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Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly

(Titus 2:12)

The Gospel Confronts Modern Moral Issues

Edited by

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Knoxville, Tennessee

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Dedication

*This volume is dedicated to
all men of God
who are faithfully proclaiming the
Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
(1 Timothy 4:1-5).*

Preface

“Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly” (Titus 2:12) was selected as the theme of the 3rd annual East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions’ lectureship because of the need to set forth God’s answers to modern moral problems. The sub-title, “The Gospel Confronts Modern Moral Issues” states the purpose in a very positive way. As lectureship plans developed it was decided to print the lectures that God’s children who would be unable to attend the lectureship, and those in future generations, might benefit from these lessons. Speakers were chosen who are faithfully dedicated to the proclamation of the wonderful Gospel of Jesus Christ our King. Our sole purpose of the lectureship and lectureship book is to consider modern moral issues which confront members of the Kingdom of God and give answers from the Word of God, the Bible. If now or in the future one precious soul is brought closer to God through this work then every effort will have been rewarded.

Sincere appreciation and gratitude is given to each speaker who made their valuable contribution to the lectureship and book without remuneration. Their love for God’s truth and the souls of mankind has been expressed by their contribution.

Appreciation is also expressed to Don Iverson, a student of East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, who designed the front of the book, and to Rovenia Benvegna and Pat Eaves who proofread the manuscripts and proofs of the book.

May Christians of every age realize that God in His Volume has revealed for man directions which will enable him to walk in the light even as His precious Son is light.

Thomas F. Eaves, Sr.
Knoxville, Tennessee

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Biographical Sketch

JIM E. WALDRON

Jim E. Waldron was born November 4, 1935, in Nashville, Tennessee, and was baptized by Calvin Parker at West Nashville Heights in 1953. After finishing High School at Bellevue in Nashville, he attended David Lipscomb (1955-57, 59-60). He was graduated with a B.A. in history from Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tenn., in 1961, and with an M.S. in agriculture from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 1971.

Waldron has preached in North Carolina (1958-59), Pegram, Tenn. (1959-60), LaFollette, Tenn. (1960-63), Knoxville, Tenn., with Ault Road church (1963-67), and did evangelistic work in Pakistan (1967-1970). He taught in East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions (1970-71), did evangelistic work in Australia (1971-75) and taught in Maquarie School of Preaching in Sydney, Australia (1971-75). He participated in five public debates in Australia. He preached for the LaFollette church in 1975-76 and has taught with the E.T.S.O.P.M. since 1975.

Waldron met his wife, the former Laura Gary of Oak Ridge, Tenn., at David Lipscomb and was married Feb. 22, 1958. They have four children: Gary Stephen, 17, Philip Calvin, 15, and Mark Bryan, 13, and Kamni Ruth, 8, whom they adopted in Pakistan in 1959. The Waldrons present address is Route 15, Boss Drive, Knoxville, Tenn.

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A National Killer— Beverage Alcohol

Jim Waldron

Nationally there are approximately 60,000 deaths annually on the U.S. highways and it is a known fact that 55 percent of these are alcohol-related.¹ The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reported in 1974, "A California study showed that 62 percent (in other words more than 6 out of 10) of the drivers and 40 percent of the pedestrians in fatal accidents had been drinking. . . ." ²

In the Vietnam War that lasted from ten to twelve years some 56,000 American men were killed, and the loss of those fellow citizens is a tragedy deplored by all. But did you know that in just one recent five year period, "over 125,000 Americans were killed in alcohol-related auto accidents (that's more than all the U.S. deaths in Korea and Vietnam combined)." ¹

Yet, in the face of the tragedy due to the war with alcohol, which kills more than 25,000 Americans each year on highways alone, we have virtual national apathy. The alcoholic beverage lobby rolls over our communities like a Nazi blitzkrieg; *e.g.*, in Knox County, Tennessee, early in 1976, 185 citizens appeared before the county beer board against lowering the distance that required package beer not to be sold within 2,000 feet of a school, playground or meeting house. The beer board agreed to

this, but through the steam-roller tactics of the alcoholic beverage people the board ruling was struck down, and now there is a local market that will soon be selling beer within 125 feet of a church house on Middlebrook Pike in our county. It ought to begin to dawn on us that the booze peddlers have no respect whatsoever for our schools, little league ball fields or our churches. In other words in case you didn't know it we are in the midst of a war with the peddlers of alcoholic beverages.

But is it any wonder that the alcoholic beverage crowd can peddle its poison next door to our school grounds and meeting houses? For in the last few years the annual total of drinkers in the U.S. has reached approximately 100,000,000. Among these are millions of young people. Surveys have shown "that, in recent years about 57 percent of boys and 43 percent of girls aged 15 through 20 years are drinkers." Presently only "about one in three adults in the U.S. are non-drinkers. . . ." ²

The defection of more and more Americans to alcoholic beverage use is a national calamity, yet, the failure of religious leaders to fight this plague is scandalous. But someone may say that seems a bit harsh.

Harsh? Do you not know that besides the more than 25,000 killed on the highways due to alcohol there are 9 million alcoholics in the United States? There are also 15,000 alcohol-related diseases, and another 20,000 fatalities due to other alcohol related accidents. ³

But the situation is more pathetic; for each of the 9 million alcoholics affects the lives of at least four other persons, so that problem drinking enters into the lives of about 45 million individuals in the U.S. alone, with another five million of our neighbors affected in Canada. And the typical alcoholic is not on Skid-Row. An alcoholic will usually be a man or woman in their mid-thirties with a good home, family and job. ⁴ Concerning the latter, "a loss of nearly \$10 billion yearly has been attributed to worktime lost through alcohol problems of employees in business, industry, civilians in government, and the military." ² This is tragic enough, but think of the untold human suffering of wives, husbands and children.

However, even economically the picture is more bleak. For example, in 1974 a cost to the nation of \$25 billion per year was

attributed to problem drinking of alcoholic beverages and alcoholism. This included the \$10 billion mentioned above in lost work time, as well as \$9 billion in costs for health and welfare services provided for alcoholic persons and their families, and a cost of nearly \$6.3 billion as a result of motor vehicle accidents.”²

The above does not include the cost of crimes committed against American citizens by others directly under the influence of alcohol. Figures compiled from the Federal Bureau of Investigation *Uniform Crime Report* and published in 1967 stated “that 62% of all *major* crimes, such as rape, murder, aggravated assault, etc., are the result of the use of alcoholic beverages, or at least, are committed by those under the influence of some alcohol at the time.”⁵

Yet, in spite of the millions of our friends and neighbors who are directly affected in their homes through the use of alcoholic beverages; in spite of the carnage on the highways due to the drinking of alcoholic beverages; in spite of the billions lost in jobs and services due to the effects of alcoholic beverages; in spite of the thousands of mothers, wives, sweethearts, and children who are raped by men under the influence of alcoholic beverages; and in spite of thousands of others who are murdered, robbed and maimed by users of alcoholic beverages, the *pushers* of alcoholic beverages have little or no restraint whatsoever to keep them from advertising their venom on the back of every magazine, on every stretch of open highway and in our own living rooms. Did not the prophet say in the long ago, “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that addest venom to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!” (Hab. 2:15).

Complacency About Alcohol

Now, you might exclaim, how awful! But the fact that the general population is so complacent about this horror is not the worst calamity that we face in the fight against the alcoholic beverage blitz. The calamity of calamities in this fight is the fact that so many Christians have been drawn from their Savior to the rocks of infidelity by the siren song of mistress alcohol. Even preachers have been known to soften or neglect to speak against dame alcohol because Sister Cocktail and Brother

Social-Drinker now frequent the pew. We ought to be well aware of the fact that the lack of righteous people caused the destruction of the world by a flood, and that it was the lack of ten good men or women that brought swift destruction on Sodom and Gomorrah. Even our King, Jesus, declared, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13). Truly the greatest problem in the war with alcohol is the failure of all Christians to abstain and to boldly oppose this evil.

Social Drinking

But the cry goes up, there is really nothing wrong with just taking a drink or two socially. Nothing wrong? Observe what the Accident Prevention Department of Association Casualty and Surety Companies reported in the late sixties:

As far as safety is concerned, the real highway delinquent appears to be the so-called social-drinker. The driver who has had just enough alcohol in his system to release his inhibitions, who has reached the state of apparent stimulation or has a false sense of well-being is one that forms a significant link in the casual chain of many accidents. Since his moral code is temporarily relaxed, the driver with only a few tends to abandon normal precautions.⁶

Again, in an article called "Who Says The Social Drinker Isn't Dangerous?" the Allstate Good Driver Trainer Program reported some pertinent results from the testing of drivers who had taken only two or three drinks over a period of about one hour and a half. The results of the tests plainly showed that just two or three drinks spread over as much as 90 minutes greatly impaired the driving ability of experienced drivers.

Commenting on the carefully controlled results of these tests the president of the National Safety Council, Howard Pyle, said, "Your test emphasized what the medical profession has long known, that you don't have to be dead drunk to be a deadly driver. You presented convincing evidence that even expert drivers fumble at the wheel, unaware of their incompetence, after only two or more drinks—just enough to

make them feel good.”⁷ Thus we have empirical evidence that social drinking is a grave menace to society.

However, before we go any further, let me say right here that so-called “social drinking” is just plain old-fashioned drinking of hard drink: wine, beer or whiskey. And God’s Word has something to say about those who socialize with drinkers of strong drink, even as it is written, “if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord tarrieth; and shall begin to beat his fellow-servant, and shall eat and *drink* with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knows not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites” (Matt. 24:48-51). This writer knows from personal observation on many occasions as a youth that when a group comes together to socially drink not a few leave drunk.

The Bible And Beverage Alcohol

But someone will say, wait a minute! Doesn’t the Bible teach it’s alright to drink? Didn’t Jesus make wine and didn’t He drink at social functions? Here is the bastion of defense for alcoholic beverages by drinkers, whether religious or non-religious. Even after admitting that alcohol enslaves millions by addiction, encourages crime and spills blood on the highways the “social-drinkers” will cling to the quip, “the Bible condemns drunkenness, but it doesn’t condemn drinking.” And by that they mean the Bible condones the “moderate” drinking of hard drink: wine, beer and whiskey. But does it?

It must be admitted that a search of Bible Dictionaries and Commentaries will often find religious scholars on the side of being against drunkenness, but for drinking. For example, *The International Critical Commentary* says in commenting on John 2, “Wine might be abused, and drunkenness was always blameworthy; but the idea that it is wrong to use wine in moderation, like any other gift of God, would have been foreign to primitive Christianity or to Judaism. The modern notion that ‘wine’ in the N.T. means unfermented, non-intoxicating wine is without foundation.”⁸

This comment is typical of many people in general because they regard wine as being just what our present day diction-

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This comment is typical of many people in general because they regard wine as being just what our present day diction-

aries say it is, "the fermented juice of the grapes, used as an alcoholic beverage, and in cooking, religious ceremonies, etc."⁹

However, an alert reading of the Bible shows that "wine" in Scripture does not always mean an alcoholic beverage. In fact, the word "wine" in the word of God is a generic term whose meaning must be determined by the context. Other words are the same, *e.g.*, the word "soul" in Joshua 10:28 is used to mean "life" that can be destroyed by a man, while in Matthew 10:28 it is used to mean the eternally existing part of man which man cannot destroy. The context tells the difference.

It is the same with wine. For example, Genesis 9:20-21 shows that "wine" was an alcoholic beverage, which made Noah drunk; but Isaiah 16:10 shows that "wine" was the fresh juice from the press. It says, "no treader shall tread out wine in the presses" (cf. Jer. 48:33).

However, in order to properly answer the question (Does the Bible condone the drinking of alcoholic beverages?) we should look at the Hebrew and Greek words which are translated wine.

There are thirteen words from the Hebrew and Greek texts which are translated in English as wine. The eleven Hebrew words are *chemer*, *chamar*, *yayin*, *yegeb*, *mimsak*, *sobe*, *enab*, *asis*, *shekhar*, *shemarim*, and *tirosk*. The two Greek words are *gleukos* and *oinos*. Only three of the Hebrew words and one Greek word are really pertinent to our study.

Of the 196 times "wine" is found in the English Old Testament, 180 of these are: *yayin* (141), *tirosk* (38) and *shekhar* (1). The latter of these is important to our study because it is usually translated strong drink (21 times).¹⁰

The Hebrew word *yayin* is the word most often used for wine in the Old Testament. *Young's Analytical Concordance* gives (besides "wine") for *yayin* "what is pressed out, grape juice." *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* says, "*yayin*, apparently from a non-Semitic root allied to Greek [*w*]oinos, Latin *vinum*, etc. This is the usual word for 'wine' and is found 141 times in the Massoretic Text (Hebrew Text)." Thus, we see the definitions of the word indicate both alcoholic grape juice and non-alcoholic.

The Scriptures plainly show this, *i.e.*, *yayin* was used for alcoholic juice of the grapes and for non-alcoholic juice. For example, in the text noted above (Gen. 9:21) it says Noah "drank of the wine [*yayin*], and was drunken." But in Jeremiah 48:33 we read, "I have caused wine [*yayin*] to cease from the winepresses: none shall treat with shouting." Thus we see that the Scripture's use of *yayin* is a generic word which must be defined by the context.

The second most often used Hebrew word which is translated, wine, is *tirosh*. The ISBE says, "*tirosh*: Properly this is fresh grape juice. LXX (the Septuagint) always (except Isa. 65:8; Hos. 4:11) translates (it) by oinos. . . ." James Strong defines *tirosh*: "must or fresh grape juice as just squeezed out by implication (rarely) fermented. *Wine*:—(new, sweet) wines."¹²

In the Scriptures it plainly means new wine, *i.e.*, grape juice or must. For example, Isaiah 65:8 says, "As the new wine [*tirosh*] is found in the cluster." Again, Proverbs 3:10, "Thy vats shall overflow with new wine [*tirosh*]." *Tirosh* is only used in a bad sense one time (Hos. 4:11) and probably means evil through lust of it, in this text, rather than through alcohol content.

Finally, let us look at *shekhar* from the Hebrew. This word is translated wine in only one place (Num. 28:7) where it reads "strong wine." In all other places (21) it is translated "strong drink." Of the translation "strong drink," Burton Scott Easton says, "the translation 'strong drink' is unfortunate for it suggests (to modern man) 'distilled liquor,' 'brandy,' which is hardly in point."¹¹ This is true because the ancients knew nothing of the processes of distillation and *shekhar* included drinks like "pomegranate-wine, palm-wine, apple-wine, honey-wine, perhaps even beer, for some identify it with the liquor obtained from barley by the Egyptians."¹³

Finally in this word study on wine let us look at the Greek word *oinos*. Thayer says of *oinos* in the "Septuagint for *yayin*, also for *tirosh* (must, new wine), *chemar*, etc.; wine."¹⁴ Robert Young in his *Concordance* says of the New Testament use of *oinos*, "wine, grape juice."¹⁰ Thus we see that *oinos* is used in the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) to translate the generic

Hebrew word *yayin* which means the juice of grapes at various stages (wine or must; fresh, new or old). But *oinos* is also used to translate the Hebrew *tiros*, which definitely means fresh juice of the grapes, must, or new wine (non-alcoholic). *Oinos* which is used for wine 28 of the 29 times wine is found in the New Testament is defined as: wine, must, grape juice or new wine.

Right here perhaps I should define the English word "must." *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary* defines it "must, Latin *mustum*, new wine, neuter of *mustus*, new, fresh. Juice pressed from the grape, but not yet fermented into wine."⁹ "Must" as you can see very well expresses one major definition of wine in the Bible, which is the juice of grapes not yet fermented or rarely fermented. It probably expresses the use of *oinos* far better than the word "wine" with the modern concept of it being strong drink or an alcoholic beverage.

For example, in John 2 Jesus made approximately 120 gallons of wine for wedding guests who had already been drinking. If this was strong drink (alcoholic wine) instead of the must of grapes (non-alcoholic wine) Jesus would have been tempting them to drunkenness. Besides this, Jesus prior to His incarnation, declared "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, to thee that addest thy venom [alcohol is a poison], and makest him drunken also . . ." (Hab. 2:15). Did Jesus violate this injunction? He did not. The context on this occasion shows it had to be the kind of wine God called a blessing, *i.e.*, non-alcoholic wine, must.

By the way, alcohol is a poison as was noted recently in the *Parade* magazine: "Children and liquor don't mix. Keep them away from each other. The Health Institute points out that alcohol is a deadly poison without an antidote. Authorities say it doesn't take much alcohol to kill a child; a few ounces can do it."¹⁶

The sum of what we are saying is this: wine does not always mean an alcoholic beverage or hard drink in the Bible. Very often it means the juice of grapes or must and it is declared to be a gift from God or a blessing as in Proverbs 3:10. "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy vats shall overflow with new wine." Again Isaiah 65:8 says, "As the wine is found in the

cluster, and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it."

However, on the other hand, wine is declared to be a curse. Proverbs 4:17 says, "They drink the wine of violence," and Proverbs 20:1 says, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler."

Thus we see there are two basic types of wine in the Scriptures, one good and one bad. One will bless and one will curse. Nor is this so strange for in God's Word we read of good spirits and bad spirits—angels and demons.

Again the Bible does not leave us in the dark about making the distinction as when to drink wine (non-alcoholic, must, grape juice) and when not to drink wine (fermented liquor) for it says, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goes down smoothly: at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:31-32). This is clearly a scriptural statement for God-fearing people not to look on or use wine after it has gone through the process of vinous fermentation by which alcohol is produced and it bites like a serpent.

Therefore, in light of the fact that the Word of God distinguishes between good wine (non-alcoholic) and bad wine (alcoholic) and condemns the latter, we must deny that God condones the drinking of alcoholic wine or any other hard liquor even in moderation.

Ancient Ways Of Wine Preservation

But someone at this point may say the ancients had no way of preserving must to keep it from becoming hard. That is about as wise as saying that our forefathers a generation ago had no way of preserving the juice of the sorghum cane. They certainly didn't sit around in this country fifty years ago and let their sorghum juice ferment. They made molasses of it.

There are at least three ways the ancients preserved the juice of the grape; first, by boiling it, *e.g.*, William Patton in *Bible Wines or The Laws of Fermentation* quoting a book published in Edinburgh, 1791, says, "Adam's *Roman Antiquities* . . . on the authority of Pliny and Virgil, says; 'In order to make wine keep, they used to boil (deconquere) the must down to one-half, when it was called defrutum, to

one-third, sapa." Patton also shows that this boiling of the must was practiced among the Greeks and the Jews. Concerning the latter he says, "The Mishna (the first part of the Talmud) states that the Jews were in the habit of using boiled wine."¹⁶ This boiling of the wine to produce a grape molasses or honey accounts for the large number of references among the ancients for adding water to the wine to dilute it.

William Becker in his work *Charicles or Illustrations of the Private Lives of the Ancient Greeks* quoting Plutarch, states concerning the process of diluting wine, "and from the prevalence of this custom, *oinos* always means diluted wine." Becker continues, quoting Plato (Leg. i., p. 637) as his authority, "the wine was mixed with hot or cold water before being drunk," and snow "was often mixed with the wine. . . ." Again Becker says (from Plato) "wine was always drunk diluted, and to drink it "*akratos* (unmixed) was looked on as barbarism."¹⁷

Aristotle, who was born in 384 B.C. is quoted as saying "the wine of Arcadia was so thick that it was necessary to scrape it from the skin bottles in which it was contained, and to dissolve the scrapings in water."¹⁸ This obviously has reference to wine as a fruit concentrate. The wine (concentrated must) was usually mixed with three or four parts of water, but Homer and others stated certain kinds of wines required twenty parts of water. The celebrated Hippocrates spoke of Thracian wine and said it required twenty parts water to be a proper beverage.¹⁶

Another means of preventing fermentation was applied to the fresh must. This was filtration through thick wool or similar strainer. Such a filtration of wine is probably referred to in Isaiah 25:6 where it reads "of wine on the lees well refined." This filtration removed all the solid particles of the wine including the yeast and the process of fermentation would thereby be prevented. Patton gives a statement from Pliny (liver 23. cap. 24). "For all the sick the wine is most useful when its forces have been broken by the strainer." Pliny referred to the fermenting process as giving wine force.¹⁶ Here we get a glimpse of wine recommended for the sick in the first century and it was non-alcoholic. Similarly Paul recommended it for Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23).

A third means of preserving the juice of the grape without fermentation is described by Cato in *De Agri Cultura* Cxx. He simply describes the process of putting must in a jar (amphora), sealing it and sinking it in water. This would keep the temperature of the must below 45 degrees and prevent fermentation. For temperatures between 50 and 75 degrees are necessary to produce wine. After the solid particles had settled out of the must it would not ferment even if taken from the pond (cf. Patton, *Bible Wines*, p. 32).

We have now seen that the Bible recommends non-alcoholic wine (must, grape juice) as a blessing, but condemns alcoholic wine as a curse on him that is deceived thereby. Also we have shown that the ancients knew how to preserve the must, fresh, and did so. In closing this point on wine preservation let me mention that the ancients did not have sugar as we do and they were far more interested in having a sweet drink than we are, as we have many. However, the process of fermentation destroys the sugar in the juices of the grape by turning it into alcohol. The ancients looked for the quality of sweetness in their drinks rather than alcoholic exhilaration.¹⁶

Another Argument For Drinking

Another argument put forth for social drinking is that it is wrong in some places such as the U.S. Bible Belt, but not wrong in a country like Italy where everybody drinks wine. This is a fallacious argument as it is based, first of all, on a misconception of the gospel. The gospel is a universal standard and not a good little set of rules which work in the Southern part of the United States but not in Rome. The old paths of the gospel came from heaven via Asia, not North America. Our standard is not what the church did in Texas 100 years ago or before World War II, but what the apostles taught in Palestine 2,000 years ago (Acts 2:42). Similar arguments to the one that justifies strong drink in Rome go like this, since bribery is a way of life in Brazil, and the people do not think anything of it, Christians who go there should not condemn the practice and perhaps (if it's hard to get your car through customs) use it sometimes. Similar arguments have been used Stateside for years concerning lascivious beachwear: "Mixed bathing is not wrong in Florida or Hawaii, etc., but it would be wrong in

Nashville." This is all so much foolishness for the one gospel is to be preached in all nations even until the end of the world (Matt. 28:18-20). It is to leaven (Matt. 13:33) nations, not to be pruned or adapted to the fleshly lust of each new land it enters. God forbid! The standard of ethics and morality for saints was sent forth from Jerusalem (Lk. 24:47), not Nashville or Rome.

Another reason why the argument about drinking alcoholic wine is so wrong for Italy is because the Scriptures do not condone such even in moderation. Non-alcoholic wine is one thing, but wine tainted with the poison called alcohol is another.

When I was a boy, France was held up as a place where wine was drunk as water (the water was bad). We boiled ours in Pakistan. France is no longer mentioned as an example of a country where the people know how to hold their liquor. Now it's Italy. Concerning France, I wonder why no one mentions it this way anymore. Could it be because the average adult consumption of wine in France is a quart every day, and this has resulted in 11 percent of all deaths being attributed directly to alcohol in that country.¹⁸ Also virtually 10 percent of all Frenchmen are alcoholics, which is twice the rate of that in the U.S.⁴ Beloved, one cannot go to a country ruled by the alcohol god and convert its people by compromise.

The world is not so small that a loose standard of using alcoholic drinks in one country won't affect the citizens of the kingdom of heaven in other countries. This writer knows of two cases personally where two Christians migrated from Europe (Germany and Italy) to another land and openly contended that drinking alcoholic wine was right and justified themselves in spreading such a belief in their new homeland.

Let me tell you a sad story about a man who has now left the faith of our Lord Jesus. This young man is one year older than I, and he grew up in my hometown, Nashville. I didn't know him, but he attended the same college, David Lipscomb. The story of his departure from the faith is sad, because he is lost, but it is also sad because in some ways he got a lot of help in breaking down his convictions. For after leaving the faith he said about an earlier period:

. . . my standards were starting to slip. For one thing I had begun to drink a bit. Partly because I had been in Europe where it was more normal to drink wine than water. Also, I had been with missionary friends in Germany who said they had to drink with the people in order to reach them with the Gospel.¹⁹

As you probably know, this young man is Pat Boone. What a tragedy! What a stumbling block he found among his friends in Europe. The gospel is a universal standard of ethics, and morality for every nation and it doesn't condone the drinking of alcoholic wine in Jerusalem, Nashville, Rome or Berlin.

I am thankful to say the above quote from the brother who has now left us is not an indictment of all American gospel preachers in Europe in general or in Germany specifically. Brother Otis Gatewood who entered Germany shortly after World War II, wrote in 1955, "Even in Germany where many people drink wine with their meals there are many who oppose it seriously and a Christian would have no influence over them if he drank even a little wine."²⁰

No Redeeming Social Value

Alcohol as a beverage whether in wine, beer or whiskey has no redeeming social value. But someone will say, what about the tax money it raises. Well, let us consider a report made to the California legislature in 1953 which showed that for every dollar collected on alcohol \$5.23 was spent on liquor related costs. A similar study done earlier in Massachusetts showed a ratio of \$3.50 to one. An Atlanta study done in 1965 showed a ratio of \$6.43 to one.⁵

Alcohol as a beverage is like a pornographic book with no redeeming social values. Every way it turns it destroys. Its destruction of the liver is well known, but it also destroys other body organs such as the brain. "Dr. Melvin H. Knisely, head of the department of anatomy at the Medical College of South Carolina, told a news conference in Washington, D.C., that so-called social-drinking may result in a 'great deal of damage' to the brain. 'When his level of social-drinking is such that he feels very happy, a man is beginning to kill a few brain cells.' He stated that as many as 10,000 brain cells were destroyed at a time and the effect of damage was cumulative. . . ."²¹

I repeat at every turn alcohol destroys. For example, in 1972, while millions were starving in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Bangladesh, and similar countries, 16 billion pounds of grain and food products were being destroyed in America to make alcoholic beverages. That is 32 million pounds of good food products being turned into alcoholic beverages each day.²²

Conclusion

In closing let me say beverage alcohol, whether wine, beer or whiskey, is a curse on any nation or land. It enslaves millions in America and the world. It promotes crime and violence in our cities and rural areas. Let us abstain and oppose it like the plague that it is.

God's Word makes a clear distinction between good wine (non-alcoholic must) and bad wine (alcoholic strong drink), therefore we must be wise enough to rightly divide the word of truth and oppose the latter like the poison that it is.

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Biographical Sketch

JOHN WADDEY

The author was born July 10, 1938, in Nashville, Tennessee. He is married to the former Reba Duncan. They have three daughters, Lourene, Lesia and Becky. He attended Itawamba Junior College and the College of Evangelists in Mississippi. He has been preaching for twenty years doing full time work in Mississippi, Colorado, and Tennessee.

Evangelistic work has carried him into thirteen additional States. For eleven years he conducted a weekly radio broadcast. He has made nine overseas missionary trips, visiting and working in nineteen different nations. He has engaged in three public debates on religious themes.

As an author he has written nine volumes with five others presently in progress. He writes regularly for nine religious journals. For five years he had a weekly column in the **Rocky Mountain News** of Denver, Colorado.

He is in his tenth year with the Karns church. He helped to establish the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions and continues to teach a full schedule in the school.

He is the president of the Tennessee Volunteers for Life, a pro-life group which opposes abortion. He has participated in four televised debates on abortion and euthanasia and has engaged in a public debate on the ERA issue. He has spoken on a number of radio and television talk shows and has had thirty-five pro-life letters published in the newspapers.

2

Abortion In The Light Of God's Law

John Waddey

Today 4,000 human lives will be summarily snuffed out. The victims will die without benefit of trial or counsel. They will be executed by techniques more cruel and inhumane than any horror movie ever portrayed. These deeds are not transpiring in Russia's Gulag Archipelago or Cuba's Isle of Pines, not in some horror chamber of a fiendish devil. They are occurring in abortion clinics and hospitals across our once fair land. The conspirators in this atrocity include Supreme Court Justices, government social planners, licensed physicians and willing mothers. These victims are not war criminals or public enemies, they are innocent un-born human babies. This year 1½ million of these victims will die. Around the world it is estimated that between 40 and 55 million abortions will be performed. In the face of this, Pharoah's extermination of the Hebrew boys was but a ripple on the ocean of time. Herod's slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem would not equal one modern abortion clinic's daily quota.

On January 22, 1973, nine men robed in black issued a decree that will live in eternal infamy. On that day the Supreme Court ruled that: during the first three months of pregnancy the decision to abort rests solely with the woman and her doctor; during the second three months, the State can regulate

the abortion procedure to protect maternal health; during the third three months, when the fetus is viable, the State can regulate or even prohibit abortion except when it is necessary for the mother's mental or physical health. (*U.S. News and World Report*, March 4, 1974, p. 44).

The results of this dreadful court decision are appalling. Every major paper in the country carries ads for abortion clinics. Doctors who have forsaken their noble calling of healing and life saving, have turned to killing unwanted babies. Through the loophole of "the mother's mental or physical health," babies are now *legally* aborted through the ninth month of pregnancy. It is estimated that upwards of 4,000 of these last trimester babies were aborted in New York State alone in 1971. (Willke, *Handbook on Abortion*, 1974, p. 32).

Among the most heinous practices to result from this gruesome business is that of human experimentation on babies aborted alive. Human babies have been kept alive in laboratories where scientists subjected them to medical experiments that always result in their death. After a brief moratorium this practice is now legal once more with some restrictions. (*Ibid.*, p. 129-130).

Along with this is a growing deterioration of respect for all human life throughout the land. Voices are crying out for euthanasia, the elimination of the defective and the aged, as well as the unborn.

Humans tend to turn their faces away from unpleasant scenes. It is easy to prefer to stay ignorant on such issues as this. But ignorance will not *excuse* us, brethren. The information is available. The very land itself cries out that something must be done.

I. *Some Preliminary Questions.*

Is that which is growing in the pregnant mother's womb alive? Of course. When did it become alive? At what point of time? When the ovum and sperm united! Is that which is living in the pregnant womb human life? Remember, it is the product of two human lives. If you say it is not a human life, then what kind of life is it? Animal or vegetable? Is this life merely an appendage or a part of the mother's body? Not at all. It is

altogether a new life totally different from the mother. Is this an *innocent* human life? Without doubt! Does abortion willfully kill this innocent new human life? Yes, for that is the single purpose of the abortion. Is it wrong to deliberately kill an innocent human life? If so, why? It is because mankind alone is made in the image of God (Gen. 9:6).

II. *What The Bible Says On The Question of Abortion.*

Confusion has resulted on this issue because most people have not thought carefully about how the Bible teaches and instructs man. Many things are determined to be right or wrong by comparing them with *general* principles of truth set forth in God's book. I freely grant that abortion is not mentioned specifically by name in either testament. However, there are numerous divine principles that speak to this issue providing heavenly guidance. Let us notice some of them.

Biblical Principles Forbidding Abortion: Life is a gift from God. Paul says, "He giveth life and breath to *all things*" (Acts 17:25). As the creator and sustainer of life, God alone has the right to take the life of man (Gen. 50:15-19). Only human life is made "in the image of God" (Gen. 1:26). This elevates human life to a plane above all other forms of earthly life. It declares that man shares a kinship with God and a degree of sacred inviolateness flows from that relationship. Man from earliest times has been forbidden the right to kill his fellow human because of this "image of God" which all men share (Gen. 9:6). The penalty for thus killing an innocent neighbor was *death*. (*Ibid.*).

Christ's teaching of the value of human life was revolutionary. The first century world had little respect for life. Sixty million souls lived in debasing slavery in Rome's domains. Multitudes flocked to the gladiatorial games to watch men fight each other to death for public entertainment. Frenzied mobs were ever demanding more brutality and bloodshed. Infants were the property of the father and were commonly killed or abandoned at birth. Abortion was also wide spread.

In the midst of this Jesus taught the sacredness of human life. He taught that God so loved all the inhabitants of the earth, that He gave the best of heaven to save them (Jno. 3:16). He charged His disciples to see that every creature in the world

had opportunity to hear the gospel and be saved (Mk. 16:15-16). Even little children were precious unto Him and He rebuked those who tried to turn them away (Matt. 19:14).

The Bible does not distinguish between prenatal and post-natal life. God spoke to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee" (Jer. 1:5). Unborn John the Baptist leaped in his mother's womb when the expecting mother of our Lord greeted Elisabeth (Lk. 1:41). Perhaps the most expressive passage is from David: "For thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. . . . My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my unformed substance; and in thy book they were written. Even the days that were ordained for me when as yet there was none of them." God recognized David as a person even as he was being "curiously wrought" in his mother's womb. Already there was a plan for his life. The term used to describe the baby in Elisabeth's womb, "*brephos*," is used interchangeably for both intrauterine and extrauterine infants (Lk. 1:41). It means "an unborn child, embryo, fetus; a newborn child, an infant, a babe" (*Thayer's Greek English Lexicon*, p. 105). Christians who doubt this should ask themselves, was it the Christ-child in Mary's womb or a lifeless blob of tissue?

God's Word has always taught "Thou shalt not kill" (Rom. 13:9). Literally the Hebrew reads thou shalt do no murder. Murder is the deliberate taking of innocent human life without provocation or just cause. Abortion is the planned intentional killing of a human life. The victim of abortion is totally innocent, having done nothing amiss towards the mother, her doctor or society. In most abortions there is a selfish motive for the interests of others are placed above those of the baby. The conclusion of moral guilt is unescapable.

The golden rule of Christ tells us, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" (Matt. 7:12). Apply this rule and the abortion clinics would be closed for lack of business. What mother would want to be killed by dismemberment such as the dilation and curettage abortion procedure? What abortionist doctor would want to be trapped in a tiny cell and have a

corrosive poured over his body and forced into his lungs and stomach and then be left to convulse for hours till he died? This occurs to the baby in the salt poisoning abortion. Is there a nurse who assists in abortions who would want to be torn from her home, ripped apart by a powerful machine? Remember, by the time that early abortions are performed (eight to twelve weeks) the baby has his entire organ system in place and his full sense of pain.

To avoid the impact of Christ's attitude toward human life, Dr. Arthur Guett wrote, "The ill conceived love of neighbor has to disappear, and especially in relation to inferior or asocial creatures. It is the supreme duty of the national state to grant life and livelihood only to the healthy. . . . The life of an individual has meaning only in the light of that ultimate aim, that is, in the light of his meaning to his family and to his national state." No, this is not from an American social scientist or a modern medical ethicist, it is from the Nazi Director of Public Health in his 1935 book, *The Structure of Public Health in the Third Reich*.

Paul charges us "not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you to the things of others" (Phil. 2:4). Selfishness and personal interest lies at the root of most abortions. Unmarried couples selfishly indulge in sexual pleasure and then when pregnancy occurs they destroy the life that would cause them embarrassment or limitations. The same sin is at work when the married professional woman chooses to abort rather than accept the responsibilities of parenthood, which would interfere with her personal ambitions.

God condemns in the strongest way people who are "without natural affection" (Rom. 1:31). The Greek term "*astorgos*" denotes the want of affectionate regard towards their children. Without doubt, a mother that can deliberately kill the innocent child in her womb is lacking that normal, motherly affection which God expects of mankind.

III. *Some Objections To Our Position Considered.*

It is argued that since Adam did not become alive until God breathed into him the breath of life, and since the baby does not breathe until he leaves the womb, therefore the unborn baby has no soul and can be killed without guilt. But, really, there is

no parallel here. Adam had no life, period, until God in-breathed him. But the baby from the instant of conception is alive and growing. Oxygen is supplied to him through his umbilical system. At birth he exchanges his system for getting oxygen from one suited for his intrauterine environment to one suited to his new world. It is a scientific fact that each human life begins at conception. James tells us that the body apart from the spirit is dead (2:26). The converse of this is obviously true, *i.e.* to be alive, the spirit must be in the body. But the babe in the uterus is unquestionably alive (else there would be no need for abortion). Therefore, the living baby in the womb must have a spirit in his body.

Some feel that they have found scriptural proof that the unborn child is of less value than the mother, therefore the mother has the right to kill the babe if it is a bother to her. The passage is Exodus 21:22, "If men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart, and yet no harm follows; he shall be surely fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him . . . but if any harm follows, then thou shalt give life for life." They argue thusly, "If the baby is killed, only a fine is imposed; if the mother is killed, capital punishment is given. Therefore, unborn babies are not persons."

But "that which proves too much proves nothing." This proves far too much. Notice in verses 28-37 of the same chapter: If a man's ox gores a free man, the animal and the owner shall be put to death, but if it only gores a servant (slave) the owner of the ox shall pay a fine. Since the slave's death is punished more lightly than the free-man's, shall we conclude that slaves are not full persons and can be killed with impunity? If the case of the woman and her unborn babe teaches that the babe is a less valuable life, then so does this.

But there is an alternative. The words, "and yet no harm follows," may mean "the child is miscarried, but does not die." Then the expression, "if any harm follows" means that if either the child, the mother or both die, then the guilty party is to be capitally punished. If this be accepted, then no greater value is placed on postnatal than prenatal life. The fine is for the injury which caused the early delivery, the death penalty is for the causing of a death of either mother or child. Regardless of the

construction we put on it, it does not parallel the abortion situation. Moses here deals with a case of *accidental* damage of mother and/or child. In abortion a willful decision is made to destroy the living babe in the womb by both mother and doctor. This scripture lends no comfort to the abortionists.

