

■ A GIFT FROM GOD

Matt prayed quietly at the end of the church service. He had asked God many times to deliver him from his habit. It controlled him—for no matter how much he prayed, it was still there. He was trying hard to live in a right relationship with God, but . . . the problem was masturbation. Matt had been masturbating regularly since he was twelve. He was now sixteen. He knew it was wrong, but when he masturbated he felt both good and bad at the same time.

Last week his mother had walked into his bedroom at the wrong time. He wasn't sure whether she knew what he was doing, but the next day he found a book about sex on his bed. He felt guilty about masturbating and very confused after reading the book. The author said that masturbation was a "gift from God," but Matt remembered his church's youth director saying that masturbation was a sin and not God's will. Matt had tried to find something in the Bible related to his problem but couldn't find anything.

Matt had even shared his problem with his best friend, Pete. Pete said that he had masturbated a few times but that he didn't like it. Matt thought about talking to his youth director, but he knew that he would just say to quit doing what he was doing and pray that God would take the desire away.

Matt's older brother advised him to find a girl friend. He said that Matt was just horny and needed a girl.

- ▶ Rank the following characters from best to worst: Matt, Matt's older brother, Pete, Matt's youth director.
- ▶ Provide a reason for each of the rankings.

● Scripture Guide:	Psalm 119:44–45	2 Corinthians 3:17
	Matthew 5:28	Galatians 5:13
	Romans 14:22	