

As he smoked it, he discovered that it didn't taste good, but it sure made him feel grown up. As he puffed away, he noticed that a man was walking down the alley in his direction. As the man got closer, Norman realized—to his horror—that it was his father. It was too late to try to throw away the cigar, so he put it behind his back and tried to act as casual as possible.

They greeted each other, and to young Norman's dismay, his father began to chat with him. Desperate to divert his father's attention, the boy spotted a nearby billboard advertising the circus.

"Can I go to the circus, Dad?" he pleaded. "Can I go when it comes to town? *Please*, Dad?"

"Son," his father answered quietly but firmly, "never make a petition while at the same time trying to hide smoldering disobedience behind your back."

Peale never forgot his father's response. And it taught him a valuable lesson about God. He cannot ignore our disobedience even when we try to distract Him. Only our obedience restores our relationship with Him and gives our prayers power.

Prayer Killer #4: Lack of Transparency with God and with Others

On June 4, 1994, I had the privilege of speaking to 65,000 men at Promise Keepers in Indianapolis, Indiana. I spoke on the value of moral integrity, valuing our wives, and keeping ourselves sexually pure. During the weeks leading up to the event, I never in my life felt so much sexual temptation and pressure. I told my wife, Margaret, "Don't let me out of your sight for the next few weeks." I knew I was under serious attack.

I also made a decision at that time to share my struggles with my prayer partners. It wasn't easy, but I reasoned that if I was honest with them, they would be able to pray more effectively for me. My transparency made it possible for them to pray for me very specifi-