Can we kill the developing baby if the mother's life is threatened? Dr. Jerome LeJune, world famous geneticist, thus answered this question: "I would never attack and kill the unborn child." He reminded us his mission in medicine was to save life, not to kill. He then explained that if faced with a truly "either/or" situation, he would remove a cancerous uterus or a tubal pregnancy. In doing so, the child would inadvertently die. But this would not be the purpose of the surgery. The purpose was to save a dying mother. While you might feel that this is simply an exercise in semantics, it is a fine distinction that reflects a difference in motive and a sacred respect for all human life.

Interestingly, situations where the mother's life is jeopardized by pregnancy are extremely rare today. Dr. R. J. Hefferman says, "Anyone who performs a therapeutic abortion (for physical disease) is either ignorant of modern methods of treating the complications of pregnancy, or is unwilling to take time to use them."

What about abortion if the baby is the result of rape? The present permissive abortion situation developed because of hardship cases like these. Surely our hearts go out to victims of rape and we must offer every kind of help and assistance that God allows. However, there are certain facts about rape and pregnancy, which are generally unknown, which throw a much different light on this tough question. Less than one percent of our annual million and a half abortions are for hardship cases such as rape, deformity, incest and threat to the mother's life. Our philosophy of judgment seems grossly unequal on this point. Our courts have declared capital punishment for rapists to be cruel and inhumane. The guilty father can only get a few years' punishment, and often goes scot-free. But we then execute capital punishment on the innocent babe in the womb! He is totally innocent. He has done nothing wrong in the case at all. Is it fair to deal thusly?

But how many women become pregnant because of a rape situation? A scientific study was made of rape victims treated in the Minneapolis-St. Paul hospitals. A ten year study which dealt with some 3,500 cases showed not one case of pregnancy. All have known married couples who wanted a baby and tried to conceive—but met with frustrating failure. Finally they adopted a baby and then conceived very shortly. There are psychological factors which affect conception. Our benevolent Creator so made the feminine reproductive system so that she rarely conceives under the trauma of a rape situation.

Few people are aware of the fact that conception does not occur at the moment of climax. Rather, it takes several hours for the sperm to reach the ovum in the fallopian tube. This being the case, the woman who is so unfortunate as to experience a rape, need never face the choice of abortion or giving birth to a child of rape. We must inform our wives and women of this fact so that they would know to immediately go to an emergency room and be treated with a spermicide. There is a vast difference in stopping conception from occurring and in destroying new life once conceived. The one is not wrong, the other is.

If there is a danger of deformity, could we then abort the baby? To this most difficult point we raise the question, is all human life sacred or just some? Is the defective baby in the womb human life? What of the defective child after birth, is it human? If we can abort the defective unborn, why not kill the defective once born? Wherein is the difference? If we decide to eliminate those who are imperfect, we need to ask and answer these important questions: (a) Just how perfect will one have to be before he is allowed to live? (b) Who will have the power to make the decisions? Has any mortal man the wisdom or the right to thus play God?

“England’s Nobel prize winning biologist, Dr. Francis Creck . . . has advocated legislation under which new-born babies would not be considered legally alive until they were two days old and have been certified as healthy by medical examiners. . . .” (Paul Marx, *The Mercy Killers*). Since God is the giver of *all* life (Acts 17:25) and since only He has the right to take life (Gen. 50:15-19) man cannot take it upon himself to kill

this innocent life. Remember that less than one percent of the 1½ million annual abortions are for all of these hardship cases. For years mankind has destroyed the weak and defective offspring of its fine blooded animals. Are we now prepared to begin doing this to the human race? In Nazi Germany the point was reached where babies were killed who had wrinkled ears and who were bed-wetters. "A society is measured by the care and attention it gives to its most helpless members."

Is then birth control wrong? These are entirely different questions. Birth control keeps conception from occurring. Abortion kills life after it is conceived. It is the author's view that birth control does not violate any scriptural injunction. It is a personal matter left to the discretion of each married couple. We would add this word or warning. Some methods of birth control are abortifacients, *i.e.*, the intra-uterine device and the morning after pill. These we would reject.

IV. *Where Does This Road Lead?*

Influential voices are being heard to extend this power of death over yet other classes of humanity. Dr. William Gaylin, professor of Psychiatry and Law at Columbia University, said, ". . . it used to be easy to know what we wanted for our children, and now the best for our children might mean deciding which ones to kill. We've always wanted the best for our grandparents, and now that might mean killing them. . . ." (Feb. 17, 1972, *Conference of American Association of University Women*). George Paulson writes, "How long shall life be preserved when there is no redeeming social value? If life has no apparent purpose, perhaps it is to the benefit of others that such lives not be salvaged." ("Who Should Live," *Geriatrics*, 28, March 1973, pp. 136-138).

We could fill pages with similar shocking statements boldly made and publicly circulated by the thought leaders of our day. These *extreme* ideas which are discussed in university halls and learned journals today tend to become the proposed legislation of tomorrow. Once a society takes the first difficult step over the boundary that protects the sanctity of human life, then the other more drastic steps become easy and rather natural. You cannot afford to overlook what happened in Nazi Germany. Read Dr. Fredric Wertham's study of that ghastly era of

modern history in his book, *A Sign For Cain*. The nation's clock of moral soundness is steadily moving towards disaster. Today it is abortion, soon we will have infanticide. Tomorrow it will be euthanasia. The next step may well be genocide, the elimination of whole races or classes of undesirables. Then will come cosmocide! God will administer that!

V. *What Must We Do?*

We must educate ourselves and our society as to the realities of the abortion problem. Few people are fully aware of the humanity of the unborn child. Most are not informed as to the extent of the present legal status which allows abortion on demand through nine months under the ruse of the mother's mental health. There is little public knowledge of the cruelty and inhumanness of the various abortion procedures presently used. Not many can give an adequate Bible refutation of the abortion propaganda. We must be prepared to meet the pro-abortion people with sound arguments and intelligent response. Emotionalism and indignation alone will never win the battle. Ninety-nine percent of those who we teach the truth about this awful evil will never choose abortion.

We must work to secure a constitutional amendment that will guarantee the right to life to all human beings, including the unborn from conception to natural death; save in those cases where the mother's life is threatened. Nothing short of this will override the Supreme Court's ruling on abortion.

Since some 70 percent of all who have abortions are unwed mothers, we must teach and encourage young people to honor the principles of sexual morality taught by Jesus. Virtuous young couples who abstain from sex until marriage are never faced with a decision about abortion. We especially need basic facts-of-life teaching in a Christian context. Certainly parents must face up to their responsibility, but our churches need to provide Biblical studies in morality as well if we are going to prepare our young people to live responsibly in our hedonistic age.

We must replace judgmental harshness with Christian compassion. The old attitudes of ostracizing and scorning the unwed mother must give way to compassion and assistance.

This is equally true of parents, society and the church. When we drive the unwed mother out, the friendly abortionist is waiting to greet her. Uncle Sam will gladly take care of the abortion expense with our Medicaid funds. If we expect the woman with a problem pregnancy to carry it to term, then we must be prepared to lend the needed support. Also we need to greatly improve our attitudes towards victims of rape. Sadly in our attempt to discourage promiscuity by penalizing the unwed mother, we have actually encouraged them to take the abortion route which appears so much easier than enduring the social stigma. We must actively oppose the abortionists whose hands are shedding this innocent blood.

IV. *Should Christians Get Actively Involved In Fighting Such Evils?*

Traditionally our brethren have stood back and hesitated to actively oppose such issues. If we can oppose the use of tobacco, alcohol and dancing, surely we can oppose the killing of babies. Isaiah was charged by God, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and declare unto my people their transgression. . . ." (58:1). Christians have a moral responsibility to aid those whose lives are being threatened. "Rescue those who are being dragged to death, and from those tottering to execution withdraw not. If you say, 'I know not this man' does not he who tests hearts perceive it? He who guards your life knows it, and he will repay each one according to his deeds" (Prov. 24:11-12). We cannot hide behind the feeble question of Cain, *i.e.*, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9). The answer is unreservedly yes! Jesus taught us that any human being in distress is our neighbor and we must aid him (Lk. 10:25-37).

All agree that we who are children of light are not to partake in deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:7). But Paul carries our responsibility even further, saying, ". . . have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even *reprove* them" (Eph. 5:11).

When maniacal Herod slaughtered the 15 or 20 infants of Bethlehem, the evangelist wrote, "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and she would not be comforted, because they were not" (Matt.

2:18). A million and a half innocent babes will be killed this year. If we had angels' ears perhaps we could hear Mother Eve weeping for her children so cruelly murdered!

Our highest court assures us that this bloody practice is legal and right. Population and societal experts tell us it is good and necessary to attain a true quality of life. Society says it is better than unloved and unwanted babies. Abortists doctors tell us it is more humane to abort handicapped babies. "Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isa. 5:20).

May we who are God's children rise up in holy indignation and drive this Satanic evil from our midst lest the land vomit us out as ancient Canaan vomited out her heathen inhabitants who filled the cup of moral iniquity (Lev. 18:24-25; 20:2). Let us take up the Sword of the Lord and dare to dream the impossible dream that some way, somehow, someday we might win our noble fight to save the innocent babes whose lives are in jeopardy.

Biographical Sketch

BEN S. FLATT

Ben S. Flatt was born near Gainesboro, Tennessee, May 26, 1940. He is married to the former Julia Faye Anderson. They are the parents of three daughters and one son.

After graduation from Jackson County High School, he received his A.A. from Freed-Hardeman College and B.S. from Tennessee Tech. During this time he served as state president and national president of the Student National Education Association.

Flatt began preaching by appointment at the age of 13 and has done local work for the past 17 years. He is now in his third year with the Grundy Street Church of Christ in Tullahoma, Tennessee. He has conducted 173 gospel meetings in eleven States and Canada. He has directed Lylewood Christian Camp and worked with Short Mountain Christian Camp. He is presently a staff writer for **The World Evangelist** and serves on the advisory board of E.T.S.O.P.M.

3

Adultery

Ben S. Flatt

“But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul” (Prov. 6:32).

It is important to understand the purpose which we desire to accomplish in this lectureship as it applies to this subject. Our stated approach is “The Gospel Confronts Modern Moral Issues.” Because of this, my goal is not to present what some man has written or some well known opinion, but it shall be to examine what the Bible teaches on the subject.

Not only is there a trend in our environment toward immoral actions, but there also seems to be the development of a tolerant attitude even toward that which is specifically condemned in the Bible. Many are allowing themselves to be brainwashed into overlooking situations which strike at the very foundation of moral standards. Ignorance of God’s teaching is a contributing factor; however, a “don’t care” attitude and a rebellion against the known facts are causing greater concern. People today are likely to boast about doing acts which were unmentionable just a few years ago, and some of these people are members of the church. The following statement was heard recently: “Before long it will be hard to find men to consider for elders and deacons, and members to teach Bible classes, who have not been involved in adultery or some immoral or questionable activity.” Surely indicators point in that direction.

We must understand the subject of adultery and take a strong stand with the forces of truth. Unless we do, there will be serious results in at least four areas: the sanctity of the home, the future of the country, the influence of the church, and the salvation of souls. Some are predicting that homes as we know them will not be respected in the future, or even today, our own young people are finding the search for a pure, clean Christian mate somewhat difficult. One common factor present before the fall of every great empire was the breaking down of the home structure; our nation and its leaders need to awaken. Condoning unscriptural relationships will have a leavening effect in the church today just as it did in Corinth (1 Cor. 5). Perhaps the most serious fact is that one who is guilty of adultery and who dies in such a condition will lose his soul (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Rev. 21:8).

Preachers of the gospel are sometimes prone to shun the subject or to touch it lightly because so many are involved and because the truth brings temporary heartache in most instances. When we consider the high stakes, however, we will not "shun to declare all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), nor believe we have "become an enemy because we tell the truth" (Gal. 4:16). It is time to get things in proper focus and to look at immorality from the vantage point of the judgment, realizing the vast difference between "enter in" and "cast him out" (Matt. 25:21-30).

Definition Of Terms

Both "fornication" and "adultery" are used in the Bible to name sins of immorality, with "fornication" normally a more inclusive term. "Adultery" may usually refer to a problem on the part of a married person; however, the words "whoso" in Proverbs 6:32 and "whosoever" in Matthew 5:28 indicate that it can also describe certain thoughts and actions by any person, married or unmarried. In this study, we will be using the term in that manner, without placing emphasis on the distinction between "fornication" and "adultery."

It is necessary to analyze the different types of sins described by the term "adultery." The Bible identifies four very distinct areas of sin by the term. One of these, spiritual adultery, deals with the Christian's lack of faithfulness to Christ, the husband of the spiritual bride. "For I am jealous

over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2). "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity of God?" (Jas. 4:4). The person who flirts with worldliness and steps out on Christ by association with denominationalism is guilty of this sin. Although it is very prevalent, needing to be explored and met with the truth, it is not the sin under consideration now.

The other three types of adultery deal with mental and physical conduct and may be committed by either men or women and by both Christians and aliens. One may be guilty of the thought of adultery, the act of adultery, or the state of adultery. These three conditions are certainly related, and one may lead to another; nevertheless, each is a distinct type of sin and must be so considered if we are to understand what is involved and what God expects by way of repentance.

It is sometimes suggested that the Bible is not clear; and stated positions by some brethren, in my opinion, tend to muddy the water; however, I strongly assert that the Bible can be understood on this subject if we approach it with an open mind committed to doing God's will, teaching what the Bible really says, not what we think or wish it said.

Thought Of Adultery

Adultery may be committed in one's thoughts without any physical contact or any legal actions. It is in the heart that the conception of this sin takes place. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man . . ." (Matt. 15:19, 20). Jesus sounded a warning about such thoughts. "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). This type of sin may be committed without any other person, including one who has prompted evil thoughts, ever knowing about it; in fact, unless the thoughts are expressed in words or lead to overt actions, only God and the guilty one will know of the sin.

Conclusions concerning the thought of adultery can easily go to very serious extremes. On the one hand, it might be

suggested that what one thinks is his own business and doesn't matter; whereas, some might conclude that to look in any manner toward one of the opposite sex is sinful. The sin occurs in the form of a lustful look, especially when the lust is such that only the lack of convenient circumstances prevents further immoral actions. To look on one of the opposite sex with appreciation for neatness, cleanliness, or attractiveness does not constitute sin. In addition, to realize that one would probably make a good husband or wife, even considering one's qualities as a possible marriage partner according to God's will, would not be evil. It is when one has a lustful look and inappropriate desires that sin enters the scene.

Three factors contribute to overcoming this type of adultery. First, all must try to control the thoughts. ". . . and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). A rather beautiful formula is given by Paul to the young man Timothy. "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger sisters, with all purity" (1 Tim. 5:1, 2). If each man could look at each woman as a mother or sister, and each woman could look at each man as a father or brother, purity would control the thoughts.

Second, lasciviousness encourages the thought of adultery, and God will not hold the one guiltless who promotes evil thinking. Those who are careless in appearance may lead others astray in their thoughts, and some even display themselves in appearance and actions in a calculated effort to seduce the opposite sex. A few ". . . being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:19). Older women are instructed to teach younger women to be chaste (Tit. 2:5). Paul admonished women to ". . . adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety. . . ." (1 Tim. 2:9). There is an indication in these verses (and it cannot be put aside) that the man is specifically warned of the thought of adultery, and the

woman is especially encouraged to dress in modest apparel; none the less, every person, male or female, should be aware that evil thoughts are sinful, and concerned about any appearance or action which might cause thoughts of adultery. Let us dress and act properly!

The third need is repentance. Of course, if an evil thought has been expressed to others, public repentance needed, but if it is committed in such a way that no one knows except the guilty party and God, God will forgive when one is truly sorry for his thoughts, asks for forgiveness, and determines to keep future thoughts pure. The thought of adultery is committed in the mind.

Act Of Adultery

Lustful thoughts and desires are condemned, yet the sexual appetite is a part of normal development. Understanding this, God instituted a plan for the appropriate satisfaction of the sexual desires. "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). After mentioning that God had made both male and female, Jesus stated, ". . . For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh" (Matt. 19:5). The complete physical relationship within the marriage bonds has the approval of God. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). This shows that the sexual union in marriage is a beautiful concept; however, it also proves that any such relationship outside of marriage is sin. Such a sin, committed by a man and a woman who are not married to each other, is the act of adultery. This is different from the thought of adultery in that a physical union is involved. The very same act which is right with one's own husband or wife is sinful under any other circumstances. "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. 7:1, 2). This basic principle was a part of the original plan and was continually emphasized throughout the Bible. One of the Ten Commandments was "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14). Desires for love and companionship are to be fulfilled with one's own mate and

with no other person. There is no exception to this rule! Any premarital or extramarital sexual act is sinful.

A general lack of respect for the sanctity of the home seems to have developed in recent years. Many have come to believe the fulfillment of the sexual appetites with any consenting adult to be acceptable. Because of this, we are confronted with a huge task of promoting a respect for the human body as the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16, 17), and upholding the sacredness of the home, a divine institution (Gen. 2:18-24). Teaching is needed at all levels, but especially with our youth. Many problems will be solved by helping young people understand God's blueprint and by guiding them to patiently seek out a suitable mate.

The act of adultery is a serious sin, but forgiveness can be received. The improper action must be ceased and desires for such action controlled. Repentance would also demand making things right, at least expressing contriteness to any other party involved and to those who know of the sin. The alien must then be obedient to the plan of salvation; the Christian must go through prayer to ask God's forgiveness. The act of adultery can be overcome only by ceasing the action, expressing penitence, and obedience to God's laws for forgiveness.

State Of Adultery

In addition to the thought of adultery and the act of adultery, sin is committed when two people who are not marriageable in God's sight enter into a legal marriage relationship. Because it is increasingly easy to obtain a divorce from one and a license to marry another, the extent of the problem is magnified. Two people, although accepted by the government as husband and wife, are living in a state of adultery if they have not been joined together by God, and we must realize that God will not unite a man and woman in violation of His stated principles.

God's approval is given for a single person to seek out a good mate. The normal expectation is for a ". . . man to leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife . . ." (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). Because death is a severing factor, the widow or widower may be married to another eligible person; although

there is the limitation of marrying in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:39). It is God's desire that two people married to each other continue in that sacred relationship until death takes one of them. "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6). "For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband" (Rom. 7:2).

It is not God's will that anyone divorce his mate and be married to another. There are indications in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 that a faithful person may put away an unfaithful partner on the grounds of adultery and then be married to another eligible mate; however, extreme care should be given to stay within the boundaries of the teaching in these verses. Any marriage to a second living mate without God's approval constitutes the state of adultery. "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:32). "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9).

According to these passages, if a divorce takes place for any other reason than fornication, a remarriage by either party would begin a state of adultery. If a putting away is on the grounds of adultery, the guilty party could not remarry without there being a state of adultery. The only person involved who could consider remarriage is the innocent partner of an unfaithful mate, and all factors involved should be seriously considered even then. The innocent party in such cases should try to be forgiving and work to overcome the difficulty if at all possible. If one has contributed to or encouraged unfaithfulness by failing to be a loving husband or wife, it is dangerous to conclude that person is innocent. To overlook or forgive unfaithfulness at one point in life and then use it as a smokescreen for some other problem at a later date does not fit the possible case for remarriage in these verses. There must be the putting away on the grounds of fornication, at least in the sight of God, before there can be any scriptural consideration for remarriage. When one of the parties involved in a marriage has a living mate of a

previous marriage, except that person be the innocent victim of a fornicator, the union is a state of adultery.

Again, we conclude that the state of adultery is a sin for which there is forgiveness; however, requirements for that forgiveness are not easily met. God demands repentance and obedience as prerequisites to forgiveness; there is no exception. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3, 5). Repentance is "a change of mind which results in a change of conduct." It is necessary to be sorry for the sin and let that sorrow lead one to cease the sin with no intention of committing it again. Relative to the state of adultery, there is no way to repent without ceasing the sinful relationship. Two people in such a state cannot repent while continuing in the union which causes the sin. Baptism for the alien and prayer for the Christian will not cover an active sin. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. 6:1, 2). "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13). It is not possible to receive forgiveness for any sin while continuing to live in that sin.

Heartaches are involved, and personal feelings may keep us from being objective, but we must accept God's teachings. It is very hard in cases where children have been born to an adulterous union. Recognition should be given to the fact that the needs of children must be supplied. The dissolving of a sinful union does not free a father or mother from responsibility to the children involved, but neither does the presence of children alter the status of an adulterous relationship. I can find no promise of forgiveness without repentance, and repentance means ceasing the sinful state.

Seriousness Of The Sin

Adultery is a subject which must be considered seriously. Whether it be the thought of adultery, the act of adultery, or the state of adultery, souls are at stake. The difficulties associated with the problem can be overcome only by a return to God's way. The desire for love and companionship causes

sexual urges to be strong. God knew this; He made a way for complete satisfaction in the beautiful setting of the home. Such beauty is destroyed, however, when the setting is altered. Impure thoughts, overt actions, and unscriptural unions put lives and souls in jeopardy. For this reason, we beg those who are guilty to come to repentance.

Prevention Of Sin

Perhaps the best cure for the sin of adultery, and the easiest way to overcome it, is to prevent its occurrence. Herein lies a great need of God's people today. There must be more teaching on the subject, especially to young people while the problem can be avoided. Involvement in wholesome activities should be encouraged, occupying the mind with good thoughts and desires. Avoiding environments which suggest wrong thoughts and actions will be helpful. Additionally, efforts must be made to have happy homes. If each husband will try to be the best possible husband, and each wife will try to be the best possible wife, rendering due benevolence (1 Cor. 7:3, 4), the natural desires will be completely satisfied, and no one will need to seek fulfillment in forbidden areas. Then and only then the home can be respected as God has ordained, the world will see its great value, and the sin of adultery can be successfully overcome.

Biographical Sketch

WAYNE JACKSON

Wayne Jackson was born in Old Hickory, Tennessee. His training includes: David Lipscomb College, The College of Evangelists, Stockton College, Sacramento Baptist College, and The Alabama Christian School of Religion. He has preached for the following churches: Delta, Colorado (1959-61), and Stockton, California (1961-the present).

Brother Jackson is editor of the **Christian Courier** and writes for several other brotherhood publications. He has authored several books and tracts, a number of which have been translated into other languages. He has spoken on numerous lectureship programs and engaged in some one dozen oral and written debates. Brother Jackson and his wife, Betty, have three children—Joy, Jared, and Jason.

4

Bribery

Wayne Jackson

A recent series of revelations about a massive volume of corrupt payments abroad by U.S. corporations has dramatically brought the subject of bribery to the current attention of all Americans. It was recently revealed, for example, that Gulf Oil has made bribes to the ruling political party of Korea which total some \$4 million. It was also discovered that Exxon, the largest corporation in the U.S., between 1963 and 1972 made some \$29 million in bribes to political situations in Italy. In addition, bribery in business is rampant. And many Americans are highly concerned. One journalist recently declared that bribery "is morally reprehensive. It stains all relationships, business and public."

The corruption of bribery is hoary with antiquity. Despite the fact, for instance, that there were heavy fines against bribery in ancient Rome, the practice of a political candidate buying support was common. The financial liabilities of some of the leading figures is evidence aplenty of such corruption. In 62 B.C. Julius Caesar's debts amount to what would be about \$500,000 in American currency. At the age of twenty-four Marcus Antonius owed \$100,000; fourteen years later his liability as no less than \$600,000. Cicero was constrained to comment: "Bribery is at boiling point." In the antique world of the Greek Empire things were better. Political bribery seems not to have prevailed, at least on a large scale, in Greece, though in commenting upon the situation in Carthage Aristotle

reflected: "It is natural that a man should make money of his office if he has to pay for it." A study of multiple ancient cultures will reveal that bribery has consistently been condemned by civilized peoples as a corrupt practice. In that landmark document of English history, the *Magna Charta*, it was stated: "To none will we sell, to none will we deny or defer, right or justice."

Bribery And The Old Testament

The Old Testament vigorously condemns bribery. The Hebrew term *sho'chad*, frequently rendered "gift" (KJV) or "bribe" (ASV), denoted "a present" and generally had to do with a gift presented to a judge to obtain a favorable verdict. Properly, though, a bribe is "anything given to a person to induce him to do something illegal or wrong, or against his wishes." Old Testament writers associate it with several base attitudes and attendant evils.

(1) Bribery was considered a perversion of justice in that it often caused the innocent to be condemned and the guilty released. Moses declared: "And thou shalt take no bribe: for a bribe blindeth them that have sight, and perverteth the words of the righteous" (Ex. 23:8). Again: "Thou shalt not wrest judgment. Thou shalt not respect persons; neither shalt thou take a bribe; for a bribe doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous" (Deut. 16:19). David praises the man who refuses to take reward against the innocent (Psa. 15:5) and condemns as "wickedness" the reception of bribes (Psa. 26:10). See also Proverbs 17:23 and Isaiah 5:23.

(2) Bribery is a companion of numerous additional forms of evil. It goes hand-in-hand with *extortion*. "Surely extortion maketh the wise man foolish; and a bribe destroyeth the understanding" (Eccles. 7:7). It is an associate of *thievery*. "The princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth bribes, and follow after rewards . . ." (Isa. 1:23). Bribery is not uncommonly connected with *murder*. "In thee have they taken bribes to shed blood . . ." (Ezek. 22:12).

In connection with the sin of bribery, Moses extols the holiness of Jehovah when he affirms that the Lord "regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (Deut. 10:17; cf. 2 Chron.

19:7). Accordingly, those who would “dwell on high” with Jehovah must shake their hands from taking bribes (Isa. 33:15).

According to the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, bribery beyond the bounds of Israel was not condemned. “Bribing non-Jewish rulers, officials, and judges was regarded as legitimate at all times. In view of their bias against Jews it is not difficult to understand such an attitude. Not only was it quite usual to bribe kings (1 Kings 15:19; 2 Kings 16:8; Ber. 28b, *et.al.*), but expenses involved in bribing judges and sheriffs were often expressly included in the expenses recoverable from debtors.” Whether the above is an accurate reflection of true Jewish law is really beside the point here, for Israel had trouble aplenty with bribery within their own ranks! Prior to their fall to the Assyrians, Amos indicted Israel for their bribery practices. “For I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins—ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe, and that turn aside the needy in the gate from their right” (Amos 5:12).

Some contend that the Jews had no formal penalty for taking bribes. Modern Jewish authorities assert that such practices were “in the nature of unethical misconduct rather than of a criminal offense.” It is alleged that a bribe-taker could have been flogged, but it is more likely that a bribed judge’s decision would have simply been rendered invalid; possibly he might also be assessed some liability. However, Josephus declared: “If any judge takes bribes, his punishment is death” (*Against Apion* 2:28). The Law clearly pronounced a “curse” upon any who took a bribe to slay an innocent person (Deut. 27:25).

Bribery And The New Testament

Though bribery is not specifically mentioned in the New Testament, it is certainly condemned both by principle and by implication. A few cases of bribery will serve to illustrate the point. (a) Perhaps the most notable case of bribery was that of Judas, who for the paltry sum of thirty pieces of silver was “bought” to become “guide to them that took Jesus” (Acts 1:16), and with that “reward” (Acts 1:18) obtained a hole in the ground for his body. His judgment about Jesus—formed over a

three year span—was completely perverted by his greed (cf. Jno. 12:6). (b) Another such instance involves the bribing of the Roman soldiers who stood guard at Jesus' tomb. On the Sabbath Christ's body was in the tomb, a group of Pharisees visited Pilate warning him that the "deceiver" Jesus had promised to rise from the dead after three days. They requested, therefore, that the tomb "be made sure" lest His disciples steal the body and fabricate a tale of the resurrection. The governor assigned them a guard urging them to "make it as sure as ye can." After the Lord was raised, some of the Roman guard went into Jerusalem and reported the dramatic events to the Jewish rulers. A hasty meeting of the Sanhedrin was called resulting in a large bribe being paid to the soldiers with the charge: "Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." (See Matthew 27:62-66; 28:11-15). I tell you, it would take "much money" to get someone to stick with a story that ridiculous. The very idea—a sleeping witness! At any rate, the very fact that the officials sealed the soldiers' mouths with a bribe is proof that the affixed Roman seal had not remained inviolate! (c) In Acts 8 we are told that "when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money [a bribe, if you will], saying, Give me also this power . . ." (18, 19). The apostle Peter promptly responded: "Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money."*

The New Testament condemns bribery from both the positive and negative viewpoints. Bribery is really the offspring of covetousness, hence every passage dealing with the latter is an indictment of the former. Prohibitions against covetousness (Rom. 13:9) and the penalty attached to such (1 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 5:5) are grave warnings to those who would accept bribes or patronize the weakness of others. Additionally, Jehovah makes it incumbent upon us that "we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Cor. 8:21). The word "honorable" in this verse is the

* From this incident the term "Simony" was coined—the practice that arose in later church history of bribing one's way into religious office. See that word discussed in the various Church Histories and Encyclopedias.

Greek *kalos*, of which W. E. Vine says: "good, admirable, becoming, has also the ethical meaning of what is fair, right, honourable, of such conduct as deserves esteem." Bribery violates every principle of honesty and integrity set forth in the Word of God.

Ecclesiastical Bribery

The tendency of men to bribe, and to accept bribes, has been characteristic of all areas of life. Not even religion has escaped this spiritual disease. In the era of the Old Testament, Balaam, who lived in the time of Israel's wandering in the wilderness and who is called a "prophet" by inspiration (2 Pet. 2:16), was persuaded by means of a bribe to attempt a cursing of the people of Jehovah (Num. 22-24). Though a religious man, his love of the "hire of wrong-doing" was his undoing!

Apparently bribery was not an uncommon practice among religious leaders in the time of the Judges of Israel, for Samuel, near the end of the days, challenged: "Here I am: witness against me before Jehovah, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you" (1 Sam. 12:3). Though this great prophet was not one who could be bought (vs. 4), his evil sons were not of the same character for the record says: "And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice" (1 Sam. 8:3).

Bribery appears to have been commonplace among Israel's prophets and priests in the declining years of Judah's reign for Micah fearlessly attacks the practice: "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet they lean upon Jehovah, and say, Is not Jehovah in the midst of us? no evil shall come upon us" (Micah 3:11). Again, "Their hands are upon that which is evil to do it diligently; the prince asketh, and the judge is ready for a reward . . ." (Micah 7:3).

The task of being a spiritual leader and teacher is indeed awesome. Religious guides are charged with the solemn responsibility of directing people in the way of Truth—without addi-

tion, subtraction or alteration. Such a vocation calls for singleness of purpose and total dedication for there are great dangers along the way. There have always been those (even in religion) who "hate him that reproveth" and "abhor him that speaketh uprightly" (Amos 5:10). Having itching ears that cannot tolerate sound doctrine, they heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts (2 Tim. 4:3) and bid them "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits, get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us" (Isa. 30:10, 11). Men are basically religious; they want to be religious; they need it. But because many of them do not wish to surrender to the Truth, their alternative is to find a leader or preacher who will tell them exactly what they want to hear. The religious world is filled with racketeers who can be bribed into teaching virtually *anything* under the sun! The Lord knew this would be the situation. This is why there is an abundance of Biblical material for spiritual leaders relating to money matters.

Spiritual bribery — Among the divinely given qualifications for the overseer of God's flock is the requisite that the Lord's bishop must not be a "lover of money" (1 Tim. 3:3) or "greedy of filthy lucre" (Tit. 1:7). The latter expression is also used with reference to deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8. These warnings imply, among other things possibly, a temptation to bribery. There might be those who would desire the work of church leadership but who, due to materialistic disposition, would be highly vulnerable to persons or groups who are accustomed to *buying their own way* in everything. And if we may accept the testimony of church history, this is exactly what happened in the post-apostolic age. The *Apostolic Constitutions*, documents from the fourth century A.D., warn against bishops accepting "shameful gifts" and thereby being influenced against exercising discipline against evil men in the church (Bk. ii, c. 9). Another remarkable passage deals with those "pastors" who would, because of bribes, falsely accuse the innocent and have them expelled from Christian fellowship (Bk. ii, c. 42).

The truth of the matter is, this type of situation exists in principle in many congregations today. Consider some cases. I

know of a congregation on the West Coast whose eldership will not permit a gospel preacher to teach the Bible doctrine of marriage in their midst. They claim there are so many families in the congregation involved in the divorce problem that if it were taught, many would leave and their church budget would be ruined! There is an eldership (?) that has been bribed by adulterers. Or there is the situation where an eldership is approached by a segment of the local church that does not especially care for straight-forward Bible teaching. Their spokesman will say, "Brethren, we do not like the way brother Doe preaches and we have decided that we can no longer in good conscience give our contributions here." And often elderships have bowed to such bribes and suggested to their preacher that it would be better if he found another work. If this is not a form of bribery, what is it?

And we might as well face it, brethren; preachers are not above taking a bribe now and then themselves. Some of our preaching brethren take a bribe each time they receive a pay check. If, for instance, a minister refrains from teaching the whole truth of God on such subjects as social drinking, immodesty, marriage and divorce, church discipline, covetousness, etc., when he knows that addressing himself to these matters would result in his dismissal, he is being bribed as surely as if someone were slipping an envelope full of money under his door! Perhaps this is why Paul warned the young Timothy about the numerous temptations that befall those who are minded to be rich (1 Tim. 6:5-10). Sure, brethren, we are human. We need a home, clothes, food, and other necessities; we even enjoy a few luxuries. But let us not neglect the preaching of the whole truth. We must not allow our souls to be bribed by those who haven't the slightest interest in going to heaven!

Special Problems

I believe a word of caution is appropriate in connection with some of the current practices in religionism. I am constrained to believe that many religious folk are no longer of the persuasion that Christianity has the intrinsic merit to attract the attention of serious minded people. Accordingly, gimmicks and allurements (and, yes, even bribes) of a circus-like atmosphere

are used to woo large numbers. One denominational group initiated the practice of giving "trading stamps" to those who could secure the most new members for the congregation. Surely, though, Christian people would not have to be bribed to carry out the Lord's commission to the lost! (Though I'm not sure some of our people could even be bribed into evangelizing.) And I am wondering if we are not getting dangerously close to a form of bribery (and in some cases *more than close*) in some of our brotherhood bus programs. Would it not be better to motivate people by proclaiming the Lord's grace rather than by gifts and lollypop theology? I am not saying that all incentive rewards, especially for children, are wrong. I do, however, think some are going too far and extremism can ultimately produce grave consequences.

Again, let it be stressed. Biblical ethics would never allow the Christian to engage in practices commonly known as bribery, *i.e.*, all attempts to pervert justice or bring about that which is immoral. In those shady areas which might be occasionally confronted, the child of God will use his Scripture-seasoned judgment and attempt to practice the golden rule and provide for things honorable in the sight of all men.

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Biographical Sketch

JERRY DYER

Jerry Dyer was graduated from Sunset School of Preaching and attended Abilene Christian University for special courses in Missions. He taught in the Macquarie School of Preaching in Sydney, Australia, for five years and served as a missionary in Australia for six and a half years.

Dyer worked in campaigns in Canada, Scotland and six States in the United States. He organized the M.A.T.E. Program, an evangelistic outreach that has as its purpose to fully evangelize Australia by the year 2,000. He has directed nine campaigns in Australia and three in the States. At present he is teaching in the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions with a special emphasis in Personal Evangelism and World Missions.

Dyer has been married for 15 years. He and his wife, Jeanette, have two daughters, Jill, 13, and Dana, 6. His plans are to spend the rest of his life in training missionaries, soul winners, and doing foreign mission work.

5

Carnal Warfare

Jerry C. Dyer

The scene is a fox hole in Vietnam. Two people are talking. One is holding a Bible in his nail-scarred hands. You see he is fulfilling the great commission of preaching the gospel to all the world. The study has been going fine until the enemy opens fire. Jesus then says to the person he is teaching, "Pardon me for a minute so I can kill our enemy, then we will proceed with our discussion on the salvation of souls." Does that scene seem to strike an unreal cord in your mind? It does in mine. It seems unreal to me that the creator, sustainer and Lord of life could take the life of one of his own. Yet, that scene has been duplicated, probably without the Bible and gospel message, by some of Jesus' followers for many years.

The subject of discussion assigned to me is that of carnal warfare. Needless to say, much prayer and research has been done on this subject. I cannot reach the conclusion one author on this subject reached. He said words to this effect: I started as a pacifist, but after the research I ended up leaving that position. I would have to say if I had researched the sources he researched I probably would have too. Men's ideas, early church fathers and denominational writers on the subject are interesting, but I fail to see their spiritual value in the light of God's Word. One thing that has surprised me as I researched this subject is the scarcity of material on carnal warfare during wars on either side. It seems to me that that should be a time, more than any other, for our brethren to calmly present the

biblical teaching on the subject. In the preparation of this lesson I have decided to approach the subject differently than any I have read. Instead of a discussion of each verse that deals with the subject and because of the brevity of this lesson I will approach it in this manner. Listed below are some reasons why I, as a child of God, cannot be duty bound to any group or organization that would require that I learn to hate or take the life of another person.

