thus, we see that David had a filter for his associations.

Do you have people in your life who encourage your relationship with God and encourage you to do the right thing? These are the people you want to keep in your life. They help you live a better and purer life. They might not always tell you what you want to hear, but they help steer you in the right direction. These are the friends and influences you want to keep around.

Do you have close friends or influences that encourage you to do wrong? Every time you're with them, you seem to get in trouble. Every time you're with them, you do things you normally wouldn't do, listen to things you normally wouldn't listen to, and talk to your parents in ways you shouldn't. These are ones that you may want to consider filtering out, so you can live a purer life.

David had a filter for his eyes. In Psalm 101:3, David said, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside." David made up his mind that if it wasn't going to help him do right, he wasn't going to tolerate the sight of it. He learned to filter out all the things that could enter his life through his eyes and affect his heart.

Then David made a decision in verse 6: "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land." Instead of looking at bad things, bad habits, and crooked people, David determined to look at what honest and sincere people were doing. These were the things he allowed himself to see.

What do you allow yourself to see? Is there a chance that those things can enter your life by way of your eyes and affect your heart? If so, this would be a proper place to apply the filter to your life.

David had a filter for behaviors, people, and attitudes. Is your filter for behaviors, people, and attitudes working? If not, when you fix it, you will find out how much more beautiful life can be.

## PRACTICE

Ask the members in your group to make a list of people and habits in their lives. Then have them ask the following questions:

- 1 Do these things and people help me move closer to Jesus?
- 2 Do these things or people discourage my relationship with Jesus?

## PRAY

Jesus, I love You! Thank You for allowing me to have a relationship with You. I want to do what I can to hold on to that relationship. If my filter is not working, help me fix it. Help me filter out the things and people in my life that discourage a relationship with You, and help me to identify which things and people are strengthening my relationship with You.

## PLUS

Intentionally start to apply what you've learned from this lesson by asking yourself this question: Will this harm or help my relationship with Jesus Christ?