I cannot become a part of an organization or swear to an oath that would supercede my allegiance to my Father in Heaven. The Scriptures do clearly teach that I am to "be subject to the higher powers" (Rom. 13:1-7); "submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (1 Pet. 2:13); and that "I am to render unto Caesar that which is Caesars" (Matt. 22:21).

It is my personal belief that as a child of God I should be the most law-abiding citizen in whatever country I am living. It disturbs me greatly to hear my brethren and especially my preaching brethren actually bragging about breaking the speed or bird limit. If I understand these passages cited, I would be breaking God's commandments if I speed, cheat on income tax, etc. So my discussion is not to deny that we must obey the laws of the land. "Well," someone says, "then why are you even discussing this subject; the government requires that you serve in one branch of the armed services?" (I might add that at the time of this writing the draft has been abolished so I will handle this as though the draft had been reinstated, as it probably will be in time of war.)

To answer the inquiry above: I am writing this to show you that a higher power exists than America or any or all nations put together. Let's take some examples. The Lord Jesus has commissioned us to "Preach the gospel to every creature" (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15). That commission was given to every generation. Now let's suppose that we lived in the country of Greece and they said, "We will throw you into jail if you try to make proselytes from the Greek Orthodox Church." What do you do? That is a law of the land as it is in Russia, China, and many Communist controlled countries. Which law will you obey, Christ's or the government? The Bible gives us

an example of where this actually took place. In Acts the fourth chapter the first three verses the Jewish powers took hold of Peter and John and put them in prison because they had healed a man and preached Jesus. Although they could not deny the miracles and marveled (vs. 13) they still “commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (vs. 18). However, the *inspired* apostle says we must speak these things (vs. 19-20). So they further threatened them and let them go. Of course, they continued to preach and in the fifth chapter of Acts they are called in to the council again (vs. 17-18) and thrown in prison. An angel releases them (vs. 19) and they went and preached. So the soldiers brought them back before the council and reminded them that they (as an authorized council from the government) had commanded them not to preach nor teach this man Jesus. Now, notice the *inspired* apostle’s answer, “We ought to [must] obey God rather than men.”

So this is why we have the right to preach and teach brethren not to engage in anything that would be against God’s Word even though it is commanded by the government. The Scriptures clearly teach that although the government commands it, we must abstain from it (even if it means being thrown in jail) if it conflicts with God’s law. Our purpose of this lesson will be to show you from God’s Word that I have a command to save souls and not to allow them to be destroyed in hell nor physically destroy their tabernacles.

Another example of disobeying the laws of the land comes from World War II. The place is the Nuremberg Trials. Those Nazis who took part in the destruction of 6,000,000 Jews. Notice their defense.

(1) Our society had the need and the desire. They felt the need because they felt that the Jews were their enemies and may some day turn on them. Therefore this fear caused them to desire to exterminate them.

(2) The next step was to enact laws that would be in accord with those needs and desires.

(3) Their next argument was: “Our society demanded that we adhere to the laws.”

(4) In fact they said that it would have been immoral for us to not “obey the laws of our country.”

(5) Then their final argument was: "You now by the laws of your land condemn us for obeying the laws of our land."

Now, how can you say that the Nazis were wrong in the murder of 6,000,000 Jews, because they obeyed the laws of their land? My friends and brethren, the only way you can say that they are wrong is to admit that there is a higher law, a law that supercedes the law of the land, the law to which Peter and John appealed when they had broken the law of the land. That law comes from Almighty God.

Yes, you are a citizen of this nation and are obligated to obey the laws of this nation, but you have a higher command resounding from the lips of the inspired apostle Peter, "We ought to obey God rather than man." Paul added his inspired message in Philippians 3:20 when he capped the argument with these words, "Our *citizenship* is in Heaven." There's your allegiance, there's your supreme law, that's your ultimate goal.

Jesus' teaching demands abstinence from carnal warfare. From here on our objective is to show that, as a citizen of the Kingdom of God, you cannot be engaged in carnal warfare. The prophecies concerning the Kingdom depict it as a peaceful kingdom. They suggest that the subjects will be different from their ancestors of the Old Testament and follow in the footsteps of King Jesus.

Let it be clearly understood that we are not saying that wars were not justified; yea, commanded in the Old Testament. God's theocratic nation, Israel, was told to go to war several times. They were taught to hate the enemy that would have engulfed them. However, we are not under the Old Law today, we are under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Let's see what Jesus and His apostles taught our attitude was to be to all.

Prophecies of peace call on the Christian to abstain from carnal warfare. The prophecies telling of the coming kingdom (church) described a peaceful situation for those in the kingdom. Isaiah taught that the subjects of the kingdom were to "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks," and that they were to "learn war no more" (Isa. 2:2-4).

I believe that it is safe to assume that most members of the church do not subscribe to the heresy of premillennialism and

accept the fact that this is referring to the coming kingdom (church) in the time of our Lord. But even if you subscribe to the hypothesis you must admit that there is coming a time when the people of God will cease carnal warfare.

The reasoning is this, if it applies to the church, it applies now. If it applies to the church it applies to the Christian. This prophecy is saying that as an individual member of the kingdom (church) of God I can no longer engage in the carnal warfare carried on by my ancestors (physical or spiritual).

Another prophecy on the peaceful condition of the Messiah and His reign is found in Isaiah 9:6. He is said to be the Prince of Peace. In fact, when the Prince of Peace came, He pronounced a blessing on peacemakers (Matt. 5:9). Jesus never at any time in His ministry suggested, hinted at, commanded or taught that His disciples were to be warriors with weapons of carnal warfare and destructors of lives. Then doesn't it seem logical that since we follow in the footsteps of the Prince of Peace then we should use His same means and methods.

Isaiah, again referring to the church, said that they would not hurt or destroy in God's holy mountain (Isa. 11:6-9). We are now in that time to which he was referring. The wars sanctioned by the government decree that we should hurt and destroy. Men are trained to be brutal and inflict brutal torture of months and years of suffering on others. To borrow a few phrases from World War II, one is asked to become an "angel of Hell," a "devil dog," whose blood lust is cultivated especially among bayonet fighters. Instruction is given on the proper way to choke an enemy, gouge out his eyes, strangle to death, slice his throat, and knee him in the crotch. "Guts at both ends of the bayonet" is the motto.

War encourages man to be at war with his virtues and at peace with his vices. How do you stick a bayonet in a man in the fashion appropriate to a Christian gentleman? How do you as a soul winner drop napalm on men, women, children and babies?

If a weapon will help win the war, few other questions will be seriously asked. It will be used if it can get the job done.

* Duke of Wellington said, "Men of nice scruples about religion have no business in the army or navy."

* Napoleon said, "War is the trade of barbarians."

* Major General Charles Scott (AP Dispatatch, May 14, 1943), stated the enemy becomes our teacher and from him we learn to "kill without compunction and possibly get a little fun out of it."

The point is this, if war's way and weapons are right for the Christian, then the prophecies of peace in the kingdom and the Christian's peaceful attitude is wrong.

There are many other prophecies that refer to the peaceful condition of the kingdom. Those who do not believe that the church is the kingdom will not see the importance or impact of these but we who accept God at His word and believe that Christ is now reigning in the kingdom must see the peaceful nature from these prophecies. (1) Hosea said that the sword and the battle bow were to be broken (Hos. 2:18). (2) Isaiah said that destruction and violence were to be cast out (Isa. 60:18). (3) Zechariah said that the battle bow would be broken off and that Christ would speak peace unto the people (Zech. 9:10).

Thus we as citizens of the kingdom must allie with the peaceful intent and purposes for those in the kingdom.

Look at what Jesus taught His disciples about "carnal warfare." Some would say today, "We must fight to free people of other lands from the totalitarian governments so they can worship God as they please." Jesus lived and died, the Bible was written in a time when the most totalitarian government that has ever existed was in full power. What did Jesus teach the Christians to do? What did He teach His apostles to do? Find the command if you can to defend yourself! Find the command to take aggressive violent action! Listen to what the Prince of Peace said:

Matthew 10:16—"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." That's what the master of our lives said. Notice after telling them to be "harmless as doves" he told them what would happen to them.

Vs. 17—"scourge you,"

Vs. 21—"families will turn against families and cause their own brothers, sisters, fathers, and mothers to be put to death."

Vs. 22—"be hated,"

Vs. 28—"kill the body."

So the Prince of Peace said they will hate you, scourge you, kill you, put you to death but you be harmless as doves. You will not find a passage in the New Testament where Jesus authorized the Christian to take the life of a fellow human being in a defensive or offensive act. In fact, the Jews were so dismally disappointed with Him that they rejected Him.

Look at this:

(1) The Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah, as king, because they wanted an earthly Messiah to break the galling yoke of Romanism.

(2) The premillennialist accepts His spiritual Messiahship but rejects His spiritual kingship.

(3) The person who partakes in carnal warfare accepts the spiritual nature of Christ and His kingdom but rejects the spiritual nature of the activities of those who are subjects of the kingdom.

In order to be consistent with the teachings of Jesus, one must follow the teaching and example of the Prince of Peace.

The Scriptures are "choc-a-block" full of warnings that there would be wars (Matt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 21). But you will never find a Scripture that tells the Christian that he personally has the right to defend himself, his home, his ideals, or his religious freedom. The early church (by the way, that's the church we are trying to, or supposed to, restore) understood Jesus' teaching. Look at what He said when this totalitarian government will attack Jerusalem (Lk. 21:20-21), "And when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Jerusalem flee to the mountains . . ." Can you call a person, who obeyed this command, a coward?

Jesus reversed the teaching of the Old Testament concerning our attitude toward our enemies.

Matthew 5:38-48—"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue

thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

How can you hear, heed and obey the voice of our Savior and engage in any kind of activity that would bring you in violent conflict with your enemy?

I suggest that the "law of the land" advocates that you hate your enemy. We would be the first to admit that the Old Testament law taught the same thing. Yet, Jesus says no, Love your enemy. I don't think that any would want to go back under the Old Law since the Scriptures teach that you will be "severed [cut off] from Jesus" and "fall from grace" (Gal. 5:1-4). Jesus' law says "love your enemy." The Old Law says "hate your enemy." Which law do you follow when you seek to and actually take the life of your enemy?

We would suggest that the type of love that we should have toward our enemy is not "syrupy sentimentality" but "creative, active goodwill." Seeking the best for him. You should have the love that is trying to help him eternally. I will be the first to say that this is difficult but then Jesus never said that "this life" would be easy. In fact, He said in Matthew 5:46-47, "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans the same?"

Jesus is saying, "If you just love the people who are easy to love how are you any better than those wretched turn coats,

Jews, who extract tax money from you as they work for the Romans?" Try to imagine the most hated of our society (the thief, the murderer, the rapist, the communist). Are you any better than the thief, murderer, rapist, communist if you just love the people that are easy to love. These people even love those who are easy to love, but you *be different*. You are called out of the world (1 Pet. 2:9). You are sanctified, set apart for service to God (1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Pet. 2:9). You are not to be conformed to the world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Rom. 12:1-2). That new mind is to be patterned after the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5) who said (1) Love your enemy, (2) Pray for them who persecute you, (3) Love even those who are not easy to love, (4) Turn the other cheek. Now does that sound different to what the world says? It should because it is! King Jesus leads us up a path that is "narrow" and different from the world, but that path leads to eternal life.

Is there such a thing as a "just war"? Is there a just cause where we can fight to deliver one from the oppression of another or fight for religious freedom? What did Jesus say on the subject? In the 18th chapter of John we have Jesus' answer to that question. Here the enemy comes out to take Jesus into captivity. The one they seek never harmed anyone, He did good wherever He went. He healed the sick, the blind, the halt, the deaf, those possessed by evil spirits. He never sinned, He never did anything evil to any human being nor did He teach others to do anything evil. So if there was ever an occasion to release a person who was unjustly treated it surely would have been Jesus on that "betrayal night." In fact, one of His disciples tried to do that. Notice the context. The Jews come out with lanterns, torches and weapons (vs. 3). Judas betrays Him (vs. 5). Then Peter attacks the mob and cuts off the ear of one of them (vs. 10). Jesus then tells Peter to "put up thy sword" (vs. 11) and explains that he must drink the cup the Lord has poured for Him. Now some would have you to believe that the only reason that Jesus had Peter put up his sword is because He knew that His time was here and that under other circumstances He would have allowed a violent reaction to an unjust mob. However, the Scriptures go on. Jesus explains to Pilate that His kingdom is different from earthly kingdoms which would demand that the servants fight so that their king

would not be delivered over to another (vs. 36). "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

Here is the other reason why Peter was to put up his sword. Jesus' kingdom is different, His servants do not engage in carnal violence even for the most just man that ever lived and that is King Jesus. We have shown the Scriptures teach us *not* to engage in carnal warfare from King Jesus Himself. As a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven (Phil. 3:20), I cannot engage in carnal warfare no matter how just the cause. The burden of proof is now on others to find a contradictory statement in God's Word that would allow you to partake in carnal warfare as a citizen of the "kingdom of God's dear son."

We have seen that all of the prophecies concerning the coming kingdom (church) describe it as a peaceful time when the subjects of that kingdom will not be carnal warriors as their predecessors in the Old Testament were. When the king of this kingdom came He advocated peace on earth. A non-violent attitude was to engulf the participant in the New Covenant, the spiritual kingdom that was to be different from the old. Whereas under the old they were to hate their enemy, we are to love. Under an earthly kingdom they could fight for the release of kings, etc., but under the spiritual banner of King Jesus we cannot.

The apostles carried on with the same attitude that Jesus started. In John 14:25-26 and John 16:13 Jesus reminded His disciples that He had taught them many things. However, when the Holy Spirit came He would guide them into (1) all truth, (2) all things, (3) all things that were coming, (4) all things that Jesus taught. The New Testament writers, time and time again, affirmed that what they delivered in ink was not their own (1 Cor. 2:12-14; 11:23; 14:37; 2 Pet. 1:20;21, etc.). So, what did the Holy Spirit of God teach the New Testament Christians about "carnal warfare"?

He taught them that they were engaged in war and then explained (1) what it was and (2) what it was not. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5—"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after

the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" he states in unmistakable terms that we do not engage in carnal warfare but we are at war. This war involves pulling down strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against God. In Ephesians 6:16-17 he is more specific as to who we are fighting. "The devil." "Not flesh and blood" but the "spiritual wickedness." The false teaching of men that have exalted themselves against the teaching of God. The New Testament warns time and time again that there are false teachers who will pervert the Word of God (Matt. 7:15, 21-23; 15:7-14; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Cor. 11:13-14; Rom. 10:17-18; Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; Tit. 1:10-16; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; 1 Jno. 4:1; 2 Jno. 6-11; Jude 3-4). Notice the source of the teaching for these false teachers, old Satan himself. For 2 Corinthians 11:14 tells us Satan transforms to an angel of light and we read in 1 Timothy 4:1-5, "doctrines of the devil." Brethren, we are in a war, but that war is not against men but against the teachings of Satan carried by his messengers in the world!

Notice what the "inspired" apostle Paul said in Romans 12:14—"Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not." That kind of sounds familiar. You see why Paul could say, "Be imitators of me, even as I imitate Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1); "I think that I have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 7).

Vs. 17—"Recompense to no man evil for evil"—don't get back. Don't pay back. That is what recompense is. And you as a child of God have no part in that kind of activity.

Vs. 18—"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Notice that he didn't add, "But if you can't then kill them." He said it's up to you. You are the peacemaker. You take the initiative. You have the responsibility to try to live peaceably with all men. "As much as lieth within you." *You who?* Romans 1:7, "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." *i.e.*, all the Christians in Rome. Are you a Christian? Are you beloved of God? Then this teaching in Romans 12 applies to you.

Vs. 19—“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto the wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.” He very tenderly pleads with them/us “dearly beloved.” He knows how vengeance will eat a man up. He knows that we will get angry at the horrible things we will see; in fact, he even says “be angry but sin not, let not the sun go down on your wrath.” There is no sin connected with anger. Jesus was angry when He put the animals out of the temple and overturned the tables. He was angry when He spoke to the hypocritical Jewish leaders and said, “How shall you escape the damnation of hell?” (Matt. 23:33). But Jesus didn’t harbor that anger. Paul is pleading with them to not seek vengeance because hate that promotes vengeance will be a cancer to the soul. He also pleads with them not to seek vengeance because “that belongs to God.” “I will repay saith the Lord.” We as members of the church of Christ say, “I don’t call myself ‘Reverend’ because that title belongs to God and since I am not God then I won’t call myself Reverend (Psa. 111:9).” I suggest in the same vein of thought that vengeance belongs to God and when you seek vengeance you are putting yourself in the judgment seat of God. Paul, as God’s apostle, says leave it to God because it will be a cancer to your soul and that’s God’s duty anyway.

Vs. 20-21—“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” This is to be your defense against evil. Not physical violence, not mental or emotional torture. But the same master and Lord of our life taught. “Do good to all men.” “Overcome evil with good.” “Take care of your enemies’ needs.” “Love the unlovable.” “To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, it is sin” (Jas. 4:17). You see Jesus “went about doing good” and commanded the same of His disciples. If you are a child of God, an “*obedient*” disciple of Christ, you will “pay back” evil with good.

“But,” an objector says, “doesn’t Romans 13 teach us to become a part of the government and doesn’t the government have the responsibility to carry out violent retribution to the law breaker?” Yes on both counts. The answer for the Christian to these questions must be modified in these areas:

(1) You are to obey the laws, be subject to the higher powers, etc., as we discussed at the first of the paper. However, we showed that this must be modified with the statement of Peter, "We must obey God rather than men." In other words when the government issues a command that would conflict with God's teaching then we must obey God's rather than man's. For example, the government tells you to take the life of another human being and yet we have shown time and time again from the New Testament of our Lord Jesus that this cannot be our attitude. So you must obey God rather than man and refuse to take the life of another human being.

(2) Notice again the context. To whom is he writing the letter? (Rom. 1). To the Christians in Rome. Look at Romans 13:4—"For he [He who? The power appointed by God] is a minister for thee [Thee who? You Christians]." So God says that the power has been appointed for your benefit. You are not to carry out the vengeance (you Christians, Rom. 12:19). Why? Because God has appointed a power to do that. People will persecute you and do evil to you but God has appointed a power that He will use to render vengeance to the evil doer. But you as a child of God are to have no part in that. I would be the first to call for firmer action, more severe punishment. I believe the power has the right and responsibility to do that but I do not have the right or responsibility. Read carefully Romans 12 and 13 and I believe you can establish who is to do what.

Another thing that I believe casts a lot of light on our subject of discussion is that of the great commission. Our Lord Jesus sent "*us*" into battle. We have seen that we have a battle to wage. A war in which to engage. A banner to unfurl. A charge to keep. Plus an admonition not to become entangled in the affairs of this life that we might please the one who enrolled us to be a soldier (2 Tim. 2:4). Jesus enrolled us "to fight the good fight" and share His message with "every creature" (Mk. 16:15-16) in every generation. It is beyond my understanding why we haven't given our sons and daughters to live and die to this task. I can't understand why we will send them, yea make them feel obligated, to go to every corner of the world for the government's sake, to kill, maim, cripple, torture, burn and destroy and yet actually discourage them from going to the same place to teach love, joy, peace, longsuffering, the gospel of

Jesus Christ. We have sent them to the tropical jungles of Vietnam, the deserts of Arabia, the cold of Eastern Europe for months and years. We have separated husband from wife, son from parents, father from children, to do the bidding of the godless governments appointed to do the task of carrying out the vengeance of God and yet we scream, cry, kick, fight, fume, fuss, beg, plead and do everything that we can saying, "Please don't encourage my son to preach," "Please don't send my children to the mission field," "Please don't take my grandchildren away at a time when they will not know their grandparents." Do you *"really"* wonder why we cry out with our brethren in Revelation, perhaps for another reason but with the same pathos, "How long, how long?" How long before we are going to see parents sending their children into the mission field to fight the only battle we have been commissioned to fight? How long before we see the best of our people encouraged to save souls rather than slit throats? How long before we see proportionate sacrifice to save souls rather than kill or maim? How long before we have the legions going to mission under the banner of King Jesus? How long before we can look into the face of the damned and weep because of their undone lost condition instead of taking their lives and sealing their destiny? How long, how long?

What did King Jesus teach us to do and be as citizens of His kingdom?

1. Matt. 5:9—"Blessed are the peacemakers."
2. Matt. 5:10—"Blessed are you when you are persecuted for righteousness' sake."
3. Matt. 5:12—"Rejoice and be exceeding glad . . . great is your reward in Heaven."
4. Matt. 5:21-22—"Don't hate or kill as your ancestors did."
5. Matt. 5:38-48—
 - a. Don't pay back eye for eye as they did of old.
 - b. Don't visit the evil person.
 - c. Go the extra mile.
 - d. Don't hate your enemy as you were taught of old.
 - e. Love your enemy.
 - f. It's easy to love those who love you.

- g. However a child of God loves friend and foe.
 - h. If you want to be pleasing to God love all.
6. You are citizens of the Kingdom.
- a. Isa. 2:2-4—"beat your swords into plowshares and your spears into pruninghooks," "learn war no more."
 - b. Isa. 9:6—"Prince of Peace will rule in the Kingdom."
 - c. Isa. 11:6-9—"They will not hurt or destroy in God's holy mountain."
 - d. Hosea 2:18—"Battle bow will be broken."
 - e. Isa. 60:18—"Destruction and violence will be cast out."
 - f. Zech. 9:10—"Christ will speak peace and battle bow will be broken off."
7. Matt. 10:16—"Be harmless as doves and wise as serpents."
8. Rom. 12:1-2—"Be different from the world."
9. John 18—
- a. "Put up your sword."
 - b. "My servant, do not fight."
10. Matt. 7:12—"Whatsoever ye would that men do unto you, do ye unto them."
11. Matt. 26:52—"They that take the sword shall perish by the sword."
12. 1 Pet. 2:21—
- a. "Leaving you an example that ye should follow his steps."
 - b. When reviled, revile not again, when suffering, threaten not, but commit himself to Him that judgeth righteously."
13. Rom. 12—
- a. 17—"Render to no man evil for evil."
 - b. 19—"Avenge not yourselves, give place to God."
 - c. 20—"If your enemy hunger, feed him, thirst, give him drink."
 - d. 21—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
14. 2 Cor. 10:4—"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal."

15. Eph. 6:12—"Our fight is against Satan and his teaching."

16. Jas. 4:1—"Wars come from lust."

Will you follow in the steps of King Jesus?

Biographical Sketch

HUGH FULFORD

Hugh Fulford was born December 27, 1937, in Samson, Ala. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Huey E. Fulford of Florence, Ala. He is married to the former Janet Young whom he met at Freed-Hardeman College and they are the parents of two teenage sons—Bryan, a student at David Lipscomb College, and Brett, a freshman in high school.

Brother Fulford began preaching in 1953 while still in high school. Gospel meetings and other speaking engagements have taken him to fourteen States. He has served as the regular minister of the following churches: Worthington Church of Christ, Louisville, Ky. (1958-59); Karns Church of Christ, Knoxville, Tenn. (1959-62); Allen and Edgewood Church of Christ, Jackson, Tenn. (1962-64); Madison St. Church of Christ, Clarksville, Tenn. (1964-68); College St. Church of Christ, Lebanon, Tenn. (1969-72); Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, Mobile, Ala. (1972-76). Since May of 1976 he has been the regular minister of the Fairlane Church of Christ in Shelbyville, Tenn.

Brother Fulford has appeared on the lectureship programs of Alabama Christian College (2), David Lipscomb College (2), Freed-Hardeman College, Bellview School of Preaching (2), and is making his second appearance on the E.T.S.O.P.M. lectureship. Since 1973 he has served as a regular staff writer for the **Gospel Advocate**.

6

The Church And Morality

Hugh Fulford

Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; because we are members of his body. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church. Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband. (Eph. 5:22-33).

This is but one of many passages emphasizing the need for purity in the church. As our study unfolds several others will be mentioned.

In discussing the church and morality we need to get some definitions in mind.

By the church we mean the people of God, the church in its distributive sense—God's people living in the world in all their varied relationships—home, job, social, governmental, etc.

By morality we simply mean the adherence to that which is right in all of life's relationships and activities as right is determined by the Word of God.

Morality is often limited to matters of sex. In this study it includes the whole spectrum of human conduct and includes such matters as basic personal integrity, always telling the truth, not cheating, not stealing, not committing murder, not being guilty of racial prejudice, doing an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, fulfilling one's responsibilities as husband, wife, parent, and child, being a responsible, law-abiding citizen, setting a proper example for others, and always standing for that which is right.

The church, by virtue of being the church, is to stand for, and practice, morality. The church is the *ekklesia*—the called out. We have been called out of the world by the gospel to a life of holiness. Paul declared:

For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works. (Tit. 2:11-14).

Again, he wrote:

Wherefore, come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Cor. 6:17-7:1).

To the Philippians he said:

Do all things without murmurings and questionings: that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without

blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. (Phil. 2:14-16a).

In exhorting the saints at Rome, Paul said:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1, 2).

We Live In A World Of Immorality

We live in a world of gross immorality. As evidence of this, consider the breakdown of the American home. Today the marriage vows are taken very lightly. One out of a little over every two marriages ends in divorce. A young lady went to a gospel preacher to ask him to perform her marriage ceremony. Like most preachers, he wanted to talk to her about the matter. He asked her, "What will you do if you and your husband have difficulty in getting along?" Her frank reply was: "I'd get rid of him and get me another one!" Some folks trade marriage companions more frequently than I trade cars. The alarming thing is that this tragic situation exists in the church with nothing being done about it in far too many cases. Brother Jimmy Allen reports that a Christian lawyer in a large metropolitan area where the church is numerically strong told him that within one year's time twenty-nine deacons, six elders, and seven preachers came to him asking him to help them secure divorces from their companions!

As further evidence of the immorality of our society, consider the many forms of sexual immorality. As we have already suggested, immorality is not limited to matters of sex but much of the immorality we find in the world today is sex related. As Brother Kenneth Reed has stated, "We are living in a 'sex-happy' society. Sex bombards us from every side—advertisings, TV, clothing styles, etc., etc. The sexual revolution is in full swing!" (*Harding Graduate School Lectures*, 1972, p. 51). Someone has remarked, "Regardless of

what time it is in the rest of the world it is always 'sex o'clock' in America!"

Brother Rubel Shelley in his excellent little book entitled, *Young People Make Moral Decisions*, reports that the market for erotic books, magazines, films and paraphernalia has increased by an estimated 300% in the last five years. Pornography is a business that grosses between 500 million and two billion dollars a year! Wife-swapping, adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, and bestiality are some of the tamer subjects dealt with in pornographic books and magazines today.

Added to the above are such sex-based activities as dancing, mixed swimming, immodest apparel, and suggestive music.

Additional evidence of the moral decadence of our world is seen in the widespread use of alcohol. In the United States we are quickly becoming a nation of drunkards. Arnold Toynbee, in his book, *Civilization On Trial*, said: "Out of 21 civilizations preceding this one, 19 of them have been destroyed by a mixture of atheism, materialism, socialism, and alcoholism." Later, when Mr. Toynbee was asked if he had changed his mind about Western Civilization and its prospects he replied, "Only this, that it looks now as if the number one enemy of the American way of life is drunkenness. If you people continue the present increase of drunkenness, nothing can save you from destruction. History is altogether against you." (Quoted from *Young People Make Moral Decisions*, Shelley, p. 27).

Added to all of this is the juvenile delinquency, parental disrespect, disregard for law and order, child abuse, rape, robbery, sex perversion, dirty movies and television programs, dishonesty in business and government, profanity, and the general irreverence toward, and lack of respect for, God and the result is a rather sordid picture. Paul could well have been describing our world when he wrote:

But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up,

lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away. (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

What Can The Church Do?

In the long ago, David asked: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psa. 11:3). In a day when the moral foundations of our world are being destroyed we might well ask ourselves, "What can the church do?" In responses to this question we offer the following answers:

First, the church can avoid the danger of conformity. Paul said:

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Rom. 12:2, KJV).

The church exists in the world but must not be of the world (cf. Jno. 17:15). Safety prevails as long as the ship is in the water, but when the water gets into the ship there is danger. The same principle applies with reference to the church and the world. The church is in the world to influence the world for good (Matt. 5:13-16), but when the world gets into the church that influence is counteracted and the church is in great danger. Having been called out of the world, the church must maintain that separate position. Peter said of Christians:

But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Pet. 2:9).

Second, the church can maintain its purity and be a proper example to the rest of the world. We can have a leavening influence for good on the world. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (1 Cor. 5:6). Jesus said of His disciples:

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the

light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Matt. 5:13-16).

Paul told the Corinthian Christians:

Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men. (2 Cor. 3:2).

Third, in response to the question, "What can the church do?", let it be pointed out that the church can take a firm stand against all evil. The church of the Lord in every community should be known for its stand against liquor, pornography, sexual permissiveness, and every other form of vice. The Karns church in Knoxville, Tennessee, is an outstanding example of God's people speaking out against such things as abortion, massage parlors, topless bars, etc., with a high degree of effectiveness. The church everywhere should be known for its strong stand against divorce and remarriage for just any cause. Such a stand should be manifested in the proper discipline of all immoral members. This strong posture of the church should be reflected from the pulpit, the classroom, newspaper, radio, television, and, perhaps most effectively, from the personal lives of its members. Let us never forget that:

Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (Jas. 1:27).

Fourth, the church can continue to preach the gospel through every avenue available and convert people to Christ. This, in the final analysis, is the only remedy for the immorality we find in the world. Only as people's allegiance is changed from Satan to Christ will the moral climate of society be improved. While we may sometimes think this is a hopeless task, it is not. The gospel is still the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) and if we will teach it, preach it, and live it, it will be used of the Lord to save others.

The church at Corinth was composed of people who formerly had led very immoral lives. In describing their conversion, Paul said:

Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

If the Word of God could have that kind of corrective effect upon the perverted society of ancient Corinth, it can have that kind of corrective effect upon the immoral society of our day. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). The church simply must become more militant and aggressive in teaching the Word through every legitimate avenue available. Through personal evangelism, correspondence courses, distribution of tracts, and radio and television preaching we could literally sow this land down in gospel seed (Lk. 8:11) and change the moral picture of our nation!

Brother Jimmy Adcox has said, "There is no greater challenge to be accepted than to fight the immoral influences in the world." (*Freed-Hardeman College Lectures*, 1975, p. 178). We have the weapon with which to wage the battle—the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). Paul wrote:

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:4, 5).

With faith and courage, let us go forth as the mighty army of God to do battle against the host of wickedness realizing that through Jesus Christ our Lord we shall ultimately be victorious "for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they also shall overcome that are with him, called and chosen and faithful" (Rev. 17:14).

Biographical Sketch

ROBERT R. TAYLOR

Robert R. Taylor, Jr., was born at Bradford, Tennessee, on October 30, 1931, to R. R. and Vera Mai Taylor. He grew up on a farm and moved to Lansing, Michigan, when he was fifteen. He is married to Irene Crump of Nampa, Idaho. They have two children: Rebecca, a junior at Freed-Hardeman College, and Timothy, a junior in Ripley High School. Both children are Christians and active in the work of the Lord.

Taylor is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College, of David Lipscomb College and of George Peabody College. He holds the B.A. and M.A. Degrees. He graduated with magna cum laude honors from Lipscomb. For thirteen years he taught in Junior High, Senior High and College.

Taylor obeyed the gospel in 1944. He has been preaching since 1949. He has done local work in Tennessee and Mississippi. He conducts about a dozen meetings per year and appears on about that many lectureships. He has spoken in about half the States of the Union. He preaches for the Lord's church in Ripley, Tennessee.

Taylor is a staff writer for **Gospel Advocate**, **Words of Truth**, **First Century Christian**, **Voice of Freedom**, **Gospel Truths**, and **Christian Family Magazine**. For many years he has written and had published some two to four articles per week. He is a writer of tracts and books. He is working on a number of books now to be published later.

He has appeared in **Outstanding Young Men of America**, **Personalities of the South**, and **Who's Who in Religion**.

7

Dancing: From Satan Or From God?

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

For many years dancing has been a very popular amusement. In fact anyone today who speaks out against the modern dance and its many evils is definitely not pursuing the pathway of popularity with either young people who dance or their parents who condone such. The opponent of the modern dance is looked upon as an "odd ball," an "old fogey," and an "ancient fossil" of the long abandoned Puritanical Age. But such labels as these mean nothing to me when truth, human purity, and imperishable souls are at stake and each of these is surely at stake in this crucial matter. I bid you to read me carefully and weigh with wisdom the material that will be given. Perhaps the only side of the modern dance you have ever heard is from its avid supporters because many preachers and elders no longer do any teaching on such. The other side of the story needs to be told and that is precisely what I plan to do without fear or favor, without intimidation or partiality. Is the modern dance from Deity or from the devil? Is its design devilish or divine? Are its fruits holy or harmful. Will it lead to soul enrichment or soul damnation?

What We Are Not Talking About

A word or two needs to be said relative to that which is *not* considered in this study. I am not speaking about the kind of

dancing that was done by Hebrew women on Freedom's side of the Red Sea under the direction of Miriam, Moses' sister. The Bible says in Exodus 15:20, "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances." This dancing was not done in the midst of revellings and lasciviousness. It was not mixed dancing. It was done by women. Apparently, it was done during the daylight. It was an expression of religious rejoicing. Such as that type of dancing bears no resemblance at all to the modern dance.

I am not speaking about the kind of dancing that was done by King David sometime after he became monarch of the Hebrew nation. The Bible says of him in 2 Samuel 6:12-14, "And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obedom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obedom into the city of David with gladness. And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the Lord, had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings. And David danced before the Lord with all his might: and David was girded with a linen ephod." Please observe that this dancing was done in a religious atmosphere. It was done by David alone. There is no dancing between men and women mentioned in this Bible account. What we read here is nothing akin to an incident that happened in Dallas, Texas, some years back. After Communion had been given a picture was made between the Methodist Chaplain and an attractive college co-ed dancing up and down the aisle. The young girl was clad in thigh revealing shorts. What David did is nothing akin to a dance advertised for the Second Presbyterian church facilities in Memphis, Tennessee, in the early 1970's. Girls who wore *hot pants* were to get in at half price. The boys were to pay regular price. The advertisement said, "Come and enjoy the scenery." What the boys had to pay extra would be recompensed by a leg show! Religion, hot pants and dancing, what a combination! That is not what David did. And it is not what any man of God will be a part of who has one bit of respect for the God of heaven and the Heavenly volume—the Bible.

What Then Are We Talking About?

We are talking about the type of sensual dancing they had at the base of Mt. Sinai when Moses was atop holy Horeb receiving the Ten Commandments inscribed upon tables of stone. The Bible says, "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger was waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount" (Ex. 32:19). Exodus 32:25 states, "And when Moses saw that the people were naked; for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies . . ." In 1 Corinthians 10:7 Paul looked back to this very incident and wrote, "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." This was the play of the sensual, of the lascivious. It was a direct ancestor of the very kind of dancing that is done by millions today and the very kind we are now protesting in this lesson.

We are talking about the kind of dancing that was evidently done by the sensual Salome, the daughter of Herodias, before Herod and other men at his birthday celebration. This shocking disclosure is revealed in Matthew 14 and Mark 6. The dancing daughter of the hateful Herodias presented a pleasing dance before Herod and the others who were present. Herod became so enamored with her dance that he promised her anything her heart desired up to half the kingdom. Herodias, her infamous coach in this shocking matter, suggested that the request should be for John's head in a platter. The infamous deed soon stood in cruel completion. Seemingly, there is little doubt but what this was a lascivious dance—the very kind that has caused many a man to lose his head figuratively. In this case it was the loss of a real head—that of John the Baptist. Figuratively, dancing has cost many a man to lose his moral headship over his passions and sensual appetites.

In this study we are talking about mixed dancing. Dancing that is done between men and women, between boys and girls. We are talking about the dancing that calls for the close embrace and the wild gyrations of bodily movements swaying lasciviously to the beat of sensual music. We are talking about dancing that is done at night and with the lights turned low.

We are speaking of the type of dancing that is done when scanty and revealing clothing for the women participants are welcomed apparel. We are talking about scenes where there is feeling and fondling between men and women, between boys and girls in a devilish and deeply seductive setting. Dancing is usually an ally, a willing ally, I might add, to such undesirables as drinking, gambling, impure speech, coarse conversations, and fleshly propositions. The whole setting is a cleverly devised scheme for a passionate prelude to fornication and adultery whether they *actually* occur or not. Now who will deny such?

Dancing Is Satanic In Origin

Those who have made a study of the modern dance tell us that it had its inception in a house of prostitution in Paris, France. The very city and place of its origin say much about its unwholesome beginnings, its infamous origin.

The prudent Jehovah placed the sex desire in humanity for the deep expression of love between husband and wife and for the procreation of the race. It is in marriage and marriage only that these desires should be aroused and fulfilled. It is in marriage only that children should be brought into the world. Without the presence of the sex instinct the human race would long ago have perished from the earth. God knew this and made ample provisions for the continuation of the race. Yet the Devilish Deluder has taken the sex desire in men and women and prostituted it to the destruction of marriage and family and the damnation of countless souls. He has used the dance with effectiveness in creating the very seductive climate in which lasciviousness, revellings and ultimately wherein fornication and adultery will result. Fornication and adultery are no more the passionate products of the devil than is the modern dance that serves as a stimulus to such. There should be neither debate nor denial as to the origin of the modern dance. It is without controversy the product of his devilish origin.

The Modern Dance Is Devilish In Its Designs

Modern dancing is closely allied with revellings and lasciviousness as we propose to prove in this very study. In a countless number of times it has proved to be the prelude to

overt immorality. It has been a frequent contributor to divorce, the breakup of homes and the tearing asunder of child security in the home. It even has been an indirect contributor to murder as estranged mates have seen what dancing did in the breakup of their homes and became violent in the process. Murder of mates is an ever growing crime in our land and the modern dance has been a frequent factor in the creation of a murderous climate between husbands and wives. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." The modern dance is so much part and parcel of the wicked world around us that no Christian can afford to participate therein or lend his influence toward it in any fashion.

Paul writes in Galatians 5:19-21, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness . . . Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." A number of these terms will condemn the modern dance. Two are mentioned in particular. One of these is that of revellings. Exactly what is included in this term by way of definition? The *American College Dictionary* defines the term to mean, "An occasion of merrymaking or noisy festivity with dancing, etc." Liddell and Scott in their *Greek-Lexicon* affirm a close connection between revellings "with music and dancing." Also connected is drinking. Such activities in ancient times frequently followed victory at public games. Is not the application an obvious one? It is indeed! Today following a victory (or even a defeat) on the football field or the basketball floor there is a ballroom floor or something closely akin where a dance band plays, beer is present in abundant amounts, the lights are low and those of the opposite sex dance and dance. Today it is called the "Homecoming Dance" or a "Victory Party" if the favored team has won an important game. But the dancing party is usually held with or without victory. And it is frequently the case where men who failed to score in athletic competition score with the devil and a willing member of the opposite sex in a fleshly conquest. A worldly woman once confessed that no surrender is as sweet as the surrender in this

game. And the dance is a heavy contributor to the immoral escapades of such nights. Those who will deny such do not know much about what is going on in such environments.

The other word in Galatians 5 that needs comment and definition is lasciviousness. It is a rather big word and it majors in mischief. Thayer in his *Greek-English Lexicon* says the term means, "filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females" (p. 79). Will anyone be so naive as to deny that filthy words are very much part and parcel at dancing and drinking parties? Will any be so naive as to deny that indecent bodily movements very much dominate the average dancing situation in our day? Will any be so naive as to deny that the dance encourages the unchaste handling and fondling of males and females. Is not that its chief stimulus? If not, what is it? Just as social drinking is a prelude to outright drunkenness so also dancing and petting are passionate preludes to fornication and adultery. There is too much overwhelming proof from those who have been down that route and know from their own fall for any of the naive supporters of the modern dance to demur at this point. Even if there be no overt immorality subsequent to the dance, the dance stands solidly condemned upon its own devilish demerits. It is lascivious and a form of revellings. Paul says plainly and pointedly that those guilty of lasciviousness and revellings are not going to be saved in heaven.

Compelling Testimony From Those Who Know

Some years ago the FBI put out a tract suggesting some six ways in which young people get hurt. Could you guess what the six were? Would you be surprised to know that the dance is one of the six? The other five, as reported, were: (1) drinking, (2) gambling, (3) reckless driving, (4) parking and petting, and (5) mixed swimming. Look at how many of these are concerned with the modern dance. Without exception each one of the six fits in with the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes and the pride or vainglory of life. The apostle of love in 1 John 2:15-17 affirms that those who pursue this type of fleshly life are going to perish along with the world which they have loved and serve. Nothing is more certain than this. J. Edgar Hoover, former head of the FBI, is on public record as saying, "Most juvenile

crime has its inception in the dance hall, either public or private." Mr. Hoover was in position to know whereof he spoke. From another law enforcement officer came this statement some years ago, "It is estimated that in New York City, 4,000 women are living the life of infamy, and that three-fourths of these are started on their life of infamy through the dance." This was from Dr. Phelps of the New York City Police. No doubt the figures would be much higher today for this statement was made many years ago. The Chicago Vice Commission once asked 300 prostitute girls what led to their becoming sinners or scarlet women. Some 85 percent of them responded by saying, "My first step wrong was caused by the modern dance." A step out upon the ballroom floor is a step down, a mighty big step down. These girls knew. They had traveled their downward route personally. It was not hearsay with them; it was personal testimony.

Noted educators have spoken out against the modern dance. Professor W. C. Wilkerson once analyzed the modern dance and concluded that it is a "system or means, contrived with more than human ingenuity, to excite the instinct of sex action." There you have it spelled out. Its main motivation, its ardent appeal and its drawing power are sex oriented. Dr. Lita Hollingsworth, Professor Of Columbia University, defended modern dancing by saying, "Dancing is an exciting and pleasurable recreation as it affords a partial satisfaction to the sex impulse." And what it frequently leads to satisfies the remainder of the sex impulse! Beloved reader, people of the world see nothing wrong with the modern dance because they see nothing wrong with fornication and adultery. But they are not as naive as are some religious people who claim there is nothing of the sexual connected with dancing. Worldly people know that dancing is sex related. The Christian educator, Thomas C. Whitfield, who holds the Ph.D. in Education and is a long time professor of David Lipscomb College, has well said, "The modern dance is condemned precisely at this point. It is not wrong solely because it might lead one to the physical act of fornication, but it is sinful to the degree that it arouses unrestrained desires that cannot be fulfilled under present relations and conditions. When such desires are aroused, the dancing is within itself sinful because it is then a lascivious

act." The modern dance is from Satan; its origin is not traceable to God and the cause of holy truth.

A number of years ago Dr. E. S. Sonners, eminent nerve specialist of Chicago and Los Angeles, declared, "I attack the modern dance as a reversion toward savagery. As a medical man, I flatly charge that modern social dancing is fundamentally sinful and evil. I charge that dancing's charm is based upon sex appeal. I charge that it is the most insidious of the maneuvers preliminary to sex betrayal. It is nothing more or less than damnable, diabolical, animal, physical dissipation. Do brother and sister dance like that? Father and mother? Mother and son? . . . The basic spell of the dance is the spell of illicit contact. . . . I tell you frankly, it is not safe to subject even the strongest men and women to the subtle temptation of the dance. A trail of broken homes proves this." Did you read carefully this quotation from this eminent physician? Did its message sink deeply within your heart? Will it come back with a message of profit the next time your son or daughter wants to go dancing? If you participate in modern dancing yourself, what influence will this fine statement have upon you the next time you are tempted to go dancing?

Dr. Howard Crosby has well stated, "The foundation for the vast amount of domestic misery and domestic crime, which startles us often in its public outcroppings, was laid when parents allowed the sacredness of their daughters' persons and the purity of their maiden instincts to be rudely shocked in the waltz." Dr. Winfield Scott has well said, "All specialists in this field without a single exception concur in the belief that the dance is a device of the devil." Another physician, J. F. Williams, in his book, *Personal Hygiene*, states, "Dancing is the only amusement that depends solely upon the mingling of sexes for its existence. Separate the sexes and the dance would die." A striking illustration of this was observed some years back when a dance was planned for some service men. In planning for the dance somebody forgot to invite any girls! Needless to say that dance died before it ever began! The fellows were not interested in the exercise of the dance; that is not why they came. They were not the least bit interested in the development of social grace by dancing with each other.

Another statement from Dr. E. S. Sonners, from whom we have already heard, says, "Under what other shield can a man or woman, a youth or maiden, so promiscuously fondle so many of the opposite sex in a single night, or in a lifetime." Dr. A. C. Dixon has well said, "The modern dance is the fine art of covering with music, indelicate, immodest, and oft-time indecent attitudes and postures between men and women." Parents, are you reading with care? Young people who dance, are you reading with any profit? Who can disregard what these men said? Were they not in position to know whereof they spoke?

Famed designer of women's clothes in Paris, France, Christian Dior, is on newspaper record in his home city as saying, "For the first time I have done away with corsets even for dance dresses. I have often heard men complaining that in dancing they couldn't feel a living form under women's corsets." Did someone say there is no sex appeal in the modern dance? Did someone say the chief drawing power of the dance is for exercise and the development of social graces? For what kind of exercise? For what kind of social graces? The dance is for *sexual* exercise and is intimately connected with the *social disgraces*. Will any deny that such is true?

What say the dancing experts? T. A. Vogner, former supervisor of the Dancing Academy of Los Angeles and also former president of the Dancing Masters' Association of the Pacific Coast, said, "No woman can waltz well and waltz virtuously." Hence, vice takes over when virtue leaves. And in the case of the modern dance virtue was never present to take leave as far as the dance itself is concerned.

Some years back Professor Louis J. Guyon, owner and operator of the "Paradise," one of Chicago's largest dance halls, said, "We know that sex is the strongest impulse planted in the human race. You can just picture the effect on a boy or girl of 18 or 20, when this hunger is keenest, when knowledge and experience are lacking in the formation of judgment, of one of these dances which calls for close bodily contact and frequently bring the cheeks together and entwine the limbs. Yet, we find thousands of boys and girls dancing this very way who do not realize they are doing anything out of the way, and

whose fool parents look on complacently. This form of dancing is a menace to the future of our nation." Is anyone still willing to sing the innocent praises of the modern dance in view of this overwhelming evidence?

Some years back the Memphis, Tennessee, city schools called a halt to sponsoring proms, sock hops and dances in both junior and senior high schools. Mr. Lee C. Thompson, assistant superintendent of administrative services for the Memphis board, told the why of this action. He said, "The dances had become *too difficult to supervise and control*. . . . Many of the students were leaving before the dances were over, holding parties of their own after the dances and going off to such places as Sardis Lake." (emphasis mine, RRT). At the time this action was taken Mr. Thompson said this was a general trend throughout the land. Beloved, it needs to become more than just a trend; it needs to become a fixed reality among all schools, colleges and universities.

What say certain of the youth who participate in the modern dance? Forty-four young men were once asked what their feelings were toward the young ladies with whom they danced. Forty-one of the number said their thoughts were impure. That is a stunning 93 percent! And the other three boys may have had the same thoughts but did not consider their thoughts as wrong.

Did you know that ballroom dancing is declining in its popularity with a number of people? I quote from *Dancing and Immorality*, "Just a few days ago in a radio interview, the famous dancing instructor, Arthur Murray, was asked why there has been a decline in the popularity of ballroom dancing. His response confirmed what many have believed for a long time. He said that since dancing is based on sex and since young people have few qualms about going ahead with sex relations, there is really no need now for dancing. (In other words, many young people have just cut out the 'middle man.')

"There is an interesting observation coming from the acknowledged master of the dance. Several years ago his wife, Kathryn Murray, had observed that the female partner in the dance had to yield her body completely to her partner in order to dance properly. What does this do to the old arguments that

dancing is good exercise, develops grace and poise, and helps one develop socially? *It puts them in their place.* Dancing is just a convenient excuse for a male to get his arms around and his hands on a female. That's all it ever was! And many have known it even before Arthur Murray admitted it." (Bulletin, Ligonier, Pennsylvania, Roger Barron, Editor, May 16, 1976).

The following fits in at this point. A young lady once went to a dance. A man old enough to be her father and then some danced with her. He did not want to let her go and stayed close by. She complained. She should have known why. She really was too old to be so naive about these matters. Such is the ever present nature of the insidious dance.

Dancing Is Diabolical In Its Fruits

A matron for a home for fallen women in Los Angeles said, "Seven-tenths of the girls received here have fallen through the dance and its influence." Clara Jones, field worker for the North Dakota House of Mercy, said, "75 to 90 percent of those that slipped over the edge and slid into sex sin and entered unmarried motherhood at the North Dakota House of Mercy, tell one single story—the modern dance." (Rubel Shelly, Radio Printed Sermon, December 5, 1971). The modern dance bids an ever present welcome to alcoholic beverages, is a place where prostitutes can prey on those present and furnishes an open place where fleshly minded men can pick up a partner for the night of planned fornication or adultery. Yet millions of parents will allow their youngsters to go there with little feeling of any apprehension. Such is a pit of hell; it is another of the many dens of Satanic activity. Before the Medical Association of New Jersey a prominent doctor once said, "Dance halls are the modern nurseries of divorce courts, training shops of prostitution, and graduating schools of infamy and vice." Professor William H. Holmes, former dancing master, has said, "I have found the ballroom an avenue of destruction to multitudes. This is a truth burned into the hearts of thousands of downcast fathers and brokenhearted mothers."

In a northern high school some years back a number of boys said they went dancing for one reason only—to obtain a sex partner for the night. In a southern community some years

back the boys said they danced for one reason. It gave them opportunity to get their hands on a number of girls and to rub their bodies against the bodies of attractive girls. This they did while the adult chaperons looked on approvingly. To make sexual advances on the dance floor was expected, encouraged, and approved. Isn't it strange what is allowed on the dance floor which would not be tolerated elsewhere in the absence of music? A young dancing girl once confessed to her father and a preacher that dancing had killed much of her former spirituality.

What About Square Dancing?

Though square dancing is certainly not in the same class with modern dancing, yet gospel preachers are sometimes asked relative to the feasibility of Christian involvement therein. I submit for consideration some guideline questions: (1) In what type of environment does square dancing place the participant? (2) Is this environment conducive to one's Christianity or does it dull one's spiritual sensitivity? (3) If there were a strict segregation of the sexes at the square dance—strictly men with men and women with women and in two different rooms, would there be the same drawing power to participate? (4) As a man, does participation in the square dance prompt impure thoughts toward the women who are involved? (5) As a woman does participation in the square dance prompt impure thoughts toward the men who are involved? Is this activity conducive to Christian purity? (6) Would it be considered out of place by the participants to begin the square dancing session with a prayer for the Lord to bless such and then close with a benediction? Can the Christian afford to engage in any activity that he could not invoke the Lord's blessings upon it? If so, *what*? (7) As a woman participant do any of the demanded actions call for indecent body movements or do the whirling actions reveal large portions of the legs—especially the thighs? (8) If the regularly scheduled sessions of square dancing were on a Bible study night, during a gospel meeting or when there was a scheduled visitation meeting, which one would claim priority? (9) Does the square dancing participant spend as much time in worshipping God, reading the Bible, praying to the Heavenly

Father and in soul winning as he does in square dancing? (10) Would anyone consider it out of place at a square dance to ask every participating partner to attend a coming gospel meeting or the next regularly scheduled services of the church? (11) Does square dancing lead the hearty participant to desire to engage in modern dancing—a much more insidious type of fleshly amusement? (12) Will participation in square dancing make it easier or harder to teach one's children against the evils of the modern dance? (13) Will my participation in square dancing make it harder or easier for my Christian friends to teach their children against the evils of modern dancing? (14) Do the elders, deacons, preachers, Bible teachers, song directors and other godly Christians that I most admire engage in square dancing? If they did, would it enhance or diminish my respect for them? (15) Would Jesus, Peter, James, John, Paul, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Nazareth, Mary and Martha of Bethany, Louis and Eunice, were they here today, participate heartily in the square dancing sessions? (16) How well is one representing the family of God when he participates in square dancing? (17) Would it enhance or lower your impression of us if you knew all of us connected with the 1977 East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions' Lectureship were regular participants at square dancing sessions in our respective communities?

In Conclusion: Some Guideline Scriptures

These weighty Scriptures are surely disobeyed when people participate in the modern dance. John says in 1 John 2:15, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." James says in James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." In Ephesians 5:11 Paul wrote, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Peter declared in 1 Peter 1:16, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." Paul said in Romans 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world: . . ." To the youthful evangelist Timothy Paul wrote, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in

faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). "Keep thyself pure" is Paul's admonition in 1 Timothy 5:22. To the Colossians Paul wrote, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1). Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). In 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 Paul wrote, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." In 1 John 3:3 we read, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Beloved reader, what would Jesus do about the modern dance? You know the answer to that query and so do I. He would avoid it like the leprosy and expose it for its Satanic origin, its devilish designs and its soul destroying fruits. These were the three basic indictments we leveled against modern dancing at the outset of this study. They now stand proved, beloved.

Biographical Sketch

RUBEL SHELLEY

Rubel Shelly was born and reared in Hardeman County, Tennessee. He is a graduate of Middleton High School, Freed-Hardeman College (A.A.), Harding College (B.A), and Harding Graduate School of Religion (M.A., M.Th.).

He serves as minister of the Estes Church of Christ near Henderson, Tennessee, and teaches full time in the Bible Department of Freed-Hardeman College. He has written eleven books, contributes articles to various brotherhood papers, and has had several years of experience in regular radio preaching.

Shelly has done extensive work in teaching and counseling young people. He frequently speaks to youth groups on a variety of topics which are of special interest to them. In the Spring of 1973, he received the first annual award for "Outstanding Service to Christian Youth" from Freed-Hardeman College.

He preaches in a number of evangelistic meetings each year and has spoken on numerous Christian college lectureships. His biography appears in **Outstanding Young Men of America, 1973 and 1976**, and he has been listed in the **International Dictionary of Biographies**.

Shelly's wife is the former Myra Shappley. They are the parents of three children: Michelle, Tim and Tom.

8

Divorce And Remarriage

Rubel Shelly

Introduction

Alarming statistics relative to the prevalence of divorce appear frequently in newspapers, magazines, government reports, and sermons. To say that these statistics *alarm* the Christian is to be guilty of serious understatement; *they scare him to death!* In 1870, there was one divorce for every 33.7 marriages contracted that year in the United States; in the 1970's, however, there has been one divorce for every 3.5 marriages. We are living in a world where the will of God with respect to the sanctity of marriage is disregarded by people of all economic, social, racial, geographical, and religious backgrounds. Scripturally unjustified divorce and remarriage threaten the purity of almost every congregation of the Lord's church in this country.

This dishonoring of God's will must be checked. We must teach positively about the desirability of and means to Christian marriage; we must reach out to families in crisis and help stabilize them; we must see divorce and remarriage from the divine viewpoint rather than the non-Christian counselor, psychiatrist, or sociologist's viewpoint; and churches must not fellowship those of their members who violate God's laws on divorce and remarriage and refuse to repent of their deed.

While there are several profitable approaches to this subject, the task assigned in this study is *a consideration of New Testament doctrine relevant to divorce and remarriage.*

Adopting God's Attitude

The Almighty God of heaven and earth is "not a God of confusion but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33). He hates confusion and division in the church, Christ's bride; He also hates confusion and division in the marriages and personal lives of His people.

The will of God is for *unity* in marriage. Jesus spoke of marriage and said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh: so that they are no more two but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mk. 10:7-9; cf. Gen. 2:24).

Not only did God *ordain* marriage in the Garden of Eden but He has also *protected its sanctity* through law. Two of the Ten Commandments (seventh and tenth) speak directly to the matter: "Thou shalt not commit adultery. . . . Thou shalt not covet . . . thy neighbor's wife" (Ex. 20:14, 17). Deuteronomy 24:1-4 does allow the man who finds an "unseemly thing" in his wife to put her away, and this concession came to be the ground of controversy. At the time of Jesus, two interpretations of it were current. The rabbi Hillel had taught that the "unseemly thing" could be anything from unfaithfulness to burned bread; the rabbi Shammai had taught that only sexual infidelity (*i.e.*, fornication, Gk. *porneia*) could justify divorce. Jesus plainly declared that the latter view was the one consistent with the eternal will of the Father. "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery" (Matt. 19:9).

The attitude of God toward divorce is clearly this: *He hates it* (cf. Mal. 2:15-16). It is a departure from His righteous will for the lives of creatures made in His own image, and He allows it only under the most extreme of circumstances. If the one-flesh union of marriage is broken by sexual infidelity, then and only then does God allow divorce. The offended party may put away the fornicator and choose another companion without blame; the offending party is put away and cannot contract another marriage without incurring divine judgment. Jesus Himself taught "that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and

whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:32).

But mankind generally has come to accept divorce. Alvin Toffler has predicted that "serial monogamy" may well become the alternative to traditional marriage at some point in the not-too-distant future; several states now have "no fault divorce," and more states are on their way to having it; the social stigma once attached to divorce is essentially absent.

It would appear that the church has been influenced by the world to the degree that many congregations are now willing to tolerate divorce. There is little willingness to discipline those who are openly violating their marriage vows. Flimsy "dodges" on the clear teaching of Scripture are being offered to rationalize this departure from the truth. First, some teach that people outside the church are not subject to Christ's laws on marriage and divorce. Second, some argue that baptism forgives adultery and sanctifies the relationship between two people who are living together at the time of their baptism (*i.e.*, baptism makes adultery into legitimate marriage). Third, still others are teaching that in the case of divorce for fornication both the offended and offending parties have the right of remarriage. All three of these views are false, and those who teach them are endangering both their own souls and those who hear them.

We must adopt the attitude of God (as revealed in Scripture) toward divorce and remarriage and reject all notions and doctrines which differ from the divine will.

Let us briefly examine the three false views which have been mentioned and show why they must be rejected.

All Men Are Subject To Christ's Laws On Divorce And Remarriage

One of the more notable efforts to evade the force of the Lord's teaching on divorce and remarriage has been to hold that *the regulations concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage given in the New Testament are not binding on men and women in the world*. It is asserted that only those in the church are obligated to keep these laws; those outside of Christ

are said to be subject to civil law only.¹ According to this view, if a man has been married and divorced ten times for the most trivial of reasons, he is not guilty of sin in the matter unless he has broken some civil law related to marriage. According to this view, God will recognize and sanctify the relationship one is living in at the time of his baptism as a legitimate marriage.

The New Testament teaches that the entire content of the gospel of Christ is binding on all men. First, Christ claimed universal authority over men when He said, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). The full Godhead has given Him "authority over all flesh" for the duration of the Christian era (Jno. 17:2; cf. 1 Cor. 15:24-28). By virtue of His atoning death and glorious resurrection, He has been exalted to a position where "every knee must bow" and "every tongue must confess that Jesus is Lord" (Phil. 2:9-11); there is no civil law, Noahic Law, or aspect of natural revelation which requires this of men. Therefore, it must be that Christ has authority over mankind which is nothing less than universal.

Second, the entire content of the gospel is applicable to all men. Paul spoke of that day when God "will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained" (Acts 17:31). And what will be the standard of right by which the deeds of men will be evaluated? Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my saying, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. 12:48). Men who have lived in the Christian age will not be judged according to Noahic, natural, or civil law; they will be judged by the gospel. Vengeance from God will be visited on "them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thess. 1:8).

1. The most complete treatment of this position in print is the **Warren-Fuqua Debate** (Fort Worth: J. E. Snelson Printing Co., n.d.). Fuqua argued that alien sinners are subject to civil law only; Warren argued that all men are subject to the laws of Christ governing marriage. Also, Pat Harrell has argued that "pagans were not responsible for Christian ethics." Instead of placing them under civil law only, however, he says they were under obligation to the "Noahic Laws" and natural revelation. Cf. Pat Harrell, **Divorce and Remarriage in the Early Church** (Austin, Texas: R. B. Sweet Co., Inc., 1967), pp. 131-5.

Third, the New Testament affirms that alien sinners are guilty of specific violations of Christ's moral law revealed in the gospel. Prior to their conversion, the people of Corinth had been guilty of such sins as fornication, idolatry, stealing, coveting, and extortion (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Some of these (*e.g.*, stealing) would have been violations of most civil laws; others (*e.g.*, idolatry) would not. Some (*e.g.*, idolatry) would have contravened the so-called "Noahic Laws"; others (*e.g.*, coveting) would not. Some (*e.g.*, stealing) would have been regarded as evil by pagans who reflected on natural revelation; others (*e.g.*, coveting) would not. The point of all this is surely clear: those people could not have been guilty of these sins if they had not been subject to the moral laws of Christ which are revealed in the gospel. No man can transgress a law to which he is not accountable (Rom. 4:15b); yet alien sinners at Corinth had transgressed the moral laws of the gospel of Christ; therefore alien sinners are subject to the moral laws of the gospel.

Suppose for a moment that men in the world are not subject to the authority of Christ as expressed in the requirements of the gospel. The person who adopts this view in order to get away from the laws governing divorce and remarriage has, by virtue of the logical implications of his position, adopted the following views also: (1) No alien sinner can be saved from sin, for no alien is subject to the laws of Christ; (2) It is conceivable that a man could live his entire life through without breaking civil law or "Noahic Law" and thus be sinless before the judgment bar of Christ without benefit of the blood of Christ; and (3) Denominational bodies cannot be charged with error or condemned as sinful, for they are not subject to the laws of Christ and do not violate civil law or whatever other rules outside the gospel one might want to impose on them! Any doctrine which entails as many obviously false positions as this one is to be rejected as a falsehood itself.

Before leaving this view to consider the others already mentioned, let us give brief attention to two objections which are sometimes heard from its advocates. First, Romans 8:7 is usually cited to show that "the mind of the flesh . . . is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be." It is argued that this means the non-Christian is not accountable to the

gospel, the law of God. Such an interpretation perverts not only this passage but the entirety of the New Testament. The Greek word translated "subject" in this verse means "subject oneself, be subjected or subordinated, obey."² Therefore, the Holy Spirit is not saying that the unbeliever is not obligated to obey the law of God; he is saying that the unbeliever disregards the law and does not obey it. That the unbeliever will be held responsible for his action and judged for his disobedience has already been proven from the Scripture. It is therefore less confusing to translate Romans 8:7 to say that "the mind that is set on the flesh . . . does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot" (RSV). The heart which is in love with the world does not obey the gospel and cannot do so until the object of his affection changes (cf. 1 Jno. 2:15-17). Second, it is sometimes argued that different regulations in the gospel apply to different people. For example, baptism is said to be a command to the alien and the Lord's Supper a command to the Christian; the commands about divorce and remarriage are also said to apply to Christians only. The fact of the matter is that all the requirements of the gospel apply to all men. There is only the matter of *qualification* to consider. An unbeliever is not qualified (while still in unbelief) to be baptized, but he is accountable to the law of God which requires baptism; an unbeliever is not even qualified (while in unbelief) to repent, but he is certainly accountable to the law of God which requires repentance. Furthermore, the laws about divorce and remarriage are not addressed to Christians but to "whosoever" and "male and female." God both recognizes and regulates all marriages between marriageable persons—whether they are Christians or not. The view that men outside of Christ are not subject to the gospel is patently false.

Baptism Does Not Sanctify Adulterous Relationships

A slightly different approach to the divorce and remarriage question has been made by those who hold that *regardless of one's past marital record (e.g., divorced and remarried five times for reasons other than fornication on the part of one's*

2. W. F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, S. V. "hupotasso."

mate). God sanctifies his situation at baptism and allows him to continue his relationship with the present mate. This view was advanced in a book by Pat Harrell several years ago³ and has been offered again more recently by Jim Woodroof.⁴

The most frequent point of beginning for people who argue for this view is to ask, doesn't baptism take away all sin? The correct biblical answer to that question is No. Baptism will not forgive a sin known to an individual which is yet unrepented of. Faith in Jesus Christ must precede baptism (Mk. 16:16), and baptism without prior faith is of no value; repentance must also precede baptism (Acts 2:38), and baptism without prior repentance of every known sin in the person's life is useless.

Repentance demands that one sever all relationships which violate the law of Christ. Suppose that one is living in a polygamous relationship with six "wives." Does the gospel of Christ contain any teaching relevant to that situation? Is it the duty of the gospel preacher to impart that teaching to the man? If the man makes it clear that he does not intend to repent of his sinful situation, can he be scripturally baptized? What if the situation involves a number of people living in a communal relationship and sharing sexual partners? Must we teach baptism and omit repentance because of the "touchiness" of the situation? Of course the Bible's teaching about repentance must be laid before these people. They must be taught the whole truth of the gospel and given the choice between obedience or disobedience. The adulterer is no different.

Another relevant question at this point is this: Is prayer effective to secure the forgiveness of sin in the life of the Christian? Of course it is. In order for an alien sinner to be forgiven of lying, he must be baptized; if a Christian should lie after his conversion, he may be forgiven through prayer. Suppose an alien sinner divorces his wife for some trivial cause and remarries. According to the view that some brethren hold, he can be baptized and continue that previously adulterous union as a legitimate marriage. Now let us suppose that a brother in Christ leaves his wife, divorces her, and establishes a

3. Harrell, **Divorce and Remarriage**, pp. 101-45, 172-96.

4. James S. Woodroof, **The Divorce Dilemma** (Nashville: Christian Family Books, 1973, pp. 41-61).

new relationship with another woman; he is obviously in a relationship of adultery. Then he comes down the aisle and asks for the church to pray for him to be forgiven and restored to fellowship with the congregation. Will repentance (*i.e.*, discontinuance of the adulterous relationship) be expected or not? Why is less required of the alien who expresses an interest in baptism?

The view that baptism somehow sanctifies an unholy relationship so as to turn adultery into marriage is preposterous. Is baptism some sort of "magic" which performs marriage ceremonies for adulterers? And what if only one of the two is baptized? Is the baptized person living in a legitimate state of marriage while his partner to the union remains adulterous? Such a view of baptism is unworthy of one who professes to be a teacher of the Word of God (*cf.* Jas. 3:1), for it is contrary to all the Bible teaches on the subject.

The voice of the objector is heard again, and this time he argues that there are some sins (*e.g.*, murder) which simply cannot be undone. While it is granted that a murderer cannot "undo" his act to the degree that he can bring the dead man back to life, that is not to say that he is without obligation to repent of his deed. He must repent of the spirit which produced the act of murder (*i.e.*, hatred); he must manifest genuine remorse over having taken another's life without cause; and he must make whatever restitution is possible under the law. His restitution may involve a prison sentence, support for the man's wife and children, or other appropriate acts. But his repentance must demonstrate itself in some way.

But murder is not a true parallel to the situation involved in adultery. In a case of murder, there is a past fact of history which cannot be changed; in the case of adultery, there is not merely a past fact (*i.e.*, the taking to oneself a mate to which he has not right before God) but an abiding reality (*i.e.*, the perpetuation of that unauthorized relationship). In order to repent of adultery, one must not only be remorseful over the past fact of having established an adulterous relationship but also terminate its abiding reality. A truer analogy than murder is stealing. If a man repents of stealing money from a bank, he must not only be sorry for the past fact of taking something to which he had no right but also discontinue his present relation-

ship to it. He must give up the money, for it was never his to begin with! The adulterer must give up his companion, for she never belonged to him to begin with!

Again, some would quote from Paul in support of the view that one can remain with whatever companion he may be living at the time of baptism. "Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called" (1 Cor. 7:20). That this passage should be used in support of this false doctrine on divorce and remarriage is more pathetic than convincing. Is Paul's statement unqualified? May a pagan continue to live with his ten wives if he is "called" in that situation? What if two males are living in homosexual "marriage" when they first hear the gospel? It is perverting Scripture to apply 1 Corinthians 7:20 to states which are immoral.

In its context, 1 Corinthians 7:20 teaches that one may abide in his pre-conversion situation so long as the situation (1) is not such as to inherently involve one in sin and (2) allows him to exercise his spiritual obligations to the Lord. The three examples Paul considers are marriage to an unbeliever, racial status, and bondage in slavery. If one is married to an unbeliever, that marriage should be continued, and the believer should attempt to win the unbeliever to the Lord (1 Cor. 7:10-14). On the other hand, if the unbeliever is making it impossible for the Christian to fulfill his obligations to Christ, the believer is bound to the Lord's service over any obligation to the non-Christian partner. The marriage may be terminated in such a case, but neither person has the right to marry another; they must either "remain unmarried" or "be reconciled" to each other (1 Cor. 7:10-11, 15).⁵ Whether one is Jew or Gentile is a second situation which need not change in order for one to be a Christian. There is nothing inherently sinful about being either

5. Some brethren (cf. Harrell and Woodroof) hold that desertion of a Christian by an unbeliever gives the right of remarriage to the Christian, the so-called "Pauline privilege." This view rests on a misinterpretation of the word "bondage" in 1 Cor. 7:15. For a helpful reply to the notion of a "Pauline privilege" for divorce and remarriage, see Roy H. Lanier, Sr., "Review of the So-Called 'Pauline Privilege'," *Spiritual Sword* 6 (January 1975) pp. 33-36 and Harvey Floyd, "More in Review of the So-Called 'Pauline Privilege,'" *ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

(racially), and one can meet his spiritual obligations to Christ without having to change his status as "circumcision" or "uncircumcision." Finally, he speaks of the situation of one who is a slave. One is not in sin because he is in the unfortunate position of being enslaved to another. Neither is he in a situation where he cannot serve Christ; in fact, he can glorify Christ by serving his master faithfully (cf. Eph. 6:5-8). All of these cases are designed to show how one can use his otherwise legitimate situation at conversion as a means to the glorification of God; not one is designed to prove that a sinful relationship may be perpetuated.

One final objection is that there is no Bible example of two people separating from each other (because of an adulterous relationship) at the time of their baptism. Neither is there an example of polygamy, incest, or homosexuality being broken up at baptism; shall we therefore conclude that these situations were allowed to continue beyond the baptism of people previously involved in them? The lack of specific examples of every sin repented of does not mean that those sins could be continued. The New Testament would be an impossibly large volume to contain such! We are told that people who were once adulterers turned from their old life at conversion (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9). We have enough intelligence to discern the implications of such a fact—even without a detailed case history being provided in the record.

There is no escaping the fact that the world is subject to the laws of Christ on divorce and remarriage and that this is a factor to be considered in one's repentance from sin in order to be saved. In those heart-breaking situations where a couple is living in adultery and where innocent children are involved, the whole truth of God must be preached. The gospel cannot be accommodated to people's sins so as to remove from them the difficult responsibility of repentance. Such people must be taught what the Word of God says on divorce and remarriage and allowed to make their choice between obedience and disobedience. It was disregard of the will of God that created the situation; it is repentance and submission to the will of God that will secure pardon and peace.

*The Divorced Fornicator Does Not Have The Right
Of Remarriage*

The final dangerous and false doctrine concerning divorce and remarriage is that *both parties involved in a divorce for fornication have the right of remarriage*. This view has been advanced recently in a little booklet by Lewis Hale⁶ and has been favorably received by some brethren. It is biblically false, reduces the teaching of Christ on divorce and remarriage to nonsense, and implies the legitimacy of situations which are grossly immoral and repulsive.

Matthew 19:9 is the principal passage of relevance in understanding who has the right of remarriage following divorce under the gospel. Jesus' words in the verse are these: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." Jesus taught that a person who divorces his mate for some trivial cause (*i.e.*, for a reason other than fornication) is guilty of adultery if he marries again. This is the *general rule* concerning divorce and remarriage under the new covenant (cf. Lk. 16:18). But he also taught that one who divorces a mate who is a fornicator is an *exception* to the general rule. One whose companion has given himself/herself over to sexual impurity can put away that unfaithful person and marry again without being guilty of adultery.

Please notice that Matthew 19:9 considers only the action of the person who is doing the putting away. Read Jesus' statement without the "except clause" and this point is clear: "Whosoever shall put away his wife and shall marry another committeth adultery." With the "except clause" inserted, it still deals only with the action of the person who is putting one away. It is the offended party only who is under consideration in the exception. Stated very simply, *the guilty party in a divorce for fornication does not have the right of remarriage because he does not have the cause which bestows that right*.

The right of remarriage following divorce is clearly a contingent right; that is, it depends on a necessary prior

6. Lewis G. Hale, **Except for Fornication** (Oklahoma City: Hale Publications, 1974).

cause—the putting away of a fornicator. The guilty party can never exercise a right for which the necessary prior cause is absent. Since the guilty party did not put away a fornicator (but was rather put away as a fornicator), he cannot presume to have the right of remarriage. He does not have the right to contract another marriage.

Any doctrine which implies a false doctrine is false itself.⁷ With this true principle in mind, let us notice some things about the view which says that a divorced fornicator has the right of remarriage before God. By virtue of such a position, one could marry an 18-year-old virgin, impregnate her, commit deliberate fornication, and then (since fornication gives both parties the right to remarry) divorce and leave her to marry another 18-year-old virgin and repeat the process twenty times, and every single one of his “marriages” would be legitimate in the eyes of God! If this view of Christ’s law on divorce and remarriage is correct, Christianity offers the world the lowest moral code of any religion known to mankind. But this hypothetical case presents an obviously immoral situation. It therefore follows that the doctrine which would imply the legitimacy of such an immoral scheme should be rejected as a false doctrine.

The only plausible case which can be made for this false view can be stated as follows: “But the marriage bond cannot be broken for one person and not be broken for the other also. If a man divorces a woman who has committed fornication, neither person is married any longer; and any person who is not married has the right to contract marriage. Therefore a divorce for fornication destroys the marriage bond and frees both parties to remarry.”

It is granted that neither party is married any longer after a divorce for fornication has been secured. But it is *not* granted that any unmarried person has an automatic right to marry without restrictions.

No individual has any moral or spiritual rights except those given him by divine authority in the Word of God (Col. 3:17; cf.

7. Jesus used this form of argument and thus verified its validity in Luke 11:14-20.

2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17). This principle of biblical interpretation has been conceded generally throughout our brotherhood since Pentecost. Shall we apply it to music in worship and not apply it to the right of remarriage? For example, the person whose mate has died does not have the right of remarriage simply because he no longer has a companion. He has the right of remarriage only because such is authorized by God in Scripture (Rom. 7:2-3), and then only within certain limitations (cf. 1 Cor. 7:39).

Applying the authority principle to the matter of remarriage following divorce, one can reach two firm conclusions. First, the offended party in a divorce for fornication has the right of remarriage, because Christ gave him that right in Matthew 19:9. Second, since no right of remarriage has been given to the guilty part, he has no such right.

The very fact that remarriage is the right of the offended party alone is often the only incentive people have to try to work out their marital problems. I have no doubt whatever that many would be encouraged to commit fornication if they were convinced (as some are now teaching among us) that such would free them to remarry.

Conclusion

The sanctity of marriage is *guarded* by the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in Holy Scriptures; it is *demeaned* by false doctrines such as the three which have been examined in this study. It is hoped that our biblical perspective on these views will help fortify Christians against them and bring others back to the truth who have come under false teaching.

May we study these matters carefully and resolve to stand firmly in the truth of Almighty God.

9

Gambling

Wayne Jackson

From the dusty streets of ancient Babylon to the glittering Las Vegas Strip, whether with animal bones or a deck of cards, gambling is virtually as old and as widespread as the human race. In Babylon headless arrows were used in wagers, and in the time of Homer the Greeks had dice marked with numbers on four sides which were made from the knuckle bones of sheep, goats and calves. The children of Rome played "heads and tails" with coins. Archaeological discoveries have revealed gambling devices as far back as 1800 years before Christ.

Apparently gambling did not become a problem among the Israelites until the time of the Babylonian captivity, and Isaiah delivers a blistering rebuke regarding this vice: "But ye that forsake Jehovah, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but ye did that which was evil in mine eyes, and chose that wherein I delighted not" (Isa. 65:11, 12).

Perhaps it should be observed at this point, however, that the casting of lots for various purposes in the Old Testament (*e.g.*, the assignment of tribal lands, Num. 26:55; office rotation, 1 Chron. 24:5; or the identification of law offenders, Jonah 1:7), as well as the selection of the apostle Matthias by lot (Acts 1:26) in the New Testament, are not forms of gambling. In many such cases this was simply the method by which

Jehovah made *His* choice to the people. "The lot is cast into the lap; But the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah" (Prov. 16:33).

Gambling Defined

The common definition for gambling, according to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, is: "to play games of chance for money or some other stake; to take a risk in order to gain some advantage; to bet, wager; an act or undertaking involving risk of a loss." It really involves the concept of "getting something for nothing without rendering service or exchange of goods." In truth, it is stealing by permission! Thomas Eaves has written: "A simple definition of gambling would be, desiring the possession or possessions of another (prize) the gambler creates a risk (that of losing his own possession) in an attempt through chance to gain the possession or possessions of another with nothing given in exchange. Gambling takes many forms: card games, dice, numbers, betting on elections, buying sweepstakes tickets, betting on horse races, slot machines, betting on sporting events, various types of sports pools, punch boards, bingo (for money or prizes), buying tickets in raffles, betting on recreational activities, matching for cokes, and even pitching pennies."

Moreover, it must be emphasised that gambling is a matter of *kind*, not *degree*. Whether one is wagering fifty cents or fifty dollars, he is still violating the same divine principles. In a booklet entitled *Gamblers Anonymous* (and published for members of the group of the same name) the author states: "Any betting or wagering, whether for money or not *no matter how slight or insignificant* (em. WJ) where the outcome is uncertain or depends upon chance or 'skill,' constitutes gambling." David L. McKenna characterizes gambling as "the willingness to take a risk" motivated by the twisted "desire to get something for nothing. . . . It is parasitic, producing no personal growth, achieving no social good. Even the strongest advocates of gambling agree that gambling is a non-productive human activity."

Gambling Motives

A writer in *Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* argues that gambling is motivated primarily by three urges: "(a) the desire for gain, (b) the desire for excitement, (c) the instinct of combativeness. — (a) *The desire for gain*. Human nature is impatient of the delays of regular work. It wants to acquire at one stroke, without trouble, and without the laborious accumulation of little by little. (b) *The desire for excitement* is in one sense a revolt against the narrowness, the limitations, the ordinariness of existence. Man craves for intensified life; and gambling, with its risk, its suspense, its thrill, its hope, and its shock of surprise, supplies all the necessary catastrophic elements. Hence it is, on the one hand, the last resource of the *blase'* who wishes to goad his jaded senses; and, on the other hand, the outlet of the energetic and adventurous nature which finds ordinary peaceful existence too humdrum and lacking in sensation. (c) In betting, a man backs his own powers, his judgment, or his luck. In a game of pure chance men *pit themselves against each other*, and, if there is no deception, each has an equal chance. . . . Even when all seems lost, a sudden overmastering victory is still possible. Success lends a sort of supernatural glory to the winner, who is regarded as a 'favourite of fortune'; defeat does not wound the self-respect of the loser." We may say, therefore, that gambling is basically motivated by covetousness, laziness, and recklessness!

Rationalization For Gambling

Since gambling is obviously not a contributor to human betterment, those who support the practice must seek justification for such on some other basis. Proponents have, therefore, argued for gambling on the grounds that: (a) it is an innocent form of social entertainment; and (b) it can serve as an important source of revenue for worthy projects.

In the first place, if it can be shown that gambling violates principles of Scripture, it is not *innocent* regardless of how entertaining it may be. Fornication is highly entertaining to the whoremonger, but it is never justified! Secondly, it can be demonstrated that, far from being a social benefactor to

society, gambling is a curse upon any nation. It robs the home, feeds crime, and contributes only a pittance of the revenue that a sound program of taxation would insure. But even if it provided an abundance of national wealth, it is never right to do evil that good may abound (Rom. 3:8). Let us give consideration to these two areas of investigation.

Gambling Is Sinful

Occasionally, someone who is inclined to be defensive of gambling will naively ask, "Where does the Bible say, 'Thou shalt not gamble'?" Such a disposition ignores the Scriptural approach to human problems. While the Bible does issue commands, both positive and negative, it is also a volume of principles by which our moral and religious lives are to be directed. The Bible would have to be inconceivably massive to catalog every sin and evil invention (Eccl. 7:29) that the perverted minds of men have contrived. Accordingly, gambling is a gross violation of the following fundamental spiritual truths.

First, gambling violates the New Testament obligation of *faithful stewardship*. As recipients of the manifold grace of God, Christians must function as "good stewards" (1 Pet. 4:10). We must be careful to be "faithful and wise" stewards (Lk. 12:42) for the Lord requires in stewards "that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). Indeed, as the man in the parable of the unrighteous steward, we will some day be called upon to "render the account of thy stewardship" (Lk. 16:2).

The most common term for steward in the New Testament is *oikonomos*, derived from *oikos*, a house, and *nemo*, to arrange. It literally denotes one who manages the property of another. The Biblical concept is simply this: God is the Owner of the entire universe; everything is *His*. Man and all his possessions exist for but one purpose—to glorify the Almighty God (Isa. 43:7; Eccl. 12:13). Anything that is not used, either directly or indirectly, for Jehovah's service is misused! Mac Layton has well characterized the ideal of stewardship.

The Communist view of property is that a man is merely an instrument of the state with no rights to title or true possessions. Almost half the world is in the grip of this idea. The Capitalist view is that man can own what he can rightfully

purchase, and control instruments of production. The Christian view is that God owns all; though a man may be blessed with, and have control of, abundance, it is only by means of a gracious Providence. Even then it is not his own to use entirely as he pleases, but must be employed for the service of man and the glory of God.

Since the Bible makes it wonderfully clear that all people belong to Jehovah (either by generation, Ezek. 18:4, or by regeneration, Tit. 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20) all things also are the Lord's (Job 41:11; Psa. 50:10-12; Hag. 2:8), it is equally evident that no person has the right to abuse the benevolence of God and foolishly involve himself in risking or gambling away that which belongs to his Maker.

Second, the gambler operates according to the Iron Rule which suggests that "might makes right" (cf. Hab. 1:11); if one is thus able to secure his neighbor's possessions by means of skill or chance, that is just the loser's tough luck! Such a disposition makes havoc of the injunction: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39). "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Rom. 13:10), even though that neighbor, through weakness, might consent. Biblical morality requires that a man seek not his own, but rather his neighbor's welfare (1 Cor. 10:24), which is in perfect harmony with the Golden Rule; "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). How long, pray tell, could a gambler survive if guided by such ethics?

Third, gambling promotes laziness and quenches the desire for honest work. From the very morning of time, Jehovah intended that man work. Even in Eden Adam was to dress and to keep the garden (Gen. 2:15) and later, of course, the Edenic curse decreed that "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. 3:19). Someone has well said that the Bible promises no loaves to the loafers! God's warning to the able-bodied is: "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). The gambler, however, seeks to obtain that which another has worked for, and at no cost to himself. He rationalizes his indolence by fancying that he is a victim of "hard luck" and hence, "fortune" owes him something. He is wilfully

oblivious of the old maxim that hard work is the eraser of hard luck.

Fourth, gambling, like other vices, soon becomes addictive and makes a slave of the participant. Christ plainly taught that all who commit sin (see the present tense form of the verb implying habitual conduct in John 8:34) become slaves thereto. The United States Department of Public Health estimates that there are some 6 million "compulsive gamblers" in the country; that statistic rivals the figure for alcoholism. The Christian must say with Paul, "I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor. 6:12). If this principle is true with reference to legitimate things (as the previous context indicates) how much more would it be true regarding sinful matters. So strongly does Gamblers Anonymous recognize the addictiveness of gambling that they state: "Our GA experience seems to point to those alternatives: To gamble, risking progressive deterioration, or not to gamble, and develop a better way of life." Does this mean that one "can't even participate in a little penny ante game or a world series pool? It means exactly that. A stand has to be made somewhere, and GA members have found the first bet is the one to avoid even though it may be as little as matching for a cup of coffee." The Christian will practice self-control (Gal. 5:23), which involves total abstinence from that which is wrong and moderation in that which is right.

Fifth, gambling is sinful because of the evil example it sets. Virtually no one is without influence, and it will be either for righteousness or wickedness. One who desires to please the Lord and serve his fellows will "take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17) and "give no occasion to the adversary for reviling" (1 Tim. 5:14). We cannot afford for the "way of truth" to be spoken of in an evil manner (2 Pet. 2:2). Since Jesus is our great example (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21; 1 Cor. 11:1), could one actually imagine, even in the wildest moment, the Lord kneeling in the dust to "shoot craps"? God forbid. It certainly would not, however, be difficult to imagine the courageous Son of God overturning dice tables!

Sixth, gambling breeds dishonesty and deceit. Gamblers, like drunkards and dope addicts, frequently resort to stealing and other illicit ways of acquiring money to cover their

gambling losses. In a national magazine one woman told of stealing some \$30,000 from her husband over a period of ten years to finance her gambling. Well-to-do socialites have offered sexual favors to acquaintances to prevent their husbands from discovering their gambling losses. A detective with the Reno, Nevada, police department contends that 75 percent of their embezzlement cases are gambling related. Truly, a corrupt tree can bring forth nothing but corrupt fruit (cf. Matt. 7:17, 18).

Seventh, gambling is a destroyer of the home. It frequently robs children of food and clothing thus making the gambler worse than an unbeliever (1 Tim. 5:8). In Reno there is an organization called Gam Anon, wherein families of gamblers can attempt to cope with their common problems. Many of the wives complain bitterly that no matter how bad a credit rating their husbands have, the casinos will always extend practically limitless credit. The gambling dives feel no compassion whatever. A vice-president at Harrah's casino stated: "If he (the gambler) gets into trouble with his vices, then it's his problem." It goes without saying that this horrible sin precipitates numerous divorces.

Eighth, gambling is the enemy of mental serenity. It brings about fear, frustration, anxiety. Law officers in Nevada tell of seeing despairing gamblers beating their heads against telephone poles and ripping their clothes to approximate the appearance of being robbery victims. And compulsive gamblers have a high suicide rate.

The Effect Of Gambling In America

Gambling is the scourge of much of America today. Several states have lotteries in operation. California recently passed a law legalizing gambling for charitable purposes. A few states allow race betting and the infamy of Nevada is well known.

American society is increasingly being choked with rising taxes. Many, therefore—even some religious folk—are toying with the idea that gambling could be a valued way of relieving the taxation burden. Gambling interests, of course, are attempting to capitalize upon such attitudes by suggesting that funds could be made available for the needy, the elderly,

and the disabled (what about those they've disabled?). Gambling as a source of revenue is not new to the U.S. Lotteries funded the building of the Washington Monument, started the University of Pennsylvania, and have been responsible for providing many American streets, docks, flood control, etc. However, such schemes *have never really worked*, and the liabilities have always exceeded the alleged benefits. Thomas Dewey declared: "It is fundamentally immoral to encourage the belief by the people as a whole in gambling as a source of revenue. . . . The entire history of legalized gambling in this country and abroad shows that it has brought nothing but poverty, crime and corruption, demoralization of moral and ethical standards, and ultimately a lower living standard and misery for all the people." One wonders how many politicians would speak so courageously today.

Today Americans gamble to the tune of \$50 billion plus a year—a figure equal to the national defense expenditure. Author William J. Petersen contends: "This staggering sum is controlled by organized crime, which nets about 20 percent, or \$10-12 billion. Half of this sum goes to police and other government officials as payoff. The rest, according to former Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, goes into 'the vicious activities of dope peddlers, loan sharks, bootleggers, white-slave traders and slick confidence men'."

The claim is made by some that if gambling were made legal it would eliminate the corruption that now controls so much of the "industry." That simply is not true. The example of Nevada—where all forms of gambling are legal—is a showcase exhibit. Rufus King, a Washington lawyer and former congressional investigator, affirms that Nevada is "almost completely enslaved to gambler-gangster forces." Nevada's per capita crime rate is double the national average. Harry S. Truman once exclaimed: "If you want to be like Nevada, that's your business. Nevada is the only black spot on the United States continent. . . . Legalized gambling is the worse thing in the world. I don't believe in it. Too many people have jumped out of windows because of Nevada. It is a fever."

Conclusion

There will always, though, be those who intend to gamble regardless of what anyone says. To salve their own consciences such people often foolishly rationalize by suggesting that all of life is a risk. If one crosses the street he is gambling that a car won't run him down; if one flies across the country he is wagering the plane won't crash, etc. Others have contended that insurance is a form of gambling, or that real estate investments are a risk. Of course there are risks to life; these are part and parcel of the world of natural law in which we live. But we *must* travel, work and conduct our daily affairs if we are to survive in our environment. Such pursuits are in no way parallel with the covetously motivated desire to risk one's possessions in order to extract profit from someone else for nothing! Nor are legitimate preparations (*e.g.*, insurance) for possible tragedies to be put in the gambling category. The Bible is filled with examples of wisdom of making adequate preparation for the future (cf. Prov. 6:6-8; Matt. 25:1-13; Lk. 16:1-9).

The Christian must make sure that his conduct is above reproach. The following anonymously arranged chart recently appeared in the *Gospel Advocate*. It provides some very wise guidelines for determining the spiritual validity of a practice.

I CAN'T SEE ANY HARM IN IT

Consider these guidelines when determining whether a practice is right or wrong.

1. **The Personal Test:** Will doing this make me a better or worse Christian?
2. **The Social Test:** Will doing it influence others to be better or worse Christians?
3. **The Practical Test:** Will the results of my doing it be desirable?
4. **The Universal Test:** If everyone should do this, would it improve or degrade society?
5. **The Scriptural Test:** Does the Bible endorse it, or is it expressly forbidden by the Word of God?

6. **The Stewardship Test:** Will my doing this constitute a waste of talent God gave me?

7. **The Character Test:** What will be the influence of my moral and spiritual stamina?

8. **The Family Test:** Will it bring discredit and dishonor to my family, and will it embarrass them?

9. **The Publicity Test:** Would I be willing for friends, fellow Christians, the elders, and the preacher to know about it?

10. **The Common Sense Test:** Does it agree with just plain, everyday, ordinary common sense?

11. **The Fairness Test:** Is it honest, and is it practicing the golden rule?

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21, 22).

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10

God's Word—The Christian's Standard For Morality

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

A number of fine passages of Sacred Scripture could serve well as a beginning point for our study on this occasion. But none is finer than Titus 2:11-12 which says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." This great passage tells us what to deny and reject in life; it inculcates us what to pursue and relish. Ungodliness and worldly lusts are not proper standards for Christians; the principles of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness are proper standards.

A Definition Of Terms

By God's Word I mean the Bible, the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. By a Christian I mean someone who has obeyed the gospel of Christ. He has heard the gospel, believed in Christ, repented of his sins, confessed faith in Christ as God's Son before men and been immersed in water for the remission of sins. The Christian is one who has been called out of darkness into the marvelous light of saving truth. He is one who is living for the Lord Jesus Christ and the Cause of Truth. By standard

I mean that which is set up and established by authority as a measurement. By morality I mean, "The quality of that which conforms to right ideals or principles of human conduct." (Webster). Basically, there are only two standards for the determining of morality. They are false standards and a right or true standard. The former are based on Satan and sin; the latter one is based on God and truth. The former will destroy; the latter will build and save. We are to take notice of these in our study at this time. Surely each of us recognizes that no one will ever rise higher in morals than the standard he accepts for gauging and regulating his moral conduct in attitude and action, in language and life. Antiquity speaks volumes here. Those who built and worshipped gods and goddesses never rose any higher than the standards they attributed to their adored idols and revered deities. Their idols were considered degenerate; so were the people who made these gods, established their reputations and gave them worshipful allegiance.

The Importance Of The Heart

In a very real sense our speech and actions come from the thinking processes or the heart. The Bible says in Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Later Solomon wrote, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: . . ." (Prov. 23:7). Jesus spoke as the Great Student and Examiner of human hearts when He declared in Matthew 12:34-35, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. Paul recognized the importance of right thinking as geared to right speech and right actions when he wrote the message of Philippians 4:8 and said, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Devilish Standards For Morality

A multitude of these exists. One of these is when *every man does that which is right in his own eyes*. The condition prevailed in ancient Hebrew history during the period of the judges. The Bible says in Judges 17:6, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The closing verse of Judges says, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Was such a righteous period of Hebrew history? Quite to the contrary, it was a period correctly designated by a number of Old Testament historians as "The Dark Ages of Hebrew History." Between the occurrence of these two verses when every man did what was right in his own eyes are recorded some of the darkest deeds and most glaring depravities in the annals of literature. When this becomes the standard then every man becomes his own Moral Regulator; he becomes the Governor of his own actions. In a real sense he becomes his own god. When every man does that which is right in his own eyes there could be as many standards as there are people to make them. The ancient Hebrews tried this and it reaped folly for them; it will work no better for modern man. Jeremiah tells us why by saying, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). No man is blessed with the type of intelligence to chart his own moral course through life. Look at those who have tried and the miserable flop they have made.

Another standard of the devil is *eat, drink and be merry today for tomorrow we die*. This was prominently a part of the Epicurean philosophy that Paul met while at Athens in Greece on his second missionary journey. Paul referred to this paganistic philosophy in his great resurrection chapter of 1 Corinthians 15:32 by saying, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." Paul said we should embrace this Satanic doctrine only if it be the case that the dead rise not. In fact there are some certain things we can say about this materialistic doctrine. This doctrine would only be a safe one to follow if there were no God in heaven, no Christ on David's throne, no Holy Spirit, no Bible, no judgment, and no hereafter. But since there is a God in heaven,

since Christ is His Son, since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, since the Bible is God's Word, since there is a final judgment, and since there is a never ending hereafter, then this doctrine is not a safe standard to follow in the determining of one's morals and ethics.

Closely akin to the one we have just discussed is the standard of the *lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the vainglory or pride of life*. John spoke of this in 1 John 2:15-17 and affirmed that such is of the world. It is not of the Father. Those who so engage will perish ultimately. Those who look to this Satanic standard are simply the duped slaves and abject serfs of their passions. They live but for the moment. Gratification of low and base appetites is a miserable sort of human existence. At first such may seem sweet to the taste but by and by such will become as bitter as quinine. To pursue such is to live like the soulless animals of the field.

Another devilish standard is *do your own thing*. We are hearing more and more of this but the expression itself is the only new or novel thing about it. The same practice is as old as the race. Cain did his own thing and look where it got him. The wicked contemporaries of Noah did their own thing and look where they were when the great flood came. Jezebel and Ahab did their own thing and look where they landed. Herod and Herodias did their own thing in the first century. So did Felix and Drusilla. So did Judas Iscariot. So did many others in Bible times. It was called by a different name then but the appetites were the same and the manner of fulfilling them was the same basically as now. Acceptance of this makes a god out of self. It rejects God above and makes society simply a device to minister to the desires of selfishness. What kind of world would we be able to build if everyone followed this paganistic philosophy of doing his own thing? We would live in a jungle of human lusts and human violence. Will any deny it?

Of late we have been hearing more and more of the Satanic philosophy of *if it feels good, do it*. About the kindest thing that can be said of this is that it is stupid to the nth degree. Such as this would not deny premarital sex to the unmarried; it would not deny extramarital sex to the married when they decided to roam. It would not deny the taking of a man's car by

theft if a pleasant kick were received in the process. It would not keep a person from killing another if such relieved some of his pent-up emotions of hostility and allowed him the feeling of vengeance on someone he hated. If a person feels good while getting drunk or getting high on dope or drugs, then according to his standard he should do it. The person who allows this to become his standard of morality has made his feelings into a god; pleasure has become the number one object of his unholy affections.

In recent years we have been hearing more and more about the *new morality* or *situation ethics*. The entire movement is misnamed. What they advocate is not moral but highly immoral. What they propose is not a system of real ethics at all but a glossing over of that which is sinful, that which is highly immoral. Exactly what is the movement they are seeking to sell the people of our era? We shall allow their own proponents to explain. In the late 1960's Ernest Harrison, a priest of the Anglican Church of Canada, wrote a book entitled *A Church Without God*. On page 118 he said, "The New Moralists does not accept at all the notion that there are moral standards which are revealed by God. He does not believe that God laid down laws which are for all men, at all time, under all conditions. He is, therefore, a relativist."

Joseph Fletcher has been a foremost defender of situation ethics. In his book on *Situation Ethics* he states there are three approaches in determining standards of right and wrong. They are: (1) legalistic, (2) antinomian—the lawless or unprincipled approach, and (3) situational. He rejects the first two and defends the third one. He writes on page 139 of this book, "Jesus said nothing about birth control, masturbation, fornication, or premarital intercourse, sterilization, artificial insemination, abortion, sex play, petting, and courtship. Whether any form of sex (hetero, homo, or auto) is good or evil depends on whether love is fully served." And of course each person in every situation defines his own concept of love and whether any suggested action would serve that love or not. On page 140 he wrote, "People are learning that we can have sex without love, and love without sex; that baby-making can be (and often ought to be) separated from love-making. It is indeed for re-creational as well as for procreation. But if people do not

believe it is wrong to have sex relations outside marriage, it isn't unless they hurt themselves, their parents, or others. . . . All situationists would agree with Mrs. Patrick Campbell's remark that they can do what they want 'as long as they don't do it in the street and frighten the horses'." This remark is deeply akin to the executive who caught two of his employees engaged in this very act in an office with a partially open door. He did not reprimand them for the fornication but said this was one of the purposes of doors—to keep closed while such was going on. Lust and love are synonyms to Fletcher and the situational proponents. They may deny it but such is the ultimate of their premises.

In *Christianity Today*, July 21, 1967, one religious leader surveyed the scenes of situational ethics and concluded, "Now, in the new morality you decide what love is in the heat of the moment, maybe in the back seat of the car, in the moment of uncontrolled or well-nigh uncontrolled passion." Another has said in this same issue of *Christianity Today*, "The new morality is an excuse for doing the things that deep down men know are wrong." Fletcher has said, "For me there are no rules—none at all." Leading names in theological liberalism in recent years such as Lehmann, Barth, Bonhoeffer and Bultman have been on the situational ethics bandwagon.

Leaders in education and government are busy today pushing the "new morality." Betty Ford says she would not be shocked if her teen-age daughter engaged in premarital sex. She thinks premarital relations among the unmarried might even reduce the divorce rate. We wonder if she thinks it would reduce the sinning ranks any! She and a number of people in high places are in full favor of abortion which is murder at the beginning of life. Brother Thomas Eaves, in the June, 1976, issue of *The Christian Family Magazine*, had a very fine article on *The American Way—The New Morality?* He quotes Dr. Stanly Kruger of the U.S. Office of Education while discussing teen-age values and standards as saying, "As far as I'm concerned at the time my daughter becomes 14, she has the right to decide if she should become sexually active." (p. 26). Brother Eaves on page 27 of this very provoking and well written article quotes figures to the effect that in 1973 our country spent between \$40 and \$50 million dollars in financing between

222,000 and 278,000 abortions. Our government is in the business of murdering unborn babies by the hundreds of thousands annually and using our tax dollars to pay the bill. I, for one, deeply resent such and protest such.

The year of 1976 witnessed the great sex scandal on Capitol Hill in Washington among some noted Congressmen. About the only concern with many was that the young ladies who served as mistresses for older Congressmen were paid for such services out of the public treasury. Apparently, the sins of fornication and adultery did not bother a great deal of our nation. Seemingly, if these fleshly-minded Congressmen had paid for such services out of their own pocket and not from the pocket of John Q. Public, then many would have thought nothing about it. Very little was said about the problem of paying Congressmen a good salary while some of them committed fornication or adultery. The "new morality" or "situation ethics" is seeking to groom America for a "no sin" society and such is getting closer and closer to success all the time. It is much later than we think.

The sly strategy of Satan and his disciples toward helping our sagging nation achieve the "no sin" society is being promoted by telling people (1) that everybody is doing it and you are an odd ball if you do not join the bandwagon. (2) No one will ever know. (3) You are chicken if you do not join in with this fleshly activity. (4) You do not know what you are missing by being a hold-out. (5) You will not know the difference one hundred years from now. (6) You only live once. (7) You are only young for such a short time and youth is a time to play it up—to do your own thing—to have your own fling. (8) Nobody's perfect—surely it is not wrong to satisfy a God-instilled appetite.

Brother C. L. Ganus, President of Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, has well said, "There is no New Morality. If it is moral, it is taught in the Bible in precept and principle. If it is not in the Bible, it is not a new morality, but a new revival of the old immorality. We must both preach and practice the old morality which is the manner of life required by the Lord of the new man in Jesus Christ." (*A.C.C. Lectures*, 1966, p. 26). The new morality is straight from Satan.

Jehovah's Standard For Morality

Some sharp contrasts exist between Satan's standards and God's standards. Satan has many standards and they vary from generation to generation and from situation to situation. Not so with the God of Heaven. He has one standard for morality. It does not change with the passing of generations; it does not change from situation to situation; it does not change from one part of the world to another locale. Satanic standards are relative—never absolute. Jehovah's standards for morality are absolute—never relative. God's standard is His Word—His will. That Word, that will, is found in the Bible and the Bible only. His standard is one of righteousness. This is right doing. It is preceded by right thinking. Closely akin is right speech. God's law of morality touches the heart, the lips and the hands.

The Old Testament: An Absolute Moral System

In Genesis 39 we read of Joseph in Potiphar's house. There Potiphar's lascivious wife sought to seduce Joseph to commit fornication with her. The youthful Hebrew looked to one source for moral guidance. That was God's will. He met her immoral advances with the strikingly courageous statement, "Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:8-9). Joseph's moral purity stands in marked contrast with a number within his own family. His half sister Dinah in Genesis 34:1-2 went out "to see the daughters of the land" and lost her virginity to Shechem who lay with her and defiled her. Whether she was the innocent victim of Shechem or helped to provoke the sin has long been a matter of controversy among Bible students. Yet the attack did occur while she was seeking to see the daughters of the land. Joseph was not about to do what the sons and daughters of Egypt did in the way of immorality. Joseph stands in marked contrast with Reuben, his eldest half brother, who committed incest with Bilhah, his father's concubine (Gen. 35:22). Later Jacob said of Reuben that he was as unstable as water and would not prevail or possess the pre-eminence of power. Why? ". . . because thou wentest up to thy

father's bed; then defiledst thou it; he went up to my couch" (Gen. 49:4). Joseph stands in marked contrast with Judah, another of his half brothers. The fleshly-minded Judah committed adultery with a woman he thought to be an harlot but who in reality was his own daughter-in-law, Tamar (Gen. 38). Joseph rose far above the moral standards as practiced by a number within his own immediate family. He also stands in marked contrast with David in 2 Samuel 11 who committed adultery, flagrant adultery, with the wife of one of his own valiant veterans. Uriah the Hittite. Joseph was far superior in morality in Genesis 39 than David was in 2 Samuel 11. Joseph knew that God had an absolute standard of morality. Joseph was not a relativist in morals was he? The "new morality" or "situation ethics" would have never been begun among humanity if all had been like Joseph was in Potiphar's house. Moral absolutes won the day for Joseph.

God's standard for morality among the Israelites is set forth plainly and positively in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 in what we know as the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments. Not a single one of these was relative; each one was absolute. In fact all the Mosaic Economy was based on absolutes in religious, moral, and ethical relationships. Think how ridiculous the Decalogue would have sounded if it had been given within a situational framework. Here is how it might have read. (1) "Thou shalt have no other gods before me unless the situation demands occasional idolatry." (2) "Thou shalt not make graven images ordinarily but time and place may well demand deviation from this precept." (3) "Thou shalt not take God's name in vain unless a situation seemingly demands profanity to release pent-up emotions." (4) "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy unless certain unforeseen situations occasionally demand a temporary cessation of this holy practice." (5) "Honor parents ordinarily but situations may well call for occasional rebellion as generation gaps widen and restless hearts yearn for total freedom from all parental restraint." (6) "Thou shalt not kill unless the situation demands murder." (7) "Thou shalt not commit adultery usually but certain circumstances and situations may make premarital and extramarital affairs into beautiful and very desirable relationships. After all, flesh has its rights also." (8) "Thou shalt not steal usually but

no hard and fast rules demanding total and continuous honesty will work all the time." (9) "Thou shalt not bear false witness unless a lie will better serve the situation than will the truth." (10) "Thou shalt not covet unless the object is so beautiful to behold and desirable to obtain that further resistance toward this prohibition of the mind is both foolish and futile." The Ten Commandments were given to educate Israel relative to the nature of sin and to make sin heinous in their sight. Just how successful would these Ten Commandments have been had they been situational in design and situational in execution? They would have been the laughing stock of the whole nation if this had been what Moses brought back inscribed upon tables of stone. Will any deny it?

Jehovah's rules were right and absolute; they were not ridiculous and absurd. These rules were so absolute that the sabbath violator in Numbers 15:32-37 was stoned. No situational factor saved him! Achan, the covetous thief in Jericho's capture, was stoned in Joshua 7:10-26. No situational factor operated to save him and his doomed family. King David who stole another man's wife and murdered the innocent man was grievously punished as we learn from the entire latter half of 2 Samuel. The very lawgiver and first Hebrew high priest were denied entrance into Canaan because they transgressed at the waters of Meribah (Num. 20:2-12). No situational circumstance operated to make the Almighty change His mind about denying them an entrance into Canaan. The laws of the Mosaic Economy were not only absolute in design but they were absolutely enforced in penalties when they were violated. Inspiration declares in Hebrews 2:2 that every infraction of the Jewish covenant "received a just recompense of reward; . . ." Moral absolutes form the entire length from Genesis to Malachi. Moral relativism receives no sanction from the Old Testament.

The New Testament: An Absolute Moral System

Joseph Fletcher has been one of the leading exponents of situational ethics in our day. He has written in its favor; he has spoken out in its favor. He is on written record as suggesting that Jesus left morality practically untouched in His teachings while here. Contrary to his baseless declarations Jesus Christ

placed additional teeth in the moral laws of the Old Testament and those which He intended to be part and parcel of the New Testament order. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus Christ acted as the Moral Governor of humanity. He taught that not only was murder wrong but He went beyond the overt crime of killing and legislated concerning the wicked and malicious attitudes of heart that led to murder. He not only taught that adultery was wrong but He went to the very root that produced adultery, lusts of the heart, and gave legislation concerning the same. Absolutes run throughout the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus recognized *no* situations where wrong would become right and immorality would become morality. Jesus Christ and the apostles never sought to sugar-coat the crimes and gloss over the corruptions of their era. Murder was murder whether done by Herod Antipas to John the Baptist, by Pilate the Roman Governor to the worshipping Galileans or by an unknown zealot's killing of a Roman soldier whom he greatly hated and despised. Adultery was adultery whether committed by Felix and Drusilla or the unnamed brother in 1 Corinthians 5. Jehovah's law, not situations, determined then when an action was right and when it was wrong. It is still that way today and we had better believe it and abide by such. Do you not agree?

I now call to your attention some Scriptures where *absolute warnings against evil* abound. Read with care to see if these verses contain any syllables of moral relativism. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." He taught basically the same truths in Galatians 5:19-21 and Ephesians 5:3-5. Paul was definitely not situational or a relativist in matters of morality was he? He could not have been such and have served faithfully in a religion that is absolute in its morals and ethics. John wrote in Revelation 21:8, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second

death." He wrote just as forthrightly and frankly in Revelation 21:27 and 22:15 about who would not be in heaven and who would be without, that is, in hell. The banished Prophet of Patmos was not a moral relativist was he? Among the five books and fifty chapters he penned there cannot be found that first statement that will give any sanction at all to the whole nefarious system of the situational. Such a system is devilish in origin. It is Satanic in design. It is hellish in its destiny.

Quite positively we now present some appropriate Scriptures setting forth God's standard of moral purity. Read with care to see if you detect any of the situational in any of these verses. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). In 1 Timothy 4:12 Paul commanded that Timothy be an example in purity. "Keep thyself pure" are his sentiments for Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:22. In 2 Timothy 2:22 he is to "flee youthful lusts" and be a companion "with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." The apostle of love says in 1 John 3:3, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." These sound like absolutes to me in the realm of morality. How do they sound to you? Any man who can read the "new morality" or situational ethics into any of these passages would have no trouble reading any false doctrine into the Bible.

Morality is so absolute in the New Testament that both the overt act and the motive of evil prompting it are of strict legislation in the Lord's law. Morality may be relative to Fletcher and the liberal situationists but *absolute* is Jehovah's first and final word of moral purity of human ethics. For Fletcher and the theological liberals there may be no rules, no regulations and no laws of a religious nature which they accept but the New Testament is law; it is regulation; it is a rule of action; it is restraint. The "new morality" has not wiped away any of these moral rules and ethical regulations. Situation ethics has not erased any of the moral restraints that Jesus Christ, as author of authoritative Christianity, has placed into His religion. What Fletcher and the theological liberals deny as rules, regulations and restraints now will face them in yonder's final judgment. In that sobering day there will not be any doubts or denials upon their liberalistic lips.

Concluding Observations

Jehovah's law of morality is not only absolute but it is also universal. Heaven determines what it is—not a situation in a parked car some night or in a motel room where a man and woman or a boy and girl not married to each other are voluntarily together for a night of fleshly indulgence. His law is universal. It is the same in Florida as in Tennessee. It is the same in Maine as in California. It is the same in Rome, Italy, as it is in Knoxville, Tennessee. It is the same for the person who is at home as for the person who is thousands of miles away from home. It is the same when we are among people who know us as when we are among perfect strangers who never saw us before and may never see us again in this life. Who is the proper one to determine this set of morals, this system of ethics? The one who made us. The one before whom we shall one day stand in judgment. Deity and Deity alone determines *the standard* for morality for men and women, for boys and girls. It *was* that way in Bible times; it *is* still that way today.

Jehovah's system is absolute. Situations are relative and ever changeable. Situations, regardless of what they may be, do not change vice into virtue, revelry into righteousness, and promiscuousness into purity. Those who live by the devil's standard will be with him in eternity; those who live by Jehovah's standards will be with Him in eternity. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Josh. 24:15).

Biographical Sketch

CLIFFORD REEL

Clifford Reel was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1923. He grew up in Marion County and attended public schools there. After graduating from Freed-Hardeman College in 1942, he attended George Pepperdine College for one quarter the same year. He spent approximately three years in the Medical Corps of the U.S. Navy and graduated from Abilene Christian College in 1948 with a major in history and a minor in English. His Masters Degree in Education Administration and Supervision from the University of Tennessee was awarded in 1952.

Jean Duncan of Oak Ridge and Reel were married in 1947 and they have four children: George C., Jr., Lisa, Lori, and Sara.

His first sermon was preached at Guild, Tennessee, in December, 1940. Other preaching includes Roaring Springs, Texas, while a student at Abilene Christian College, Oliver Springs, Clinton, New York Avenue in Oak Ridge, South Pittsburg, East Brainerd in Chattanooga, and Oneida, all in Tennessee, and Lynchburg, Va.

He has taught for approximately eight years in the public schools and served as principal of Boyd Buchanan School in Chattanooga for three years. He has been director of East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions since 1974. He also serves as an elder in the Karns congregation.

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Lodges

Clifford Reel

Since the theme of this lectureship is "Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly," one might wonder how the subject of Lodges would fit into the topics. It is most appropriate to include this subject since many fraternal organizations propose to direct their members in how to live such a moral life.

Our study will deal primarily with the Masonic fraternity. In the *Kentucky Monitor* the Lodge is defined as "an assemblage of Masons, duly congregated, having the Holy Bible, Square and Compasses, and a Warrant of Constitution authorizing them to work."¹ We choose masonry as representative of all lodges and what applies to it would generally apply to other secret fraternities.

We are not discussing civic clubs or other benevolent institutions. These have a different purpose and follow different courses to accomplish their aims.

Observations herein have come from first-hand and close associations. Men who follow masonry have not been made better Christians because of it. Some have been fooled into thinking that God will accept them with their shortcomings because of their connection with masonry. I have never known a dedicated mason to be as interested in Christianity as he would have been if he had not been a mason. Neither have I known a dedicated Christian to be willing to give his time and talents to masonry who did not thus take away from his dedica-

tion to Christ. There is also personal knowledge of churches that have been weakened and torn asunder because there were those who would rather hold on to their masonry than to simply serve God as a Christian.

Would you criticize or dare to examine an organization that advocates morality, helping widows and orphans and numbers among its members such great Americans as George Washington, Ben Franklin, Paul Revere, John Paul Jones, and such Presidents as Jackson, Garfield, Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt, and Harry Truman? To do such would be much like coming out in opposition to apple pie and ice-cream. And yet, when we consider the hocus-pocus religion of masonry, with its influence away from a clearly committed life, its ecumenical tendency with religions whether Christian or not, and its assuming control of what rightfully belongs to God and Christ, we are left no choice but to expose and oppose it in every right way.

The statements made in this study will apply equally to the York and Scottish Rite since one is but British in beginning while the other is of Continental (French) origin.² A few years ago there were 2,500,000 members in the United States and 1,000,000 members in the rest of the world in the Grand Lodges excluding the higher degrees of the York and Scottish Rite.³ This same article states that there are orders which confine their membership to Free-masons and their relatives though not masonic. The Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine—a social order often called “the playground of Masonry,” Order of the Eastern Star (women), Order of DeMolay (boys) and Job’s Daughters (girls) are of Masonic parentage. The Blue Lodge has numerous lodges in places where there is not a concentration of population while the Scottish Rite centers more in metropolitan areas. *Morals and Dogma* by Albert Pike is the textbook of the Scottish Rite.⁴

Let us now notice more specific areas of masonry and our reasons for opposing the system. Lengthy quotes will not be given. Books such as *Morals and Dogma*, *Kentucky Monitor*, and *Tennessee Craftsman* and others have been examined. The ideas expressed in statements from various sources will be given with appropriate references in footnotes found at the end

of this article. There is no personal animosity toward anyone. Certainly, there will be no effort to misrepresent, but to simply state the teaching of this system and contrast it with the teachings of the Bible.

Inspiration Of The Bible

The all-sufficiency of the Bible to deal with matters of spiritual concern is stated in 2 Peter 1:3. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness . . ." (no mention of masonry here). The Scriptures furnish us completely (2 Tim. 3:15-17) and will make us wise unto salvation, yet the burden of masonry is to superimpose itself on things religious and to serve as keeper of the ancient mysteries⁵ being identical with them. These ancient mysteries are nothing more than the natural system of religion. (See *Morals and Dogma*, p. 266, for more.) The Mysteries (secret organizations) were organizations composed of the wisest men of those nations, and all the higher knowledge or religion, art and science was taught in them alone.⁶ This appears to be quite an exalted position claimed by masonry and its followers—to have the higher knowledge of religion taught in it alone. The way this higher knowledge is revealed is through the square, level, plumb, rule, gavel, etc., which are used to teach important truths in character building.⁷

In *Morals and Dogma*, Pike uses a Bible quotation referring to Christians (1 Cor. 3:16, 17) and makes it apply to the Masonic Temple. Such is a flagrant violation of interpretation of Scripture since this epistle was written to Christians at Corinth and not to any lodge.⁸ The Bible is lumped together with the Hebrew Pentateuch, the Koran (Moslem's holy book), and the Square and Compass as a great light in the lodge. Consider that if the Bible is no greater than these other works then the claims it makes for inspiration in 2 Peter 1:21 are null and void.

The Bible is called by masonic authorities a symbol of the eternal book of the will of God.¹⁰ The fall of man is called by another authority a Hebrew allegory and legend.¹¹ Brethren, if we have been wondering where modernism and theological liberalism, which deny that the Bible is the inspired Word of

God, have been coming from, we might well investigate to see if we have any ties with masonry. The Bible claims to be the Word of God in Hebrews 1:1; 2 Peter 1:21; Deuteronomy 18:18; 1 Thessalonians 2:13 and in other Scriptures. Is it what it claims to be, or is it only a symbol, an allegory, or a legend?

Ideas About God And Christ

In reading the works that I have, the impression is that there is a G.A.O.T.U. (Great Architect of the Universe) but to come right out and acknowledge Him as Jehovah God who is revealed in the Bible is something that must not be done. The order makes claim to being one of God's instruments and that it is ordained of God to bestow manhood on man.¹² There is no proof whatever set forth for this statement. Instead, I find *Morals and Dogma* talking about idolatry, legends, and false gods as much as about the Bible, God and Jesus Christ.

We have previously mentioned the ecumenical tendency of the masonic order. This is seen when an admission is made that masonry *makes no profession of Christianity* but looks forward to the erection of a spiritual temple. A temple in which there shall be but one altar, one worship, a common altar on which the Veda, Shastras, Sade, Zend-Avesta, Koran, and Holy Bible shall lie untouched by sacrilegious hands and at whose shrine the Hindoo, the Persian, the Assyrian, the Chaldean, the Egyptian, the Chinese, the Mohammedan, the Jew, and the Christian may kneel and with one united voice celebrate the praises of the Supreme Architect of the Universe.¹³ You can have this kind of unity with Mohammed, Zoroaster, Hindoos and others if you so desire, but the God of the Bible said, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God" (Ex. 20:5). He also gave as one of the commandments, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). I am persuaded that He did not want His people putting other gods on a par with Him.

Such doctrines as the ecumenical ideas just referred to are found in other masonic works. Masons utter no word that can be deemed irreverent by any one of any faith. They do not tell the Moslem it is only important for him to believe that there is but one God, and wholly unessential whether Mahomet was his prophet. Nor do they tell the Jew that the Messiah whom he expects was born in Bethlehem nearly 2,000 years ago; and

that he is a heretic because he will not so believe. Their authority says, "Masonry, of no one age, belongs to all time; of no one religion, it finds its great truths in all."¹⁴ So if a mason tells you that masonry is Christian in its beliefs, don't you believe it. We have cited above the reference where masonry makes no profession of Christianity.

Regarding Christ, masons are forbidden within the walls of a Masonic Temple to suggest the degree of veneration which another shall feel for any Reformer, or the Founder of any Religion. They teach a belief in no particular creed and unbelief in none.¹⁵ All great reformers are revered and Jesus of Nazareth is listed among Moses, the Lawgiver of the Jews, Confucius, Zoroaster, and the Arabian Iconoclast as a Great Teacher of Morality and an Eminent Reformer. He is given no more recognition as the Only Begotten Son of God than the others.¹⁶ And yet the Bible teaches that if we do not believe that Jesus is God's Son we will die in our sins (Jno. 8:24). Various redeemers and mediators are suggested as acceptable by Pike when he stated that the Indians called him Chrisna; the Chinese, Kioun-tse; the Persians, Sosiosch; the Chaldeans, Dhovanai; the Egyptians, Har-Oeri; Plato, Love, and the Scandinavians, Balder.¹⁷ Every mason could assign to each such higher and even Divine Character as his creed and Truth require.¹⁸ In the edition of the *Kentucky Monitor* that I have examined, I have found one reference to Jesus Christ in the first three degrees and only one.¹⁹ It is admitted that the initiate of the first three degrees is intentionally misled by false interpretation and the desire is that such shall imagine that he understands them.²⁰ We are made to wonder if they do not accomplish this desire to deceive and to keep souls from seeking the salvation which is "in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:10).

Other Doctrines

Realizing that masons look upon those who oppose their symbols and doctrines as ignorant and "half-wise in reality, but over-wise in their own conceit," I am willing to risk falling into one of these classifications as we consider other doctrines of masonry and contrast them with the teachings of the Bible.

Masonry indicates that Christianity in the early days borrowed from Pagans.²² This is quite in contrast with the

teaching of Jesus that His doctrine was not His but (God's) who sent him (Jno. 7:16). Paul warned about the departure from the faith and the doctrines of devils (1 Tim. 4:1). We leave it to you to judge where a doctrine should be classified that would suggest that Christianity came from paganism.

The Order makes great claims to inviting no man and that a man must come of his own free will.²³ Even though this claim has been violated many times, the teaching of not inviting others stands quite in opposition to the great invitation of Jesus in Matthew 11:28 where He says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Whosoever will is invited to come and take of the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17).

Those outside masonry are pictured as seeking light in masonry and while on the outside are likened to those in darkness, helplessness and ignorance.²⁴ Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" (Jno. 8:12). That just rules out the light that might come from masonry. Christians walk in the light (1 Jno. 1:7) and have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness (Col. 1:13) without having to go through the portals of any lodge and thus gain light and freedom from darkness.

Masonry is acknowledged to be a human institution²⁵ and yet it claims to be a religious institution.²⁶ This human religious institution has one wearing the masonic apron to gain admission to the celestial lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.²⁷ Did Jesus build a human religious institution when He built the church that He promised to build in Matthew 16? The church purchased by the blood of Jesus (Acts 20:28) is the place where the saved are found (Acts 2:47). The truth of the matter is that masonry has not one whit to do with saving man's soul but that it can have much to do with a man losing his soul if he follows the teaching of this corrupt system.

Coming into the lodge is compared to a new birth.²⁸ Christ tells of the birth of the water and the Spirit (Jno. 3:5) without which no man can enter the kingdom of God and makes no

mention of initiation and coming to the lodge as being in any way connected with it.

The mason receives a lambskin to remind him of purity of life and conduct being essential.²⁹ The blood of the Lamb of God (Heb. 10:4-12; Matt. 26:29) which furnishes remission of sins is not even mentioned. Can purity of life and conduct separate and apart from Christ's blood provide salvation? Is this suggested?

Christian, if you are a mason, do you believe in the statement on the authority which says that no institution was ever established on nobler principles than the Masonic Order?³⁰ What about the church of our Lord? Was it established upon nobler principles than the lodge?

Masonry gives to its votaries the medium of prayer and with bended knee they are taught to invoke the blessings of Almighty God.³¹ The Bible teaches those who are disciples of Christ to pray to the Father in heaven (Matt. 6:9). Of those who refuse to hear God's law, the Bible says that their prayer shall be an abomination (Prov. 28:9). Masons don't even pray in Jesus' name (Jno. 14:13) and they have no right to pray since they cannot call God their Father (Jno. 8:42, 44).

The chaplain of the lodge is addressed as Rev. Brother³² and the marshall addresses the master as Worshipful Master.³³ Contrast this with the teaching of Jesus to His followers that they should not be called Master (Matt. 23:10), but that Christ was their Master. We are to worship God (Jno. 9:31; Rev. 22:9) and no man is to be worshipped (Acts 10:26).

The plain statement is made that masons teach the truth of none of the legends they recite,³⁴ yet they tell them and act them out in such a way as to imply they believe them to be true. They teach the death, burial, and resurrection of G.M.H.A. (Hiram Abiff).³⁵ The Bible no where speaks of such an event but does refer to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Why would anyone want to go through an initiation which so closely is designed to represent our Lord and do it in connection with the folly connected with masonry? This human religious organization does not mention the resurrection of Jesus in either of its first three degrees.

This fraternity urges their members to take G.M.H.A. (Hiram) as their example³⁶ while Christians have Christ as their example (1 Pet. 2:21). Whom do you choose?

Those who come to this system are pictured as coming to their doors seeking the new birth and withdrawal of the veil which concealed divine truth from their sight.³⁷ Jesus states plainly that the Word of God is truth and that men are to be sanctified by it (Jno. 17:17). If men have divine truth concealed from their eyes, a part of the cause of it is simply that they have closed their eyes (Matt. 13:15) and masonry can do nothing to open them.

Initiation into the lodge is said to be a death to the world and a resurrection to a new life.³⁸ This is not at all like the teaching of the Bible in Romans 6:2-4 where one as a Christian is said to have died to sin, to have been buried in baptism, and raised to walk in newness of life. Masons have a baptism.³⁹ What can one who is a Christian think of this in light of the statement that there is one baptism (Eph. 4:5)? If you claim to be a Christian and a mason, which one is the *one baptism*?

In the twenty-sixth degree the chief symbol of man's ultimate redemption and regeneration is said to be the fraternal supper of bread and wine.⁴⁰ In the discussion of the supper it is said that the bread that is eaten and the wine that is drunk may enter into and form part of the material bodies that were once called Moses, Confucius, Plato, Socrates, or Jesus of Nazareth. Such teaching borders on blasphemy and takes the Lord's Supper out of the kingdom of the Lord (Lk. 22:16, 30).

Conclusion

There are many issues that do not demand a particular stand regarding them. There are other issues toward which we cannot be indifferent and masonry is one of these. I had not previously entertained strong feelings toward this subject, but now I see it is impossible to be neutral in this issue. In view of the doctrines that have been investigated, each Christian is urged to do some soul-searching. My prayer is that you will see and understand the subtilty of this system. If you have thus far made no ties with masonry—make none. If you have ties—break them. Many have broken such connections. I have

yet to hear or read of one who has left the lodge, but that he is glad he is out.

Some have sought to justify belonging to the masonic organization by saying that they do good works. The Annual Shriner's Paper Sale is conducted to benefit crippled children. The Shriners set up their road-blocks, get money from every passing motorist they can and then glory in what the lodge has done.

Claims are likewise made about how the masons care for their own. Even in this area they receive much more credit than they deserve. I have known of widows who have failed to receive one cent from their deceased husbands' efforts in masonry.

The funeral services that are conducted by the lodge do not in any way encourage folks to glorify Jesus. Their ceremonies are sickening to a Christian who has trust in Christ and understands the Bible teaching regarding the church and membership in it.

Let me indulge in a personal reference as we close this investigation. Just last year my father received his 50 year pin as a mason. It was not because he had been faithful in attending the meetings or for his outstanding service to the fraternity. It seems to have been mainly that he paid his dues.

What has masonry done for him? It apparently has made him less interested in Christianity and the church Jesus purchased. It has held out to him the hope of being welcomed into that lodge above even though he has not been faithful in serving the Savior. It has given a false notion that there can be another way to heaven other than the way clearly taught in the Bible. Happiness would fill my heart if I could but hear him renounce the lodge, acknowledge before God his failure and state a simple trust in Jesus and a desire to do His will alone. Let all Christians be content to find a place of service in the kingdom of God and then say with the Psalmist, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psa. 84:10).

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Biographical Sketch

JAMES E. EATON

James E. Eaton was born October 31, 1925, in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and was raised in McMinnville, Tennessee. He was baptized in 1937 by Robert Jones. He grew up in the Central congregation in McMinnville when T. Q. Martin was its preacher.

Eaton received his B.A. degree from David Lipscomb College and the M.A. from Peabody College, both of Nashville, Tennessee.

He has served the following congregations: Ninth Street, Canton, Ohio; New York Avenue, Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Signal Mountain, Tennessee; Green's Lake Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee; White Oak, Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. He has been with the Soddy church since September 23, 1976.

Eaton served on the weekly television program, "Know Your Bible" all but six months since its beginning, and has been moderator since July 1962. The program is now entering its 18th year. He helped produce four prime time special television programs and has conducted a daily radio program. He served for three years as President of Boyd-Buchanan School and taught history and Bible at the school. Eaton has been involved in camp work at different times. Other than regular gospel meetings, he has also conducted a number of mission meetings.

12

Marijuana

Jimmie Eaton

Marijuana is a drug found in the flowering tops and leaves of the Indian hemp plant, *Cannabis Sativa*. The plant grows in mild climates in countries around the world, especially in Mexico, Africa, India and the Middle East. The strength of the drug differs from place to place depending on where and how it is grown. The marijuana available in the United States is much weaker than the kind grown in Asia, Africa and the Near East. Most of the drug that enters our country crosses the Mexican border seemingly without much difficulty. This traffic results in over \$100 million annually. When smoked it enters the blood stream acting on the brain and nervous system. How it gets to the brain is not yet understood by medical science. While it is more frequently smoked it can be eaten or taken in a liquid. When smoked it has a very pungent odor. This drug also goes by such names as pot, grass and hemp.

Those who smoke marijuana say its effects are soothing, producing a feeling of well being with drowsiness, a release from tensions, frustrations and worry. Time seems to slow down. Yet, with all this slowing down the smoker says he feels his senses have become keener.

If this is all that happens when you smoke pot then why all the big fuss? Why not legalize it and sell it over the counter of a local drug store? But the fact is that much more than this happens. After several years of research the facts are now coming to light which indicate that marijuana is a very

dangerous drug. While the effects vary with users, the quality and the amount used, yet the results and side effects are serious enough to attract our most serious attention.

When ingested, marijuana causes such reactions as fast heartbeat, lowering of body temperature and a change in blood sugar level. Researchers report lethargy, apathy, muscular incoordination, loss of inhibitions with the effects continuing as much as two years after cessation of smoking. Speaking, writing are also slowed down. Judgment is impaired often leading to accidents or erratic actions. It has been established that there are character and personality changes with progressive and lasting damage caused by changes in the chemical processes of the brain cells. Those who smoke marijuana three years or longer show a poor recovery rate.

In experimenting with animals definite genetic damage has been established. There is a big question now as to whether there is genetic damage in human beings. Dr. Hardin B. Jones, professor of medical physics and physiology at the University of California at Berkley says there is. He says, "We have increasing evidence that Cannabis causes defects in embryo development, broken chromosomes and mutations. All this portends some frightening prospects."

Another effect of marijuana is psychological damage resulting in anxiety, panic, confusion, loss of memory and suspicion. In more severe cases it was found there was a loss of contact with reality, vivid visions and hallucinations. Heavy use of marijuana can induce hallucinations as intense as those produced by LSD. It has also been established that it can produce paranoiac and schizophrenic conditions. Even cardiac failure has been reported.

Why do intelligent people smoke marijuana? By the same token why do intelligent people smoke tobacco or drink alcohol? One can know the dangers of drugs and have a head full of facts but lack the wisdom (ability to apply knowledge) to reject them. The marijuana smoker is not very wise. He is foolish to smoke this drug.

In a Gallup poll it was found that some 38 percent have tried marijuana out of curiosity. But as the old adage goes, "curiosity killed the cat." Many curiosity seekers have received

far more than they bargained for. For example many teenagers experimenting with drugs get into trouble because of the erratic behavior produced. Some may try marijuana a few times and quit. But of these experimenters as many as 25 percent will become continual users. Of these about 10 percent will get into trouble. Many of them will then go on to hard drugs. About 90 percent of all drug addicts who are treated today began first with marijuana, graduating to something harder. Marijuana then is just a step to the harder drugs. Only 2 percent of the hard users ever come off of them. Consider all the evidence the teen age pot smoker is following a dangerous course. Drug abuse by young people has now reached enormous proportions. Experimenting with drugs is the "in" thing. It doesn't leave us with a very bright outlook.

No doubt there is an element of rebellion involved with some young people smoking marijuana. We have passed through a decade of rebellion where youth were angry with their world. Marijuana is a way of demonstrating their unhappiness with the establishment. The basic problem here is the American home. There has been a great deterioration in the home during the past twenty years. The father is so involved with being successful he does not have any time for the family. The mother has little purpose in life. She feels neglected by her husband. She may obtain a job which takes her out of the home causing a loss of interest in the home. On the other hand, if she does not work or have something to keep her busy she becomes frustrated, nervous, and fearful over her health. A few trips to the doctor finds her medicine chest filled with tranquilizers, barbiturates and sleeping pills. Very little love and consideration for one another is shown in this type of home. It is now becoming common to find divorce in many homes. In most cases this causes emotional scars on the children. Often young people find themselves very unhappy in their home situation and turn away from it. Looking for closeness and an understanding they have not experienced before they turn to friends who are drug users and establish a rapport—a pseudo rapport. They look for this closeness with others who are doing something forbidden, something in common together, thus they get the illusion they are really in touch now, something they never had at home.

How tragic! How unfortunate that so many homes cannot be a happy place for children to grow up feeling secure and loved. God's plan for the home would eliminate all drug problems among the youth of our land. God's plan is that the father is to rule his family with love and consideration (Gen. 3:16; 18:19; Eph. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:7). If fathers followed God's plan they would find time to be with their children teaching them the word. At the same time wives would be submissive to their husbands (Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1) loving their children (Tit. 2:4). Children would be taught to be in subjection to their parents (Eph. 6:1). Such an arrangement would provide love and security in the home for all members of the family.

Dr. L. Jones Groll, psychoanalyst, assistant clinical professor at U.S.C. and former medical director of Westwood Psychiatric Hospital says that in treating teen drug users, "I have found, almost invariably that the basic problem is in the home." It is the home that is the source of teen drug problems. We are simply reaping what we have been sowing for the past two decades.

Probably the reason why most users smoke pot is because of its mind-bending qualities. The soothing feeling of well being, the release from tensions and frustrations enable one to escape from reality with its problems, worry and anxiety. It becomes a kind of chemical "cop-out" on life. It is this psychological dependence on marijuana that makes it so dangerous. Ours is an age of escape. In our uptight, in-a-hurry, pressure society everyone seems to want to run away. Thus, we use every means of escape. The week-end becomes an escape, holidays, vacations, even the coffee break. Also, ours is a pill society. A pill can help you sleep, stay awake, remove a pain, soothe your nerves, give you energy, keep you from having a baby, cold or headache. There is a pill for every purpose to help you escape whatever it is you don't like or want. Marijuana is supposed to make it possible to escape. Everyone wants to feel good and happy. Marijuana carries with it the promise of release from boredom, frustration, worry, etc.

The Christian who is living in harmony with God's will never feels a need of resorting to marijuana to help him in his problems. In the first place, Christians are not trying to escape.

With the help that Christ provides a Christian can face and solve all his problems. Paul says, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Paul knew that the Word provides us with solutions to all our problems (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Paul had many problems and troubles. But do we see him as one who had to resort to the drugs of his day in order that he might be able to calm his nerves and escape reality? He says, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content" (Phil. 4:11). The Christian instead of trying to escape, accepts his condition, knowing that God's Word will provide him strength and answers for his problems. Running away, escaping, has never solved problems. They will always be around this way. The only solution is to meet them finding solutions from God's Word.

More powerful than any drug is prayer. Paul says in Philipians 4:6-7: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." Thus God has provided the Christian with prayer where he takes all his problems and cares to God. In return God provides peace of mind. All our worries, anxieties and frustrations now dissolve.

The Christian knows that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He will not take anything which will harm or destroy the body. Enough research information is now available to prove beyond doubt that marijuana is harmful to our bodies. Even the experimenter is taking a great risk.

Christians are truly happy and contented people. This is because they are willing to follow the formula of successful living given by God who understands us better than anyone else. He knows man better than man knows himself. God the creator of man knew what was best for man so He has provided the very best. God intended for His people to be happy people. For example, the beatitudes all begin with the word "Blessed" (happy). When man chooses God's way he will be truly happy.

A Christian is so enthusiastic for the Lord that he does not have to smoke marijuana in order to get high. It is thrilling, exciting and exhilarating to live the Christian life. Paul says

that Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." Christians then are zealous people. They find sheer joy and satisfaction out of living for Christ. How tragic that those involved in the drug scene were never able to discover this truth. The only real solution to the drug problem is Christianity.

13

Modest Apparel

Rubel Shelly

Introduction

The human body is not evil. It was a part of God's original creation which was declared to be "very good." And in the sinless and tranquil state of the original human pair, they were naked before each other and before God without shame. "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Gen. 2:25). Their physical nakedness was typical of their total situation in the Garden of Eden. It was one of absolute openness and freedom. This was an ideal state which could exist only in the absence of sin.

Then came the fall of Adam and Eve. They listened to the false counsel of Satan and rebelled against the authority of God.

It is significant that the very first consequence of their sin was that "the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Gen. 3:7). When sin came, nakedness took on an altogether different meaning! What had once meant openness and freedom now was connected with shame. So it has been in the eyes of God ever since that day (cf. Gen. 9:21-27; Nah. 3:5; Rev. 3:18).

When God came to Adam and Eve in the wake of their sin in Eden, He did not tell them to take off their leaf-aprons so as to "recapture their innocence." To the contrary, He indicated that

they needed even more clothing than they had made for themselves. "And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21).

Our Present Situation

Our present situation in America with regard to fashion and the flaunting of flesh is but one more manifestation of man's rebellion against God. We are told that "nudity is nice." Clothes are advertised to be "daring," "sexy," "naughty," and "slightly wicked." This is the way of a sinful and perverse generation of men.

The greater shame is that this shameful rebellion against righteousness is found among members of the church. Weak sisters in the Lord assume that sex appeal is a legitimate consideration for them in selecting their wardrobes. They walk the streets in skirts so short that very little is left to the imagination. They even wear those same skirts into the assemblies of the saints where, when they sit down, six to twelve inches of thigh are exposed. (Some expose themselves this much even when they stand!) I have heard more than one Christian man say that he was embarrassed to be in front of a class as the teacher because of the exposed thighs and undergarments he sees. I have been so embarrassed in such situations that people must have thought I was a ceiling and floor inspector rather than their instructor. Some time ago I read of a man who refused to pass the Lord's Supper because of the nakedness in the pews he would view. Someone may suggest that he is just a dirty-minded fellow; it may be, however, that he is one of the few men left who are totally honest with themselves about this matter.

In the summer months, the problems get worse. Shorts and halters appear on the streets. Disgusting "hot pants" and "fanny shorts" (could names have been chosen that would have been more vulgar and suggestive?) are paraded everywhere. Girls' athletic teams wear them as "uniforms," and hot pants contests are held in stores and on malls while evil men whisper to each other, whistle, gape, and lust. Then there are the public beaches and swimming pools where both sexes strip down to the minimum required by law. And some professing Christians are right in the middle of it all!

We know that God condemns immodesty. Paul told older Christian women to "train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be *sober-minded, chaste*, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:4-5). "In like manner, that women adorn themselves in *modest apparel*, with shamefastness and sobriety . . ." (1 Tim. 2:9).

Short shorts, hot pants, fanny pants, swimsuits, bikinis, halter tops, short skirts, bosom-baring necklines, skin-tight jeans, and the like are immodest and sinful.

Some Objections

But some will protest that modesty is a relative things. They argue that the sight of a woman's ankle might have been considered immodest fifty years ago, but today it is not. Others argue that people who live in warm climates and near beaches just do not have the same views on modesty that people living in other situations might legitimately hold. Therefore these people feel that it is impossible to draw a line which separates modest and immodest dress.

The fact is that a line *can* be drawn between modesty and immodesty. *Whenever a person dresses so as to excite sexual desire in others, that person's dress is immodest and sinful.* This principle reflects what the Bible teaches about modesty and does not change with the culture or climate. And anyone who is sound enough of mind to be responsible to God for his actions and mature enough in years to be an adult knows the difference in clothes which excite sexual desire and those which do not. (Those who are too young and naive to know the difference have parents or older Christians to counsel them about their choice of clothing.)

This principle applies to men as well as women. The bronzed and muscled male who parades his "sexiness" by dress or undress is equally as sinful as the female who uses her indecency as a sexual come-on. And the knock-kneed teen-age boy who washes his car in the front yard or bicycles down the highway in nothing but gym shorts is no less indiscreet than

the homely girl who sun-bathes on the beach or walks the streets in a pair of short shorts.

It cannot be wrong for a girl to wear a swimsuit on the beach and right for her to wear one as part of the competition in a beauty contest. It cannot be wrong for her to wear hot pants to a party for the teenagers from church and right to wear them as a majorette at halftime of a football game. It cannot be wrong for her to wear a skirt to Bible class which is six to twelve inches above her knee and right to wear one as a cheerleader which does not come twelve inches below her waistline.

The point of all this is to plead for *consistency*. If we are going to plead for modesty, let us plead for it at all places and in all situations.

The World Knows The Perils Of Immodesty

People of the world are sometimes more honest about clothing than some who claim to be Christians. Non-Christians acknowledge the purposes and perils of immodesty. Mary Quant, known in fashion circles as "the mother of the mini-skirt," has been quoted in *Newsweek* as having said, "Mini-clothes are symbolic of those girls who didn't want to wait until dark to 'seduce a man. . . .'" Designer Leo Narducci says that the woman who wears revealing clothes is one who is "sure of herself, who thinks of sex more openly . . . she is not concerned about nudity. She has a body and she knows it!" Now regardless of the motive a woman tells herself she has for *wearing* shorts, swim wear, or revealing clothes in public, there are the reasons underlying their *design* and *manufacture*.

Police officials also have some comments to offer. A questionnaire was mailed to officials of 128 cities across the United States by a social studies group. Of the replies received from the largest cities, a ratio of 31 to one said they were convinced there was a connection between immodest dress and the rise of sex crimes.

The prison physician of Tombs Prison in New York City said that "the so-called crimes of passion are increasing alarmingly, and will continue to do so in my opinion until the principle cause is eliminated. That, it seems to me, is the present style of dress, which, to say the least, is immodest.

Immodest dress has a direct bearing on crime incitation, no matter how innocent the wearer may be." This observation comes from an official who has worked with 170,000 prisoners over 12 years of penal experience.

No one can convince me that women and girls who wear immodest clothing are ignorant of its effects on men. A Portugese ship, the Santa Maria, was taken over by rebel pirates several years ago, and the drama was followed closely by the news media. According to newspaper accounts of that episode, one of the first things that happened on board that ship was that the women passengers stopped wearing shorts, halters, and swim suits on deck. They were afraid, and they knew that immodest clothing would provoke those pirates to lust and expose them to grave danger. Yes, women know how their dress affects men!

Christians Know The Perils Of Immodesty

Not only does the world know about the effects of immodest dress, but so also do Christians know.

A *Christian husband and father* knows the perils of immodesty. Even if his daughters should be naive about their immodesty, he is not. And it is his duty as the spiritual leader of the family to set the standards of modesty for the women in his home. He does not have his family in subjection if he *cannot* set and enforce such standards; he is not a faithful Christian if he *will not* set and enforce them.

A young lady came home in a rage one afternoon and told her parents that a man on the street had spoken to her in a disrespectful manner and had insulted her. Her mother was as angry as the girl after the story had been told, and both women insisted that the father do something. He did do something. He sat his daughter down and talked to her. He said, "Darling, let me tell you a couple of things that will help you see what happened today in proper perspective. You are not an immoral girl, but your clothes that you were wearing when this thing happened are no different than those worn by girls who are immoral. You are young and attractive, and you have learned to dress in such a way as to call maximum attention to your beauty. I have talked with you before about the nature of men

and boys when they are around women who are dressed immodestly, so you knew better than to dress as you did today. I'm sorry that you were insulted and had to hear the suggestive remarks that were made to you, but you are as much to blame as the man!"

Would to God that more fathers would starch their backbones and do what they know is right about the wardrobes their daughters (and wives) wear!

A Christian wife and mother knows the enticing nature of certain types of clothing. She must first set a good example of personal modesty before her daughters. She must then see to the wardrobes of her daughters so as to teach them to be modest. One well-known psychologist has said, "The mother who encourages her twelve or thirteen-year-old to attract boys need not be surprised if she is going steady at fourteen and married or in trouble by the time she is sixteen!"

Parents, do not deceive yourselves a moment longer thinking that your children will love you more or feel closer to you as a parent if you let them live loosely. I have lost count of the number of teen-aged boys and girls who have told me that their parents "don't care what I do." They say it with contempt in their voices, not admiration!

A Christian young man knows the effect that hot pants, halters, and short skirts have on him and his friends. An adolescent male has a difficult enough time with the frustrating sexual stirrings he is experiencing for the first time. Add to that the pressures and enticements of a sex-oriented society where fashion is deliberately designed to stimulate those desires to an even greater level and the result is an intense and cruel temptation.

A Christian young man who is pure in heart himself does not want to see his sisters in Christ expose themselves to the gaze of people around them so as to become the objects of their evil lust. Neither does he want them to make his own Christian life more difficult. And it is easier for girls to wear modest clothing than for boys to have to pluck out their eyes (cf. Mk. 9:43-49).

Finally, you, *Christian young lady*, know the power of certain types of clothing to “turn men on.” Only an eccentric person gets any pleasure out of being different from everybody else. It is natural for us to want to eat what others eat, dress as they dress, and live like the people with whom we have contact. But when conscience demands that we be different in our eating, dressing, or other social activities, we must be prepared to exhibit godly courage and keep ourselves pure. What about it, young sister in Christ? Are you exhibiting the strength of character which is necessary to live up to the Christian standard of life to which you committed yourself when you became a child of God?

What Can Be Done?

Ladies, I realize that when you do your best to be modest there still exists the possibility that some evil man will still look at you and lust. In such case, you are not responsible. But if you have not done all you know to do in this regard, or if you have deliberately chosen to wear clothing that the world acknowledges to be sexy and enticing, you are as guilty of sin for provoking lust as the man who looks at you (at your implicit invitation) and covets you! Keep these three things in mind as you judge your wardrobe and habits of dress:

First, recognize that you must be modest and sensible in your dress to have the favor of God. The clothing you choose must be that which can be worn “with shamefastness and sobriety” (1 Tim. 2:9). As one’s dress is a mirror of her heart, Paul urged that a Christian woman not show herself to be carnal and frivolous by her apparel. Instead, let her show her purity of heart with modest attire.

Second, “abstain from every form of evil” in your attire, demeanor, and speech (1 Thess. 5:22). You do not have to balk at fashionable clothing or seek to be like an eighteenth-century Puritan in dress. Dress in good taste and appropriately for the situation, but never allow the world to set a fashion for you which involves you with the immoral and the indecent. Do not be conformed to the world’s evil trends. Do not be a faddist who insists on being immodest because immodesty is all the rage in fashion!

Third, realize that your life is to exalt Christ and make it possible for you to shine as a light in a crooked and perverse generation. Dress to the glory of God (cf. 1 Cor. 10:31). Give your primary attention not to the adorning of your body but of your true, inner self. "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God great price" (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

Conclusion

May God help His people to exhibit His holiness to the world through modest dress.

Biographical Sketch

J. W. [BILL] NICKS

J. W. (Bill) Nicks of 706 E. Wood St., Paris, Tenn., has preached the gospel since 1942. He attended school at Freed-Hardeman College, Memphis State University, and Abilene Christian University.

Nicks has served the following churches: Berclair, Memphis; Woodbury; Highland View, Oak Ridge; Savannah; Cross Plains and Fort Worth, Tex., and presently is at Paris, Tenn.

He served under Procter Street in Port Arthur, Tex., as a missionary to Nigeria for five years, and under Eastside in Sheffield, Ala., as a missionary to Liberia and Nigeria for 6 years. He also founded a Bible college for training preachers among Ibos of Nigeria, and also trained several preachers in Liberia. He served as consultant to Administrator at Nigerian Christian Hospital after Biafran War.

He taught in Bible and Missions Department at Michigan Christian College, Rochester, Mich., for three years and preached for churches in Plymouth and Royal Oak, Mich. He preaches regularly on radio.

Nicks was married in 1943 to the former Gerry Petty, Parkersburg, W. Va., and they have three daughters and five grandchildren. Two sons-in-law are preachers. A native of Nashville, Tenn., he is the son of the late Tommy Nicks.

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The Movies

Bill Nicks

One of the most amazing features of the present crisis that as sunk our morals to its lowest ebb in history is not the violation of our normative standards, but it is in the failure to recognize there *are* any ethical standards. The reason so many taboos have toppled is because the average person has lost all sense of an objective moral order. Nowhere is this more evident to the general public than in the movies. The sensual walk and talk of Mae West, and the final statement of Rhett Butler to Scarlett O'Hara, which were shocking to moviegoers a generation ago, are exceedingly tame in contrast to present R rated films and many GP's, not to mention the pornographic X's.

Gene Shalit, NBC movie critic, stated on *Today*, Nov. 18, 1976, "You should guard very carefully what your children see on TV movies after school. Some of the R movies are very rough for them." He described some films as not fit for humans with "the IQ of a roach."

The vehicles used on film to titillate the customers at home and in the theatres are sex and violence. The movie industry, seeking to capitalize on the moral depravity of the consumer, makes each film a little more risqué with each picture. The Code of the Motion Picture Association of America broke down in the fifties; since then each new film, more sensual than the last, has kept pace with the tastes of the public. "People are looking for something with a kick, for fun, for vicarious thrills—and

producers are pleased to give them whatever they are willing to pay for."¹ Thus, sex is exploited, and violence for the sake of violence is foisted upon a public seeking more vivid portrayals of blown-off heads and ripped-open bellies.

It is not that moving (or still) pictures are evil within themselves. Classified as art, they are effective media for teaching. So much so that 62 percent of TV home children would rather watch TV than play outside, but 88 percent of radio-only children would rather play outside.² I enjoy seeing a *good* movie, not just any kind. H. Leo Boles said, "There are some things no righteous eye should see, ear hear, nor tongue taste." But worse than *seeing* evil is the development of *desire to see* the evil. It seems to me the number one problem in the modern home is learning to control the kind of learning situations which come into that home through the tube. Unless there is discrimination, selectivity, and curtailment of time spent viewing it, especially children will grow up with attitudes foreign to Christianity.

The Present Crisis

Someone has said that the "status quo" is Latin for "the mess we're in." Surely this definition can be applied to the movies. We have gotten into this mess gradually, and conditions are definitely a cause for alarm, enough to make every right-thinking person stand up and speak out for return to decency and morality.

Censorship and Control: There is a difference between censorship and control. Censorship is authoritarian action of the government on a local or national level. Control is that power exercised by an individual or a private organization, non-legal public pressures, and the use of boycotts, public ridicule and threats, to prevent that which is deemed not in the public interest. For example, if a local congregation joins with other citizens to stop pornography in their community, that is *control*. If the city of Nashville bans a certain movie, or book, and the Federal government forbids it from being sent through the mail, that is *censorship*. If a parent forbids the child to read a book, or if Freed-Hardeman College forbids a modernist to appear on the campus and speak to students, this would be

control. Obviously, we need both censorship and control, and both can be either good or bad. The Roman Catholic Index of Forbidden Books for many years cut off their scholars from developing in religious, political and scientific thought. Censorship and controls are good only when they protect the public from that which is evil, not when it suppresses freedom. The question is, where do we draw the line?

There are many instances in which censorship protects us. The F.D.A. forbids the sale of heroin and many other drugs. Some must be administered only on orders of a physician. This is in the public interest. Nor can a drug be advertised as a sure cure for cancer unless it proved clinically so to be. Cigarettes cannot be advertised as beneficial to health, so must be labelled as "harmful to health" on order of the surgeon general. There are also censorships relating to insurance policies, and libel laws preventing slander in journalism. This censorship pertains to our physical and our economic well-being.³

It is even more important that censorship and controls be exercised with reference to our ethical well-being. Jesus settled that when He taught us that the soul is more important than the body (Matt. 6:19-34; 16:26). The difficulties lie in our democratic way of life, and the many and varied kinds of people served by public officials. The U.S. Supreme Court does not have our spiritual welfare at heart always, as elders must do (Heb. 13:17). Thus, they have vacillated from hot to cold with reference to what is obscenity, and how much censorship is to be exercised.

From 1966 to 1973 film producers became more and more bold, until total nudity, sexual filth, and language of the gutter became prevalent. Italian director Michelangelo Antonioni toppled the taboo of total nudity in *Blow-Up* (1966), followed by *The Graduate*, *Ryan's Daughter*, *Clockwork Orange*, *Portnoy's Complaint*, and *Last Tango in Paris*.⁴ Worse and worse X-rated films increased in number and dirt.

However, on June 21, 1973, it seems the Supreme Court saw that their past decisions and definitions of obscenity were not as strict as needed for the public good. "In *Miller vs. California* and related cases, it gave the U.S. a new frame of reference for deciding obscenity cases. These decisions will, no doubt, inhibit

the flow of hard-core pornography and restore the right of the community to be protected if it chooses from offensive assaults on its standards of morality in the sexual field."⁵ It remains for decent people to speak out in their individual communities to determine what will and will not be seen in public. Truly, all that is needed for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing. However, the new formulation and definition of obscenity by the Supreme Court "is unsuitable for application to TV and radio and will, no doubt, be modified in this respect."⁶ One looks with alarm when he considers that today's "rough" movies will be tomorrow's "Saturday Night at the Movies" on TV.

Violence: Of all issues pertaining to social behavior, perhaps none has been researched so thoroughly as that of violence and its effects, particularly in the movies and on TV.⁷

The *Christian Science Monitor* survey found that the most violent evening hours (TV) were between 7:30 and 9:00, when, according to official network estimates, 26.7 million children between the ages of 2 and 17 are watching TV. 'In those early evening hours, violent incidents occurred once every 16.3 minutes on the average. After 9:00 p.m. violence tapered off quickly, with incidents occurring once every 35 minutes,' the paper said. In the early evening, there was a murder or killing once every 31 minutes, later, once every two hours.

However, television time is sold to sponsors on the conviction that although the Ajax ad will not guarantee that the viewer will buy the product, it raises the probability that he will. Social scientists would simply make the same claim for *filmed*, or television violence, whether fictitious or real. Viewing the carnage does not guarantee that the viewer will 'go forth and do likewise,' but it raises the probability that he will.⁸

What was disturbing likewise about the studies was not so much in the fact that eight out of ten programs contained violence, the overt expression of physical force against others or self, but in the fact that the most violent programs were in cartoons, those designed exclusively for children. Although the effects of violence vary with different age groups, the overall effect is simply this: the blunting of sensitivity. Many young people grow up to become, not ugly Americans, but hard Americans, without "natural affection," and thus with the

development of an "I-don't-want-to-get-involved" attitude. This social indifference augurs ill for future generations of Americans, unless some better content of teaching can be given youth. Let us not underrate the tremendous impact that movies and TV are having to shape and mold the norms for our society.⁹ Imagine the influence of such teaching on the millions of families on welfare, who can afford TV sets, and sit before them with their children eight to ten hours per day! Unless we can reach them with the gospel to counteract this influence, we are bound to see an upsurge in crime, and definitely a decline in the quality of the people of our nation.

We believe it is reasonable to conclude that a constant diet of violent behavior on television has an adverse effect on human character and attitudes. Violence on television encourages violent forms of behavior, fosters moral and social values about violence in daily life which are unacceptable in a civilized society. Further, television may reduce or even counteract parental influence. Moreover, television is a particularly potent force in families where parental influences and primary group ties are weak or completely lacking, notably in low income areas or where violent lifestyles are common. In these instances, television does not displace parental influence; it fills a vacuum. The strong preference of low income teenagers for crime, action, and adventure stories means that they are constantly exposed to the values of violent television programs without social importance, especially in the light of the large amount of time low income youngsters spend with TV and the high credence they place in what they watch. The television experience of these children and adolescents reinforces a distorted, pathological view of society.¹⁰

There is an obscenity to violence, especially the pointless ultra-violence, which, although it is ultra-profitable to the producers, and ultra-artistic to some critics, yet is untra-nauseating to discriminating viewers. Gene Shalit described the new movie, *Carrie*: "She had a bucket of blood poured over her head which gave her the power to 'concentrate' and conjure up violence. She concentrated and her mother was impaled upon a score of swords; she concentrated again, and the gym caught on fire, all the people in it burning to death." He was wise enough to condemn it as a nauseating and pointless film.¹¹

Realism: New techniques of slow-motion pictures have made violence even more vivid. Beginning with *Bonnie and Clyde*, and later *Clockwork Orange* and others, give the false view that manhood requires rites of violence, and that it is necessary to prove one's manhood to conquer other men. Add to that the fact that newer pictures are made to conform to artistic realism. Commenting on this, Joseph Morgenstern, *Newsweek* critic (Feb. 14, 1972, p. 68), stated:

Their techniques—slow motion, surreal performances, elegant decor, brilliant editing, fish-eye lenses, repeat frames—seem to comment on the action without saying anything. They lend distance, but they also dehumanize victims in the way that high fashion photography dehumanized models, and they create a high fashion horror that can turn an audience on higher than the real thing. The Vietnamese war could look lovely in slow motion.

Of course, homosexuality and sex perversion of all kinds are realities. But we would not want every act the human mind can fantasize glamorized on the screen. If so, what would be wrong with an actor who is a masochist allowing himself to be stabbed to death, or decapitated on a film, the act perpetrated by a sadistic actor in reality?

In this connection, the movie which was brought into court for its extreme appeal to prurience (*Deep Throat*) was praised by a critic for acknowledging "the importance of female sexual gratification."¹² Others felt there were better ways to acknowledge this reality. One psychoanalyst, Ernest Van der Haag, called the film a "transparent pretext for showing sexual scenes, and told the court that a pervasive social attitude that condones treating bodies purely as a means of pleasure, without regard for their humanity, constitutes a real social danger." The judge agreed and called the film "a feast of carrion and squalor, a nadir of decadence, and a Sodom and Gomorrah gone wild before the fire." Such words ought to describe all exploitation films.

Language: With the permissiveness of sex and violence, there has been a consequent increase in the earthiness of language in the movies. There is probably not a single word or expression that could not be spoken in general films today.

Beginning with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in 1966, the names of Jesus, Christ, and God were used irreverently dozens of times, as well as other expressions previously unheard of for public consumption; thus the public has been barraged with language dissipation. This is done in the name of "realistic dialogue," although it is in extreme bad taste.¹³

Profanity has been described as strong language used by weak people. Men resort to profanity when they do not have sufficient vocabulary to express themselves. It is a sign of the frustration and desperation of our times; men have lost God and are at sea without chart and compass. Decent men need to resent and resist such language in the presence of their wives and children. The church must let the world know the Biblical standard for speech (Col. 3:6; Eph. 4:29; Matt. 12:34-37).

The Rationale: Just why has this radical change swept over the world of cinema in the past two decades? It is obviously the same reason that has brought changes in art, music, the theater, and literature. It is the same rationale that has radicalized the realm of religion. Behind all of this is a departure from the normative standards of the Bible, and a glorification of philosophies of men. Rooted in the secular existentialism of Sartre, Jaspers, Huxley and Heidegger, and the religious existentialism of Barth, Brunner, Tillich and Niebuhr, many cinema writers and producers conceive of pornography as the ultimate release, the *leap to freedom*.¹⁴ It is not so much what the philosophers are doing; "our university chairs of philosophy are in effect largely vacant."¹⁵ It is what the "Southerners of this modern world are doing who write philosophy" in the books and movies. "The really dangerous thing is that our people are being taught this modern 20th Century morality without being able to understand what is happening to them. That is why this mentality has penetrated into the lower cultural levels as well as among the intellectuals."¹⁶

Why do hippies in San Francisco sing the tune of "We Shall Overcome" with the words, "We Are All Insane"? Why do gifted cinema producers put out films like *The Silence* to state that man is really dead, in which the camera looks at life and reports it as meaningless in non-human terms? (Bergman).

Why does Capote's *In Cold Blood* make no moral judgment, but simply project the fact of its happening like a computer? It is because he believes "man is dead" in the rational realm! Why did the film director of *The Last Year of Marienbad* show no categories of truth and non-truth? Because he wanted the film to show that man has taken the existential leap from rationality (reason) to non-reason, and that in this realm man is adrift, apart from the shores of logical thought. Other movies with this same message are *Juliet of the Spirits* and *Blow-Up*.¹⁷ Why do men like Timothy Leary resort to drugs? It is due to his belief that to have a "first-order experience" (Aldous Huxley), or a direct mystical experience that has no relation to the world of the rational, you turn to drugs to prepare for this experience.¹⁸

After Karl Barth's commentary on Romans in 1919, the stage was set for a new religious orthodoxy. Old line liberals had placed hopes in science for the ultimate answers. The new liberals came up with the philosophy of existentialism, the "leap of faith," similar to the Calvinistic direct operation of the Holy Spirit. In the moment of crisis, you have a confrontation with God, in which He speaks to you, not through the Scriptures, for historical criticism had robbed them of faith in its inerrancy. But this leap of faith involved a revolt against reason and logic. Man is dead to logic and reason, therefore the "leap" is subjective, and does not depend on "thus saith the Lord," as we have known it, or propositional truth. Existentialists can preach Christ, sin, and salvation, terms which sound good to the ear, but to them these words have an altogether different meaning, always separated from history and the world, being in areas of the irrational. So, Christ is not to them the Christ of history, but the Christ of faith, a mythical character invented by the minds of early Christians. Unfortunately, many Protestants have joined in with this line of thinking, which is reshaping the whole of our society.

The bitter consequences of this non-rational leap are many fold:

1. *Morality suffers*: Since there are no categories for truth and error, everything to them is relative. Fletcher's "situation ethics" is based on this. It is defective in that it fails to take into consideration the total human situation. "Contextual"

ethics, by definition, falls far short, for what may seem good to a young couple in the back seat of a car as an expression of love, may be a betrayal of one another, their parents, society and their Creator.

2. *Law suffers:* The world of civilization has had a basis for law and order by a rational study of God's law. The leap to non-rationality breaks down such a system, for how can a society judge men to be criminal if there are no categories of right and wrong? Chaos can only follow such a concept, and, as in the days of the Patriarchs, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25).

3. *There is no answer to the problem of evil:* If good is evil, and evil is good (Isa. 5:20), or if the devil is as good as God, man has departed from the holiness of God, the temptation, the fall of man, and the existence of evil in the world (Rom. 3:23).

4. *Christianity has no chance to evangelize the world:*¹⁹ The leap to non-rationality destroys historic Christianity. Jesus is a myth, the supernatural is unreasonable, Vishnu or Maharishi Yogi's deity, Guru Dev, may serve our spiritual needs as well as Christ, and Eastern cults, which we have evangelized, may now evangelize us. Under such beliefs, all hopes of Christianity having any influence in the world fade away.

The Bible Vs. The Modern Movies

The Bible is an example of what is appropriate in any field of thought. It mentions sinful man in such sexual aberrations as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, masturbation, lying with beasts, etc. We believe it is improper to remove these from the Bible, yet if a movie producer takes such incidents, making pictures of them, it would be indecent. Such would be taken out of the total contextual situation, glorifying and magnifying out of proportion the sex angle. Therefore, one test of a good movie is whether it is appropriate.

Another test is that of *honesty*. One reason *Playboy* magazine, as well as many movies, are so dangerous is the false philosophy that constitutes a fundamentally dishonest doctrine regarding sex. These magazines and movies hold to the idea that women are mere things to be used, as toys, in the life of

men, and that sex is merely a biological function, like eating and breathing, and is to be indulged at will. To them, erotic pleasure is the supreme good in life. The great danger this philosophy holds to young people is that it makes erotic pleasure the supreme good in life, rendering them unfit for the responsibilities of the home, the stabilizing unit of society. In the Biblical context, they that practice this are lewd, lascivious, and *lost*! They are in need of redeeming love. The Doris Day "will-she-or-won't-she epics" treat sex dishonestly, destroying morality.

Such movies are against the Bible because:

1. *Fornication is treated with respect.* It is considered stylish for an unmarried couple to sleep together, and in the movies that are respectable (?), couples are depicted in bed, having spent the night together. Instead of showing this to be immoral, the audience is left to think that no evil consequences come from this affair. They are not told of the psychological problems seriously arising when young people violate standards they know to be in keeping with good behavior. Guilt feelings plague them, and habits are formulated that render happy marriage impossible. As never before, we need to return to the Word of God for guidance. It is the infallible standard. Hear it: "Flee fornication . . . he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body . . . Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: fornicators . . . nor adulterers . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:18, 9, 10). "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness . . . and such like; of which I forewarn you . . . that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). "But fornication, and all uncleanness, . . . let it not be named among you, as becometh saints . . . for this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person . . . hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph. 5:3-5). "Put to death your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire . . . for which things sake the wrath of God cometh upon the sons of disobedience" (Col. 3:5, 6). "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his

own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who know not God" (1 Thess. 4:3-5). What shall be the end of fornicators? "Their part shall be in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

2. *Mate-swapping*: This phenomenon received its first major attention in the movie, *Bob and Carol, Ted and Alice*.²¹ It is nothing but the old sin of adultery in modern dress. Hear the Bible on this: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife; and the two shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6). "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery" (vs. 9). "For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband; so then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man" (Rom. 7:2, 3). Adulterers will be eternally damned, unless they repent before it is too late (Heb. 13:4; Rev. 21:8).

3. *Homosexuality*: This "lost much of its stigma in films like *The Fox*, *The Killing of Sister George*, *The Boys in the Band*, and *Deliverance*."²² But it is the ancient sin of Sodomy (Gen. 19:1ff). It is a sin resulting from departure from God and ending in heathenism (Rom. 1:18-32). All such will be lost without repentance (Gal. 5:19-21). Someone has said that the Victorian age pretended that sex did not exist, but our age pretends nothing else exists.

This is the state of the earth's sophisticated people in the 70's:

The overcrowded planet is oversexed . . . were a man from Mars to visit us, he would find that at a time when the technical prowess had been attained to propel us to other planets, vast numbers of us would be displaying a near frenzied preoccupation with a biological activity as common as eating and defecating to us. Its function was necessary to the propagation of the race, but its indulgence happened to be a mysterious source of

pleasure. And that was the trouble . . . standards were toppling. What many saw dismayed them. 'We are living in a Babylonian society,' said one. 'The emphasis is on the senses and the release of the sensual.' To religious leaders, mankind had plunged into 'disgusting and unbridled eroticism' and no longer deserved to be called civilized.²³

4. *Drinking and drunkenness*: This sin is galvanized into respectability by moviemakers. It is not a triviality in God's sight. "Wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging; and they that are deceived thereby are not wise" (Prov. 20:1; see also Prov. 23:20-35; Isa. 5:11-25; Eccl. 10:16, 17; Hab. 2:15; Eph. 5:18; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

5. *Blasphemy*: Movies like the *Miracle*, which portrayed a peasant girl seduced by a bearded stranger whom she thought to be Joseph, later giving birth to a son whom she thought to be Christ, are unworthy of public view.²⁴ What must be realized is that most of the movie writers are guilty of ignoring God and religious issues. They present life as though there were no God, and as though men and women had no religious side to their personality whatever. This is not facing reality! When charming fictitious characters are made to nobly sacrifice and achieve happiness without even acknowledging God, it leaves the impression that seeking God's strength is "much ado about nothing."²⁵ Also, they present preachers as clowns or bigots, and Christian people as smug hypocrites. While we do not expect non-Christian writers to provide Christian teaching, yet their wilful misrepresentations and blasphemies should be resisted.²⁶

Conclusion: What Can We Do?

Let us not think we can have no influence. An aroused public can tremendously affect the kind of movies shown. There is still much salt in the earth. Make your voice heard. Write Congressmen, TV stations showing indecent movies, and movie theater managers. Complain about that which is a threat to our society, particularly our young people. Write citizens organizations: *Citizens for Decency Through Law*, 450 Leader Building, Cleveland, Ohio 44114; *Morality in Media*, 487 Park Ave., New York 10022; *Stop Immorality on TV*, 278 Broadview Ave., Warrenton, Va. 22186; *Action Bulletin: Applied Christianity*,

7960 Crescent Ave., Buena Park, Calif. 70620. These can give legal advice, help, etc.

Especially, let us stand solidly for truth and right, and pray!

FOOTNOTES

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3. Kyle Haselden, **Morality and the Mass Media**, p. 83 (Broadman Press, Nashville, 1968).
4. Perry C. Cotham, **Obscenity, Pornography and Censorship**, p. 20. (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1973).
5. Victor B. Cline, ed., **Where Do You Draw the Line?**, p. 92. (Brigham Young University Press, Provo, Utah 84602, 1974).
6. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 142f.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 165, 179.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 352.
11. Gene Shalit, NBC **Today** Program, Nov. 18, 1976.
12. Cotham, *op.cit.*, pp. 20-24.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
14. Francis A. Schaeffer, **Escape From Reason**, p. 65. (Inter Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill. 60515, 1968).
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 71, 72.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-82.
20. Haselden, *op.cit.*, p. 108.
21. Cotham, *op.cit.*, p. 21.
22. *Ibid.*
23. **No More Morals: The Sexual Revolution**, by Lester Graham, pp. 10f. (Pyramid Books, N.Y., 1971).
24. Richard S. Randall, **Censorship of the Movies**, p. 21. (University of Wisconsin Press., Madison, 1968).
25. J. B. Phillips, **Your God Is Too Small**, pp. 44-47. (McMillan Pub. Co., N.Y., 1961).
26. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

Biographical Sketch

JAMES W. WATKINS, JR.

James W. Watkins, Jr., was born September 3, 1926, at Lafayette, Georgia. Following a hitch in the U.S. Navy, he met and married Miss Foye Dooley. They now have four children, two girls and two boys. Bill, the older son serves as minister of the Andrews Avenue Church of Christ in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Alan has just received his B.S. from Freed-Hardeman College.

Foye and James obeyed the gospel March 28, 1948, and attended Alabama Christian College (then Montgomery Bible College). Following graduation, James began full time work with the church in Lyerly, Georgia. From there he went to the church in Chattanooga Valley, the East Chattanooga church, the Riverwood congregation in Nashville, and is now in his tenth year with the church in East Ridge, Tennessee.

He is a charter member of the "Know Your Bible" telecast, originating in Chattanooga, now in its nineteenth year of continuously heralding the Good News. He has also done quite a bit of radio preaching and conducts a number of gospel meetings each year.

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The New Morality

James W. Watkins, Jr.

Introduction

The theme assigned for discussion at this time is "The New Morality." In all fairness let me say this, the so-called new morality which, as you know, is neither new or moral, came into being through what some saw as a failure of time honored but threadbare traditions consisting of taboos, don'ts, tsk-tsk's, and hush-hush no-no's. Men erroneously blamed the weakness of God's moral teaching for the hypocrisy of His people. The truth of the matter is, the new morality cannot be justified on the basis of the failure of God's moral code. God's will with regard to moral conduct has not always been practiced with fidelity by His children.

This observation of so-called Christian ethics and the solution (new morality) offered by theologians and intellectual leaders is not unusual nor is it unexpected. Did not Christ pray that all His followers may be one? Why? That the world may believe (Jno. 17:20-21). What is the greatest hindrance to Christianity today? Atheism? No, it is the abuse and mis-use of Christianity. Is it any wonder that the world frowns on Christianity when they hear and read every day of the "Christians" and Moslems fighting? In the funeral ceremony of our late President John F. Kennedy, the entire world was treated to a "Christian funeral." It was pompous idolatry from beginning to end. It is not, therefore, unusual that a skeptical world observing Christians as they drink socially, lie, curse,

and give themselves over to licentious living should denounce the standard that supposedly brought on such a condition and encourage time serving theologians to provide a substitute. Even in the Lord's church some have assumed that the truth has failed in its influence upon the world and have substituted a social gospel which neither elevates man spiritually nor pleases God.

The new morality, it is claimed, is simply an effort to bring man's philosophy into harmony with his practice.

Situationism, it appears, is the crystal precipitated in Christian ethics by our era's pragmatism and relativism. Historically, most men really have been situationists more or less, but the difference today is that we are situationists as a matter of rational and professed method. Gone is the old legalistic sense of guilt and of cheated ideals when we tailor our ethical cloth to fit the back of each occasion. We are deliberately closing the gap between our overt professions and our covert practices. It is an age of honesty, this age of anxiety is.¹

In substance, what Mr. Fletcher is saying is that we are finally getting our thinking down on the wicked level of uninhibited lust and not only give ourselves over to licentiousness but "consent with them that practice the same" (Rom. 1:32).

The entire point of this introduction is simply to say it is high time the world had a good, concrete example of Christian morality in the lives of Christians.

To Understand The New Morality

In order to a proper understanding of the new morality two or three terms need to be defined.

(1) *Hedonism*: "The doctrine that pleasure or happiness is the sole or chief good in life." (Webster). Allow me to quickly explain that Hedonism is not the basis or the sole factor involved in the New Morality but, recognized or not, the new morality is an effort to escape the consequences of our sins and do as we please without inhibition. In the vernacular, we like to

1. Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, pg. 147.

have our cake and eat it too. Some would dearly love to dance to the devil's music without having to pay the fiddler.

(2) *Existentialism*: "A chiefly twentieth century philosophy that is centered upon the analysis of existence, specifically of individual human beings, that regards human existence as not exhaustively describable or understandable in idealistic or scientific terms, and that stresses the freedom and responsibility of the individual, the irreducible uniqueness of an ethical or religious situation, and usually the isolation and subjective experiences (as of anxiety, guilt, dread, anguish) of an individual therein." (Webster).

Everyone therefore, from even a casual observance of these and other similar philosophies, can readily see how the handy little cliché, "situation ethics," coined about the mid-sixties, best describes the new morality.

Moral Decisions

In the matter of making moral decisions it is said that man has basically three alternatives:

Legalism: The Christian is a legalist only in the sense that he accepts in advance of his decision, the criteria upon which his decision will be made. To the Christian this is the Word of God and His truth is therefore absolute. The Christian's moral decision making is therefore greatly simplified. He holds the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God. It is his only guide for behavior, in every situation toward God and man. The Christian believes that his life is to be specifically governed by the commands of the Bible and generally by the principles laid down to help him make decisions. The Christian believes that in every decision making situation, the rules and principles have been laid down in advance. All one needs, therefore, in order to a correct decision is simply to supply either a specific command, yes or no, or to apply the Biblical principle. The advocates of the new morality think of Christianity as a legal system in the absolute sense of the term. The truth of the matter is Christianity is not a legal system at all.

Antinomianism: This is the opposite extreme of legalism. It maintains that there is no set of rules and regulations which are available beforehand by which one can make moral decisions.

The Antinomian thus maintains that all of his moral decisions must be made only when the problem arises by use of reason and judgment. He literally says that there is no law to govern his moral decisions.

Situationism: "The situationist enters into every decision making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage. . . . Just the same he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside in the situation if love seems better served by doing so."² "Situation ethics, on the other hand, calls upon us to keep law in a subservient place, so that only love and reason really count when the chips are down."³

"In situation ethics even the most revered principles may be thrown aside if they conflict in any concrete case with love."⁴

By these and other similar statements, it becomes apparent that, to the situationist, love is the only criteria, the only standard, by which one makes any decision. This being the case all of his decisions would naturally be subjective. One would be forced to withhold his judgment of this principle until he had each situationist's definition of love. Since each definition would probably vary with the individual, this principle as a basis for decision making would have to be rejected. It is not a standard. It is not a foundation, for based upon each man's assessment of the word, it is meaningless.

Two Greek words are translated "love" in the New Testament. *Agapao* (noun: *agape*) and *phileo*. *Agapao* can best be defined as a dynamic which seeks the highest good of its object without regard to sacrifice or suffering. It is, therefore, a selfless love motivated by God's love for us. Probing its fathomless depths, we find love for our fellow man simply because he is an immortal soul made in the image and likeness of his creator. In the true meaning of *agape*, we appreciate and respect human dignity and honor the rights and privileges of all men. In *agape*, we see clearly the way to love our enemies. *Agape* would never defile or cause to be impure the body or mind of one's fellow

2. Ibid., pg. 26.

3. Ibid., pg. 31.

4. Ibid., pg. 33.

man. It lays down its life if need be for the good of others (Matt. 20:28; 16:24-26).

Phileo is to be distinguished from *agapao* in that it more nearly represents tender affection. Not in the use of either of these words could one's immediate situation demand a sensual gratification of the flesh or even security of physical life at the expense of another with or without consent.

Notice now how the situationist rationalizes his position as he seeks to make the extreme, unusual, isolated incident the norm for moral decision making.

As the Russian armies drove westward to meet the Americans and British at the Elbe, a Soviet patrol picked up a Mrs. Bergmeier foraging food for her three children. Unable to even get word to the children and without any clear reason for it, she was taken off to a prison camp in the Ukraine. Her husband had been captured in the Bulge and taken to a prisoner of war camp in Wales. When he was returned to Berlin, he spent weeks and weeks rounding up his children. Two (Elise, twelve and Paul, ten) were found in a detention school run by the Russians and the oldest, Hans, fifteen, was found hiding in a cellar near the Alexander Platz. Their mother's whereabouts remained a mystery but they never stopped searching. She, more than anything else, was needed to re-knit them as a family in those times of hunger, chaos and fear.

Meanwhile, in the Ukraine, Mrs. Bergmeier learned through a sympathetic commandant, that her husband and family were trying to keep together and find her. But the rules allowed them to release her for only two reasons: (1) An illness requiring medical care beyond the camp's facilities, in which case she would be sent to a soviet hospital elsewhere and (2) pregnancy, in which case she would be returned to Germany as a liability.

She turned things over in her mind and finally asked a friendly Volga German guard to impregnate her, which he did. Her condition being medically verified, she was sent back to Berlin and to her family. They welcomed her with open arms, even when she told them how she managed it. When the child was born, they loved him more than all the rest on the view that little Dietrich had done more for them than anyone.

When it was time for him to be christened, they took him to the pastor on a Sunday afternoon. After the ceremony they sent Dietrich home with the children and sat down in the pastor's

study to ask him whether they were right to feel as they did about Mrs. Bergmeier and Dietrich. Should they be grateful to the Volga German? Had Mrs. Bergmeier done the right thing?

This is only one of many highly unusual, unique and more times hypothetical cases used in an effort to justify situation ethics. As we study this case in the light of New Testament teaching, keep in mind that "Situation Ethics" borrowed its central ingredient, "love," from Christ. In so doing the situationist makes the same mistake that the "faith only" advocate does who quotes a New Testament passage on faith; he lifts it out of its context.

The *agape* (love) of Christian ethics is concretely defined in Scripture. It was first revealed in the changeless nature of God and revealed as the First and Great Commandment by Christ (1 Jno. 4:8; Matt. 22:34-39). Can you imagine a man trying to be a channel through which the *agape* of God flows to his fellow man with no regard for the law of love?

Moral law and love do not conflict but, to the contrary, they compliment each other (1 Jno. 5:3). Love purposes cannot be fulfilled without submission to the principles of morality set out in the New Testament (2 Jno. 6). Our Lord made it clear that there could be no clash between the moral law of God and the love which comes from God. "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15). "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he is that loveth me" (Jno. 14:21). "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (Jno. 14:23). "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jno. 15:10).

Agape is actually the love of God flowing through us to our fellowman. Can you imagine one trying to manifest *agape* without the objectives and regulations of *agape* which are clearly set out in the New Testament? When love is not defined by objective moral law, the lover himself becomes the law. That being true, in most instances the "love" exhibited would not be *agape* but a relative counterfeit to be used in justifying the gratification of self. How could a young man coming to puberty, cope with the strange and powerful drives of the flesh now awakening within him on the basis of love, which is the

only determinate in situation morality if there are no objective, moral rules to direct him? A 14 year old cannot do it and if you reverse the digits a 41 year old can't do it either. Love and law are inseparable. "Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law." He then immediately sets out the kind of love which fulfills all law. "For this, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law" (Rom. 13:8-10).

If indeed, the new morality were an honest effort to improve man's mortal and social behavior that would be one thing, worthy of consideration even though as a rule of life, it would have to be rejected, but the fact is, it is a mechanism designed to relieve man of responsibility for his moral deficiency and that is another thing altogether making the so-called New Morality a dangerous doctrine, the fallacies of which must be exposed lest men be deceived by the much talk and outward appearance of love, which, in the context of the New Morality is mere subterfuge; a cloak for licentious, lustful conduct.

Biographical Sketch

CLIFFORD M. DOBBS, JR.

Clifford M. Dobbs, Jr., is the minister at the West Nashville Heights Church of Christ, 5807 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee, where he has been since September 1973.

Brother Dobbs came to Nashville from Kingsport, Tennessee, where he was with the Northeast (formerly Watuga Street) Church of Christ for over ten years.

A native of Gallatin, Tennessee, and graduate of Gallatin High School, brother Dobbs lived in Nashville from 1958-63 while a student at David Lipscomb College. From 1961-63 he served as minister of the Corinth Church of Christ near Portland, Tennessee. He obtained a B.A. Degree in Speech with a minor in Religious Education from David Lipscomb College in August 1963. It was then that he moved to the church of Christ in Kingsport, Tennessee.

Brother Dobbs is 40 years old and married to the former Wilma Lois Woodward also of Gallatin. They are the parents of three children: Joseph Tyron, age 20 and enrolled in David Lipscomb College; Mark Clifford, age 15 and in the tenth grade; and Amy Patricia, age 6 and in the first grade. Mark and Amy are both students at Nashville Christian School.

In addition to regular ministerial work, brother Dobbs speaks often on various lectureships, teaches in the Great Commission School, and regularly conducts classes at the Tennessee State Prison.

Brother Dobbs is active in civic and community affairs. He helped establish the Model City Sertoma Club and served as its first president while in Kingsport.

He took an active role in the Greater Nashville "Let Freedom Ring" Campaign in 1975. He served as coordinator among churches of Christ in Western Davidson County in planning the cooperative campaign to reach every home in the county with the gospel. He led the West Nashville Heights Church where he ministers in a survey to reach approximately 2700 homes in their immediate area.

Brother Dobbs is a charter member and chairman of the Nashville Chapter of Citizens for Decency Through Law (CDL), an organization opposing pornography and obscenity.

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Pornography

Clifford M. Dobbs, Jr.

The reality, sinfulness, consequences, and remedy for the vast problem of pornography is clearly set forth in the Bible.

The issue of pornography has been before us frequently in recent years, and I think it a most appropriate subject for discussion in this lectureship.

I am very humbled and honored to have the opportunity to present the Biblical view of the reality, sinfulness, consequences, and remedy for this insidious evil which is affecting both the world and the church of today.

We will attempt to set forth the following: What pornography is, the Biblical warnings against it, the scope of the problem, the dangers of pornography, the cost of pornography, and what can be done to combat the problem.

What Is Pornography?

In the very first chapter of the Bible God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."¹

Since the Bible interprets itself and is its own best commentary, it sets forth in later chapters the significance of the words: "Male and female He created them . . . and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth."

In the second chapter of Genesis God explains through Moses that this male and female made in the image of God are brought together by our Heavenly Father in paradise as husband and wife, and thus the responsibility of procreation falls upon mankind in the context of marriage and the home. "And God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.' . . . And the Lord God caused a deep sleep . . ."²

Here in the context of marriage God ordained that companionship and procreation are good and in subsequent passages whatever violates and endangers that divine contract is sinful.

Thus the Decalogue declares, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."³

Jesus commented on this commandment in the Sermon on the Mount in these words: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."⁴

Again, in the same chapter the Savior says, "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."⁵

The Gentile Christians were told to "abstain from fornication."⁶

In other words, sexual activity outside of marriage is to be rejected by all men including Christians. This is set forth in many other Scriptures. Homosexuality is condemned in Romans 1:26, 27. Fornication is classified as a work of the flesh in Galatians 5:19. Whoremongers and adulterers will be judged by God in Hebrews 13:4. Here the writer also says, "Let mar-

riage be had in honor among all . . .”⁷ Thus whatever illicit sexual activity which dishonors marriage is morally wrong, whether it be adultery, fornication, homosexuality, prostitution, incest, bestiality or engaging in activity which promotes enemies of not only God and marriage but of civilization itself is wrong. That which promotes such activity is lascivious in nature and is listed among the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19. We are instructed to “abstain from all appearance of evil.”⁸ (For related Scriptures see footnotes.)⁹

Pornography is a word from the Greek *porne*, a Greek word meaning “prostitute” and *graphie*, “writing,” thus written descriptions of prostitution, hence “writings, pictures, etc. intended to arouse sexual desire.”^{10,11,12}

More recently, contrary to charges that “you can’t define pornography or obscenity!” the United States Supreme Court has defined the subject in these words relative to a case argued before it in June 1973 (a case which has given local communities the ammunition needed to curb pornography in their area) the case of *Miller vs. California*: “The basic guidelines for the trier of the fact must be (a) whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest, . . . (b) whether the work depicts or described in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law, and (c) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.”¹³

In brief this simply says that whatever is offensive to the average person in the community because it exploits sex and is not serious art, literature, politics or science is obscene.

The scope of the problem of pornography is beyond the imagination of the average Christian today.

Until recently in Nashville, Tennessee, a city of over 500,000 with 600 churches about 100 of which are churches of Christ, and is sometimes called the “buckle of the Bible belt” in addition to the X-rated movie houses, so-called adult book stores, many name grocery and drug stores as well as most drive-in markets openly displayed the most lewd and offensive material imaginable. You might expect the X-rated movie houses and obscene book stores to have such materials, but we

found that the very same materials were displayed prominently in grocery stores where children had easy access to them.

It is estimated to be a two to three billion dollar business in the United States.¹⁴ This trash would fill the Empire State Building three times over.¹⁵ In many cities entire blocks are set aside or else are simply allowed to exist where almost every kind of obscene and pornographic activity is carried on. Such places as Time Square in New York City and the "Combat Zone" of Boston are examples of this in the extreme, and, of course, to a somewhat lesser degree in hundreds of other cities in America. In Nashville an adult book store was allowed to open within a block and a half of the West Nashville Heights Church Building and right next door to another church building in spite of community wide protests. A few cities, mostly smaller, have been able to nip the problem in the bud such as Hartsville, Tennessee. When a massage parlor opened, overnight the sheriff, Charles Robinson, told him to close it immediately and get out of town, which he did. In some western European countries such as Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, the "experiment" in smut shops has even been more tragic. A few years ago Denmark decided to abolish laws dealing with pornography. As a result Copenhagen became the porno capitol of the world. The result was an immediate rise in the number of sex related crimes including rape.¹⁶ This is what Ray Gauer said came from a personal interview with the chief of police of Copenhagen. But, interestingly, atheistic communistic countries will not allow such activities according to Ben Jones who recently returned from behind the iron curtain country. Outside religious reasons people who do not even believe in God ban pornography because of the danger to the well being of their civilization.¹⁷ An American who chose to remain in China after the Korean War recently was in Nashville to lecture on China. He stated that there was no pornography in China. By 1967 the scope of pornography had reached such national concern that the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography was formed and funded by public law 90-100.¹⁸

The Dangers Of Pornography

The scope of pornography is made all the more ominous by the grave consequences associated with it.

While libertarians claim there is no harm in pornography,¹⁹ it is very clear why it is condemned by the Word of God as lascivious and a work of the flesh.²⁰

"Lascivious" is defined by the dictionary as "1. Wanton; lewd; lustful. 2. Tending to produce lewd emotions."²¹ It is dehumanizing because it contributes to animalistic behavior of humans beneath the dignity for which man was created. It encourages behavior even beneath that of some animals. At least animals do not go against nature to perform the unnatural or to exploit and brutalize. Paul describes them in Romans 1:26: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature."

It exploits and brutalizes both sexes of the human species as objects to be used simply to gain money or selfish pleasure. People in the pornography industry are there because of the money they are able to make whether they are models, publishers, merchants or lawyers. I heard a lawyer say the only reason he defended the people of the industry was the money involved. The men and women who prostitute themselves for the money involved and the people who leer and lust over the products of pornography all are exploiting their fellow human beings whose bodies were created to nobly serve their Creator. Women everywhere should be outraged at what such magazines as *Playboy* do to womanhood. The same could be said of what they do to manhood or childhood. Therefore, pornography is a violation of the golden rule which says, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the law and the prophets."²² It is also a violation of the "second greatest commandment," "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."²³

Pornography attacks the institution of marriage and the home, the most basic unit of society, by encouraging promiscuity and infidelity. The pornographer cares little for the home.

The high rate of illegitimacy can be partly attributed to increased promiscuity encouraged by pornography. In our nation's capitol last year the majority of live births were out of wedlock.²⁴ Think of these thousands of children being brought into the world unwanted, without proper care on the part of the father and mother and without a strong permanent home and Christian training.

It defiles the sacred nature of sex in marriage by grossly exploiting it, commercializing it and placing an undue and often grotesque emphasis upon it. Certainly we know the Bible as well as nature teaches that love, tenderness, companionship and procreation in the context of marriage is a role filled by normal sexual relationships.²⁵ Pornography attempts to remove sexuality from its normal place by placing undue emphasis upon it, magnifying it through sophisticated photography processes, slick sick magazines, and perversion to the point of bestiality and child molestation. A preacher friend told of counseling a woman and her husband who experimented with pornography along with another married couple. The extreme limits to which reading obscene literature led them included bestial relationships with the couple's dog. It was then that the impact of what pornography could have on a marriage truly dawned upon her. She subsequently obtained a divorce from her husband. Another couple I know have small children. They are members of the church. The husband is addicted to pornography and seeks to have his wife perform the same things he views in the obscene magazines. His home is filled with lewd books and magazines, and the children find them and ask what they are. There have been so many problems and much unhappiness as a result of this. The marriage has been near divorce a number of times. In his perversions he accuses her of being "sick." This illustrates once more the ill effects pornography has upon the institution of the home.

Pornography defiles the mind of man by polluting it with impure and unholy thoughts when the thinking of God's people is to be of the pure, honorable, holy and good.²⁶

It leads to the defilement of the body when lusts aroused are fulfilled in illicit relationships.²⁷

In spite of what many do not realize, pornography is illegal.²⁸ In the United States there are Federal laws against production, distribution and sale of the obscene. This is also true of State and local laws, some of which are like a display law recently enacted in the City of Nashville which bans the display of salacious materials in retail establishments frequented by minors.²⁹ Brother Neil Gallagher in his booklet, *What Every Playboy Doesn't Want to Know About Pornography*, cites a "National cross section of cases" in which convictions were obtained.³⁰ The Bible teaches that man must obey the law of the land as long as it does not contradict the law of God.³¹ Pornography is a great part of the tremendous problem of crime in the United States. Attorney General Thomas Shriver told this writer that most of the pornographic materials distributed in this country are controlled by crime syndicates and that the major portion of salacious materials in Nashville is controlled by a man presently in the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta. This means that the majority of people who oppose pornography³² have allowed the minority criminal element to impose its will upon them and have done little to prevent the syndicates from piling the lewd garbage up around us.

Pornography is one of the major factors in the decay and decline of nations including the United States. As Gibbons cited the "decadence of the people" as one of the reasons for the fall of Rome, the degrading effects of obscenity are clearly visible in our country today as we view the growing permissiveness around us. It, along with the movie, television, liquor and advertising industry, is one of the main value setting influences in our land. Instead of allowing the Word of God to be the moral, ethical and spiritual standard, these industries are being allowed to establish what is and what is not acceptable. The Bible says, "Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."³³

Pornography leads to sexual deviancy such as homosexuality, child molestation, bestiality, rape, incest and other crimes against God and man.^{34,35}

Pornography is addictive when the Bible teaches that man is to exercise restraint and self control.³⁶ Just as people become addicted to tobacco and alcohol, you may also become so

involved with reading pornography that it will be difficult to stop. In a radio interview with Teddy Bart on WSM in Nashville, Rober Dornan, National Spokesman for Citizens for Decency Through Law, received a phone call from a young man who described his addiction to obscene magazines.

These are a few of the many dangers and consequences of pornography. The question needs to be asked: "What can be done about this growing evil in our society today?"

What Can Be Done?

The growing acceptance of pornography makes it even more urgent that God-fearing decent people take a stand against moral evils of our day.

The Commission on Pornography and Obscenity called by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967 submitted a report calling for the abolition of all laws dealing with pornography except where minors were concerned.³⁷

The report which cost two million dollars and covered a period of about three years was rejected by both the President and Congress.³⁸ The Congress which called upon the Commission to formulate a plan to regulate pornography was told that it should not be prohibited at all. The reason for this shocking conclusion on the part of the Commission is the very liberal make-up of many of its members, as well as the dishonest and high-handed methods used by them. During and since the time of the writing of the report their make-up and behavior has been described by a number of authors including three dissenting members of the group.^{39,40} Keating along with Hill and Link document the biased and often dishonest activity of members of the Commission.

The Word of God is so emphatic in declaring that the righteous must not only take a stand for the pure and holy, but they also oppose and speak out against evil. Paul told the Ephesian church, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them."⁴¹ Again, we are told, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."⁴² The writers of the New Testament spoke out against the immoralities of their day.⁴³

This means we must open our eyes to the problem of pornography and admit that it exists. The reason we have such a problem today is that those who should have been speaking out have quietly allowed the pornographer and the syndicate to pile the material around us. Like many of us, you may wait until an adult bookstore opens in your neighborhood before you become concerned and by then it may be too late.

Secondly, take action. Speak out when you see the problem. When you are in a store, take a look at the magazine rack and if there is any offensive material talk to the manager and complain. He doesn't have to carry the magazines. Tell him that they are offensive, illegal and in a nice positive way tell him that you and most of your neighbors would appreciate it if he would have them removed.

Inform yourself of the laws regulating pornography. There are State laws in Tennessee as well as local ordinances in many towns and cities.

Begin a campaign where you are. I know of an employee who wrote the president of her company concerning the magazines the store sold where she worked. The entire chain of stores was ordered to remove the offensive magazines. Jack Exum reports the same experience. A phone call to the president of a chain store operation removed the books from the entire chain.

Work to organize an anti-pornography drive where you are. In Nashville we have an active chapter of Citizens for Decency Through Law (CDL) which has been instrumental in a number of effective measures which has slowed the tide of pornography. This includes the passage of a Display Ordinance in City Council which makes it illegal to display offensive materials in retail business places which are frequented by minors. The following is a brief history of our work against pornography in Nashville which can be duplicated in most places.

When the adult bookstore opened in our area the latter part of 1975, a community-wide meeting was called by Mr. Fred Lowery, Metro Councilman from our district in West Nashville. Representatives of the Police Department, State Attorney General's office and other elected officials as well as members of the religious community were present at the meeting. The meeting was very well attended by five or six hundred persons.

In spite of many promises and much public indignation expressed, little was done. A few times a picket line was set up for an hour or so by various people. The State Attorney General raided the bookstore confiscating bushels of evidence, the cases only to be dragged out by legal maneuvers and ultimately the methods of obtaining evidence were ruled unconstitutional by a judge.

Then an article appeared in the *Gospel Advocate* of September 11, 1975, about the efforts of brother Neil Gallagher, preacher of the gospel in East Providence, Rhode Island. The article mentioned the successes of his leadership against pornography in Victoria, Texas, and other places.⁴⁴ Brother Melvin Turner, a deacon at West Nashville Heights Church of Christ, suggested to this writer that Gallagher be contacted to come and hold a workshop for community leaders and others to formulate a plan to stem the tide of pornography. After consultation with community and church leaders it was decided to invite him.

Following intensive publicity Gallagher, at the Metro Airport March 24 for a scheduled press conference in front of the magazine rack with news reporters and photographers on hand, proceeded to take one of the magazines, hold it aloft and address the good sized crowd which quickly assembled. News releases containing his itinerary were distributed to all media outlets. Following his arrival on Thursday he immediately began a series of interviews and speeches on radio, television and school organizations as well as preaching at area churches on Sunday. On Friday night and Saturday afternoon he conducted workshops at Cohn High School in West Nashville. From these workshops came a number of important steps which are still being implemented and are proving most effective.

A local chapter of Citizens for Decency Through Law (CDL) was established and incorporated. This is a national organization which was begun in 1957 to combat pornography.⁴⁵ It now is comprised of about fifty-five chapters with some 400,000 members throughout the United States. Copies of model anti-obscenity laws were distributed with a plan for their introduction in the Metro Council. These included a display ordinance, an adult bookstore ordinance, and a law to ban

X-rated movies. Step by step citizens at the workshop were given ideas which have proven effective. People were called upon to complain to store owners and managers when offensive material was observed. This resulted in a number of stores voluntarily clearing their shelves of filthy magazines. From that time to the present, letters to the editor, letters to judges, attorney generals and managers, have been written. The Tennessee State Legislature repealed an amendment to the State Obscenity Laws which hindered enforcement. With the help of the National CDL Organization a community-wide campaign was launched to support passage of a Metro ordinance banning the display of offensive materials in retail stores frequented by minors. This ordinance was introduced, passed, and has been enforced by the Police Department. Regular meetings of the board of the local CDL Chapter have been held to discuss and implement plans. Called meetings of the Nashville Chapter of CDL (about four hundred members) have been conducted. A CDL Newsletter is distributed. Future plans call for the introduction of an ordinance prohibiting so-called adult bookstores. All of this was done in a period of about eight months.

All that is really required to stem the tide of pornography is for those who believe the Bible to take a stand and speak out in every legal way against every form of moral evil. At the same time they should stand for the standards of righteousness and decency.

I realize that dealing with pornography is only dealing with the symptom rather than the underlying causes. However, in preaching the gospel and in living the Christian life, sin and temptation must be exposed and warnings should be sounded regarding their danger. When opportunity is present to do good the child of God is to grasp it. Indeed, there are opportunities to combat the swelling tide of obscenity and associated evils. If we remain silent on the sidelines what will God say to us? The fearful servant was condemned because he did nothing.⁴⁶

FOOTNOTES

1. Genesis 1:26-28, KJV.
2. Genesis 2:18, 21-24, KJV.
3. Exodus 20:14, KJV.
4. Matthew 5:27, 28, KJV.
5. Matthew 5:31, 32, KJV.
6. Acts 15:20, KJV.
7. Hebrews 13:4, ASV.
8. 1 Thessalonians 5:22, KJV.
9. Related Scriptures: Deut. 5:18; Matt. 19:18; Rom. 13:9; Lev. 20:10; Prov. 6:32; Mark 7:21; Matt. 15:19; 2 Pet. 2:14; 1 Cor. 7:2; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:18; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3; Jude 7; Deut. 23:17; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8; 22:15.
10. W. E. Vine, **An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**, pp. 125, 241.
11. Joseph Henry Thayer, D.D., **Thayers Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament**, pp. 531, 532.
12. **Webster's New World Dictionary**, College Edition; World Publishing Co.; p. 1138.
13. Cline, Victor B., Editor, **Where Do You Draw the Line?**; pp. 94, 95.
14. Andrew Connally, **Freedom: Heritage, Accomplishments, and Prospects in Christ**, Freed-Hardeman College 1976 Lectures, p. 397.
15. Ibid.
16. Ray Gauer, National Spokesman for Citizens for Decency Through Law as interviewed by Teddy Bart on the television show "Nashville."
17. **Nashville Banner**, December 29, 1976.
18. Cline, p. 185.
19. **The Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography** recommended that all laws restricting pornography be removed, because according to the majority of the commission there was not enough evidence to link pornography and any social ills.
20. Galatians 5:19.
21. **Websters New Collegiate Dictionary**, p. 474.
22. Matthew 7:12.
23. Matthew 22:39.
24. Editorial in the **Nashville Banner**, November 1976.
25. 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Hebrews 13:4.
26. Philippians 4:8, 9.

27. 1 Corinthians 6:15-20.
28. Gallagher, Neil, **What Every Playboy Doesn't Want To Know About Pornography**, pp. 11-13.
29. A copy of this law may be obtained by writing: CDL, P. O. Box 90505, Nashville, Tennessee 37209.
30. Gallagher, Neil, p. 11.
31. Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14.
32. Gallagher, Neil, pp. 21, 22.
33. Psalms 33:12.
34. Cline, pp. 212-215.
35. Leviticus 18:6-24.
36. 2 Peter 1:6.
37. Morton Hill and Winfrey Link, **The Hill-Link Minority Report of the Presidential Commission on Obscenity and Pornography** (Morality in Media, New York), Introduction, p. 2.
38. Gallagher, p. 22.
39. Hill and Link, pp. 388, 389.
40. Keating, Charles H., Jr., **Report of Charles H. Keating, Jr., Commission on Obscenity and Pornography**, pp. 9-11.
41. Ephesians 5:11.
42. James 4:17.
43. 1 Peter 4:2-5.
44. Alvin Jennings, **Gospel Advocate**, September 11, 1975, p. 583.
45. For information on how to begin a group in your area write: CDL, 450 Leader Building, Cleveland, Ohio 44114.
46. Matthew 25:24-28.

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Biographical Sketch

GARLAND ELKINS

Garland Elkins was born near Woodbury, Tennessee. He was reared in the community that wears the family name. He was baptized by Will Jones July 24, 1939. He preached his first sermon in Woodbury, May 11, 1949. He married Corinne Smith of Woodbury. They have three daughters, Connie (Mrs. Harry Harvey, Jr., of Houston, Texas), Jan (a student at Freed-Hardeman College) and Denise (a student at Harding Academy).

Brother Elkins was educated at Freed-Hardeman College, Middle Tennessee University and the University of Tennessee. He has preached the gospel for twenty-five years. He has done local work in Tennessee and Virginia and has preached in gospel meetings in a number of States. He has preached in more than one hundred meetings in his home county and adjoining county.

He is the author of a book entitled, **The Saviour's Way**, and he has also written a number of tracts. He has been a speaker on radio for a number of years. He presently speaks on WHBQ in Memphis each Sunday. This program is sponsored by the Getwell Church of Christ. He serves as the Associate Editor for the **Spiritual Sword**. Brother Elkins is the minister of the Getwell Church of Christ in Memphis.

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Pure Speech And Profanity

Garland Elkins

Profane swearing, taking the name of God in vain, is a stupendous and awful vice. It is sad but true that vast and teeming multitudes are guilty of that horrible and foolish sin! It is practiced by all classes of mankind. So-called respectable men and women (even members of the church) are addicted to this sinful habit. Men called gentlemen, women called ladies, pollute their lips and defile their hearts with blasphemous profanity.

Of all the sins against God, in some respects this is the most towering and directly offensive, since the name of God is made the edge, the hilt and the point of this poisonous sword of the tongue. From a human standpoint it is amazing that God tolerates those who blaspheme His sacred name. There are recorded instances in the Bible where a man was put to death for cursing (Lev. 24:11-16).

What The Old Testament Says

1. *Exodus 20:7*—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Lev. 24:15).

2. *Exodus 21:17*—"And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death." (Lev. 20:9; Prov. 20:20; Matt. 15:4).

3. *Leviticus 19:12*—"And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou *profane* the name of thy God: I am the Lord."

4. *Leviticus 19:14*—"Thou shalt not *curse the deaf*, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord."

5. *Numbers 22:12*—"And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not *curse* the people: for they are blessed."

6. *Job 2:9, 10*—"Then said his *wife* unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? *curse* God, and die . . . In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

7. *Psalms 109:17*—"As he loved *cursing*, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him."

8. *Proverbs 30:11*—"There is a generation that *curseth* their father, and doth not bless their mother."

9. *Psalms 62:4*—" . . . They bless with their mouth, but they *curse* inwardly."

10. *Zechariah 5:3*—" . . . every one that *sweareth* shall be cut off . . ."

11. *Psalms 10:7*—"His mouth is full of *cursing* and deceit and fraud."

12. *Proverbs 29:24*—"Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth *cursing*, and bewrayeth it not."

13. *Proverbs 30:8, 9*—" . . . give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the *name* of my God *in vain*."

14. *Leviticus 24:11-15*—"And the Israelitish woman's son *blasphemed* the name of the Lord, and *cursed*. And they brought him unto Moses. . . . And they put him in ward, that the mind of the Lord might be shewed them. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath *cursed* without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever *curseth* his God shall bear his sin."

15. *Leviticus 24:23*—"And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had *cursed* out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses."

16. *Judges 9:27*—"And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the grapes, and made merry, and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and *cursed* Abimelech."

17. *1 Samuel 17:43*—"And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine *cursed* David by his gods."

18. *2 Samuel 16:5, 7, 13*—"And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and *cursed* still as he came. And thus said Shimei when he *cursed*, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and *cursed* as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust."

What The New Testament Says

1. *Matthew 5:44*—"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that *curse* you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

2. *Romans 12:14*—"Bless them which persecute you: bless, and *curse* not."

3. *Matthew 5:34, 37*—"But I say unto you, *Swear not at all*; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

5. *Matthew 12:36, 37*—"But I say unto you, That every *idle* word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

6. *Colossians 3:8*—"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, *blasphemy*, *filthy communication* out of your mouth."

7. *James 3:10*—"Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and *cursing*. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

8. *Romans 3:14*—"Whose mouth is full of *cursing* and bitterness."

9. *James 3:8-10*—"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith *curse* we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

What Some Of The Successful Men Of The World Have Said

1. *George Washington*: "The foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing is a vice so mean and low that every person of sense and character detests and despises it."

2. *Lord Chesterfield*: "A gentleman never swears."

3. *Howard the Philanthropist*: "Always take care of your pockets when you find yourself amongst swearers. He who will take God's name in vain will think little of taking your purse, or doing anything else that is evil."

4. *Dr. Chapin*: "Profaneness is a brutal vice. He who indulges in it is no gentleman. I care not what his stamp may be in society. I care not what clothes he wears, or what culture he boasts. Despite all his refinement, the light and habitual taking of God's name in vain betrays a *coarse nature* and a *brutal will*."

5. *Jeremy Taylor*: "Nothing is a greater sacrilege than to prostitute the great name of God to the petulancy of an idle tongue."

6. *Ballou*: "Most erring people when they do wrong count upon some good to be derived from their conduct, but for profanity there is no excuse."

7. *Horace Mann*: "The devil tempts men through their ambition, their stupidity, or their appetite, until he comes to the profane swearer, whom he catches without reward."

8. *Robert Hall*: "Swearing is properly a superfluity of naughtiness and can only be considered as a sort of pepper-corn rent, in acknowledgement of the devil's right of superiority."

Cursing Is Widespread

Some people seem to live upon the very *atmosphere* of profanity. They appear to *exhale* and *inhale* it with relish and delight. They swear when they are *mad* and when they are *glad*, when they are *sad*, when they are *satisfied*, when they are *disappointed*, when they are *fortunate*, when they are *unfortunate*, when they are *sick*, when they are *well*, and when they are *blessed* in work or in play, in *earnest* and in *fun*, at home or abroad, on the *land*, in the *air* and on the *sea*, and, as incredible as it is, even in the *pulpit*, and for a thousand different reasons, and *all* circumstances, they swear *all* the time, and *all* the same, and just the same.

There is a time to pray and a time to play; however, *there is never a time when it is right to curse and swear.*

It is certainly true that profanity is widespread in this country. Doubtless, it is one of our most serious national sins. So bad is the reputation of America for the use of profanity, that if an American does not curse, some have concluded that he must be a preacher. Unfortunately, as inconsistent and sinful as it is, some preachers, both Catholic and Protestant, do use profanity!

The Name Of God Is Not To Be Profaned

The name of God stands for God Himself. God has always demanded that His name be respected. In condemnation of Israel's conduct in matters of service to Him He said: "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean . . . and I am profaned among them" (Ezek. 22:26). When Nadab and Abihu offered "strange" fire in the incense offering which God had "commanded them not" their worship was rejected and they both "died before the Lord" (Lev. 10:1, 2). Following their tragic fate, Moses told the people that an example had been made of their case "that ye may put differ-

ence between holy and unholy" (Lev. 10:10). For people either in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, to bring an unsanctified act into a sanctified realm is a violation of this principle (Lev. 10:10; Heb. 10:10). Therefore, for one to bring into New Testament worship an unauthorized act identifies one as guilty of religious profanity. Thus those who bring into the worship of God the unauthorized act of instrumental music fall into this category.

Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was guilty of the dreadful sin of sacrilege. How wicked indeed must be that sinner who has no respect for sacred things! When Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem he took the vessels from the Lord's sanctuary. He was not sacrilegious, as he did not use them in a profane way. But Belshazzar was guilty of both profanity and sacrilege in his use of them. God's name is sacred and it is a terrible thing to make profane use of sacred things.

Bywords And Slang

Many who would not think of cursing plainly use bywords which are closely akin. Christians must not use these words. It is sinful to do so regardless of who may use them. Please read very carefully the following:

One is profane who uses sacred things in an irreverent and blasphemous manner. The word **vain**, in the third commandment of the decalogue, is translated from the word in the Hebrew language which means in a light, flippant and contemptuous fashion. It is of serious consequence that many members of the church today have allowed to creep into their phraseology words and phrases the use of which amounts to profanity. Others, who would not dare use the holy names, God, Christ, Jesus, Jerusalem, Heaven, Hell, Hades, as interjections ("An ejaculatory word or form of speech, usually thrown in without grammatical connection," Webster) and for emphasis, will, nevertheless, use euphemisms (the substitution of a word or phrase less offensive or objectionable), the derivation of which goes back to one of the foregoing forms. Were those who thus do aware of the origin of many of these common by-words they would be shocked! It is therefore important that we obtain a clear conception of the significance of such words and phrases and avoid all which even indirectly border on the profane. Among them are such words as Gee Whiz, Gosh, Gad, Egad,

Golly, Good Gracious, Good Grief, My Goodness, Jeminy, Zounds, Jove, etc., etc.

Gee is an euphemistic contraction of the name of Jesus. It is slang, and has no proper use in our language. It is used as an interjection and to express surprise. It is, in effect, to say: "Jesus!" (cf. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary which says that it is "a minced form of Jesus, used in mild oaths.") **Whiz** is slang for anything excellent, "a corker, sometimes applied to a clever person or thing of excellence. Something or some one of exceptional ability or quality." The words, **Gee Whiz!** are, therefore, an oath in which Jesus and something extraordinary or unusual are joined. **Whiz** originally signified something of a humming or whirring sound, and then anything unusual or exceptional. A **Whizzer** in slang is that which is above and beyond the ordinary.

Gosh is an interjection and is used euphemistically for God. It is an exclamatory slang expression indicating surprise. The Century Dictionary says that it is "A minced form of God: often used interjectionally as a mild oath." Webster's Unabridged Dictionary says that it is "a softened form of God, used as a mild oath." It is occasionally used in hyphenated fashion such as **Gosh-awful**. In this form it is often used as an adjective, and euphemistically.

Gad, Egad, are interjections and are used euphemistically for the word "God," in mild oaths. They indicate surprise, disgust, dismay, and similar emotions, and are ejaculatory in character. **Gee, Gosh, Gad, Egad**, and similar forms are used synonymously. They are often joined with other terms for further emphasis, such as **Gee Whilikins, Gad Bodkins**, of which usage, the Unabridged Dictionary says, "A softened form of the word God as used in a mild oath or mild oaths in which the second element is often a corruption or made up word."

Golly, of extremely common use, is described by the New World Dictionary as "an exclamation of surprise, a euphemism for God. It is often used in conjunction with the word **by**, i.e., 'By Golley!' sometimes as an interjection for the word God."

Good Gracious! Good Grief! My Goodness! etc., are all mild oaths, where the word good or goodness, is used euphemistically for God. See Webster's New World Dictionary, College Edition. There are many forms of this usage, such as **Goodness Sake! Goodness Knows! Thank Goodness!**—all ejaculatory and exclamatory expressions in reference to the goodness of God, but used slangily and for emphasis. One who thus speaks calls

God to witness to the statement with which the oath is associated. "In goodness knows who it could have been, it means God only knows and I do not; in goodness knows it wasn't I, it means God knows it and could confirm my statement." (American English Usage, Nicholson.)

Heavens! Good Heavens! For Heaven's Sake! and similar expressions are statements of exclamatory character in which the heavens are called to witness to the truth of the statement made, or to support the affirmation. All such expressions when used as by-words, as slang, and in flippant, frivolous fashion, violate our Lord's injunction: "Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King" (Matt. 5:34).

We are not from this to conclude that it is wrong to use the various names of God in our conversation when such usage is reverent, respectful and sober. We have, indeed, numerous instances of such usage in the Scriptures. (Cf. "God forbid," "If God wills," "The Lord grant mercy," etc.) The Jews regarded the name of Jehovah as ineffable and to this day refuse to pronounce it in Hebrew. It is the profane use of sacred things and names against which the Bible inveighs, and all such expressions as these we have above analyzed which should be rigidly excluded from our vocabularies.¹

"Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7).

1. This command prohibits the use of God's name in any irreverent and disrespectful way. It forbids the use of God's name in any manner which is not accompanied with deep reverence and godly fear, whether it be prayer, false swearing, or a byword in careless conversation. There are many things worthy of honor and respect. We honor the name of our parents and resent any man's speaking of them disrespectfully. We respect the flag and are filled with indignation when men regard it lightly. How much more should we regard the name of the Lord our God with reverence and awe (Heb. 12:28).

2. Many who would not think of cursing plainly use bywords which are very closely akin. About eighty percent of the Christians I know use one or more of the following euphemisms:

1. Guy N. Woods, **A Commentary on the Epistle of James**, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, Tennessee, 1967, pp. 290-292.

(1) "My Lordy." This is repeating the name of the Lord in vain."

(2) "Golly." This is an euphemistic substitute for God (Webster's New International Dictionary).

(3) "Gosh." This is a softened "form of 'God!' used as a mild oath" (Webster's New International Dictionary).

(4) "For goodness sake" and "goodness gracious." Webster says that such expressions originally referred to the goodness of God.

(5) Many who throw up their hands in horror when they hear the word "hell" used in an oath, repeatedly say, "My heavens," or "For heaven's sake." If anything, this is worse, for it gets closer to God and His throne. Christ said, "And he that sweareth by the heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon" (Matt. 23:22).

(6) "Darn." It means "Damn" (Funk and Wagnall's Practical Dictionary).

(7) "Dickens." This is an euphemism for "Devil" (Webster's New International Dictionary).

(8) "What the duce." This really means "What the devil" (Webster's International Dictionary).

3. It is regrettable that there is **so much disrespect for the name of God in our land**. Many take the name of God in vain thoughtlessly, rather than for the express purpose of being offensive toward Him; nevertheless, they are guilty. "Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex. 20:7). "Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (Jas. 3:10). "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay: that ye fall not under judgment" (Jas. 5:12).

4. **It is not smart to take God's name in vain.** There is nothing to be gained by being irreverent toward the name of God. Since there are about 400,000 words in the English language, a person should be able to express himself without cursing. In fact, it reflects upon man's intelligence. It signifies that the person has not the ability to express his feelings without being irreverent toward God.²

2. Leroy Brownlow, **Some "Do's" and "Don'ts" for the Christian**, Leroy Brownlow Publications, Ft. Worth, Texas, 1951, pp. 96-98.

Some Causes Of Profanity

Doubtless many who curse or spout out vulgarity think it sounds smart to use such ugly language, to drag the name of God and sacred things down to the dust, yes, even into the gutter.

Some may swear through weakness of intellect. They may think that they cannot express themselves without using profane words. This evil habit can be stopped. Those addicted to such a vile habit need to "Learn to do well . . ." (Isa. 1:17). They need to resolve to improve and then train themselves to use proper and pure speech. Christians are to "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience: wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things; but now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking [filthy communications] out of your mouth: lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him:" (Col. 3:5-10).

The devil says: "These words are necessary to give strength to sentences and to give force to your speech. It adds emphasis." It may be that profanity and vulgarity may impress the vulgar and profane; but with the refined and pure, the prefix or the suffix of an oath depreciates and makes abhorrent an honest and honorable man's word. Such emphasis when viewed from the eyes of those who love the truth and practice virtue is revolting, disgusting, and absolutely sinful. Jesus did not curse and He commanded us to "swear not at all." Simon, perhaps, persuaded the profane mob which crucified Christ, that he did not know Him by means of cursing and swearing; but his profanity on this occasion casts the blackest shadow which ever fell over his life and reputation.

The best and most influential men who ever spoke or wrote did not swear. The world receives their words with an emphasis which profanity would have forever destroyed. Truth and virtue, wisdom and philosophy, morality and religion, honor and integrity, speak for themselves. The simple word of an

honest man is his bond and he does not have to curse to enforce it or to add weight to it. Our President's message, if curse words were in it, would be repulsive. Any right thinking person would loathe a public speaker who cursed. It may be said that taste forbids profanity in writing and speaking for the public. True, but the very same reason makes it odious, base, and a brutal habit everywhere and anywhere else.

The devil also says: "Cursing and swearing is the salt, pepper and spice of our language." It takes the devil or one influenced by him to relish such seasoning in our conversation diet. He further says, "The harmless words used in swearing only add flavor to your conversation and give you an opportunity of expressing the exact shade of your feelings." God doesn't favor the flavor! He says, "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear" (Eph. 4:29).

Other causes of profanity are poverty: "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain" (Prov. 30:8, 9). Anger causes many to curse and swear in a fit of temper. They often call it "letting off the steam." The Bible requires us even when angry to exercise self-control: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26). Drinking is one of the most fruitful causes of cursing. When men are intoxicated they will profane, when they would not be profane under other circumstances. Idleness is often another cause of profanity. An old saying, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop" contains much truth. Therefore, this is another reason to use our time wisely. Paul wrote: "Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15, 16).

Indictments Against Profanity

It is a sin against God. Profanity breaks the command of God which says, "Thou shalt not." Whenever you use profane language you are a sinner and you ought to repent of your sins.

No respectable person would think of disrespecting the name of his father or mother. Think of your heavenly Father and reverence Him. A farmer once remarked to a friend, "These mules seem to know when I swear." His friend replied, "Yes, and God in heaven knows when you swear."

Swearing destroys a man's reverence for God. Spirituality and conscientiousness cause a man to look up to his God and to expect a future state. When you destroy reverence you are building a wall between yourself and heaven. Every time you use profane language, you are adding one brick to that wall which separates you from God.

Profanity causes one to be unfit for worship. When the devil can persuade one to take God's name in vain he knows that renders one in no position to worship God "in spirit and in truth." It is an insult to Christianity. You would be insulted if you heard someone use irreverent language against your father, mother, brother, sister, wife, or children. Parents insult their children when they use profanity. A missionary returning home heard a man using profanity in the presence of his son. He said, "My son was born in a heathen land, but he has never heard such profane language. I request that you never again use such language in his presence." The profane use of the name of our heavenly Father in the presence of Christians is insulting in the highest degree.

Those who use profanity set a bad example. A father once heard his son use profane language. He was astonished. He said, "My son, is it possible that you are using such language?" Said the son, "There is nothing wrong with it. I heard you use it and my father would not use language that his son ought not to use." The father resolved that he would never again take the name of God in vain.

Profanity is a sin against society. It is claimed by writers on Civil Government, that the individual has to sacrifice certain of his rights for the welfare of society. It is true that we do indeed owe certain obligations to our fellowman (Gal. 6:10; 6:2; Jas. 2:8; Matt. 7:12). Profanity is not only forbidden by the Bible but one can even be guilty of violating the law of the land. For the benefit of society we quarantine people with contagious diseases such as smallpox and leprosy. It would be well for

society if these moral lepers, as they move in society, would also be required to cry out "unclean."

Profanity is a bad habit. Says one, "I do not mean to do anything wrong. It has become a habit with me." But it is sinful for you to let a bad habit master you in that way. Suppose you say that about lying, drinking, adultery and stealing? It is one's duty to control himself and to overcome such an evil habit. Before you use profane language, stop for one minute and pray to God and you will not take His name in vain. An Englishman sent a ship to the East. He told the captain of the vessel that there must not be any swearing on the voyage. He gave the captain a ring with the inscription, "Swear not at all." In a few days the captain was able to fully obey the instructions. Of all the habits in the world it has no place for use or profit anywhere. If you make up your mind to overcome this evil habit you can certainly do it!

Profanity dishonors one's parents. It reflects upon their training and shows a bad bringing up. An aged minister asked a young man who taught him to swear. "Was it your mother?," he asked. "No, sir, why my mother is a praying woman! It would break her heart to hear me!" The minister said, "Then why not honor your mother's teaching and the commands of your mother's God." Those who use profanity transgress the rules of good manners, outrage decency, insult good people, does what he should be ashamed to do, and what he some day (in time or in eternity) will regret. Profanity is a very degrading sin. The flow of black curses that comes from the foul mouth degrades the conversation. Profanity should be avoided like the plague. There is no instructive idea to be expressed; no good to come from it; no ear to be pleased; no honor to be acquired; no credit to be won; no wealth to be gained; and no favor of God to be earned by using it. It exhibits in all a contempt of law, both civil and spiritual. It is never heard in chaste and refined society. Those who swear bring contempt upon God, offend others, and belittle themselves.

Stop The Cursing On Television

Though profanity is practiced most everywhere it seems that one of the devil's most fertile fields is television. Until

recently profanity was seldom allowed on television. However, since millions of tongues from every spot of earth perpetually spin out their wicked threads of profanity which like a monster spider, winds and weaves its web around the world and into almost everything, Satan is making a determined effort to capture television for his profanity.

Millions of people watch and hear television daily. Voluminous profanity is becoming the norm on television it seems. A man calls upon God to condemn his neighbor, his wife and children, to condemn his houses and his lands, to condemn his horses and his cattle, to condemn his business and his profession, to condemn his misfortunes, afflictions and troubles—all in malice and rage. Then in pleasantry and fun, in the name of God, he curses his friends and relatives, his pleasures and happiness, his prosperity and advancements, his honor and his fame, in fact, every good thing he enjoys or hopes for. The profane swearer is portrayed as one who lives in the blue blazes and sulfuric stench and spectral darts and harsh noises and grating echoes, flashing, fuming, smoking, dancing and drinking. Profanity is being held up to adults and children alike as the proper thing to do. It must also be stated that just as much cursing and vulgarity is done in a quiet so-called sophisticated way on television.

I make an urgent appeal to all Christians and to non-Christians of good moral character, let us arise as a mighty army and enroll every upright citizen in our community and fight this dreaded moral disease. You inquire as to how this may be done? Perhaps the most effective way is to organize a well planned letter writing campaign, directing a voluminous number of letters to the sponsors of such programs emphatically informing them that we shall refuse to use their products until their programs are cleaned up. Further, let us inform them that we shall urge others to refrain from buying and using their products until this is done. Let us be valiant, advocate truth, expose error, and God will be with us!

18

Responsibility For Moral Training In The Home

J. J. Turner

Introduction

I have some sad news to report. Perhaps you have heard it, or even suspected it. America is sick! Everywhere you look there are symptoms of her sickness. And she is growing worse day by day. "Physicians" of no value are telling her that she is sick, but she ignores it. After all, what can psychology, sociology, anthropology and other human sciences offer a nation that has a spiritual problem? It is one thing to diagnose a problem, and yet quite another to provide the cure. The symptoms that produce the diagnosis that America is sick are many. Her life is being destroyed by some of the following things.

- * There are more than one million teenage alcoholics in America.
- * Seventy-five per cent of a recent senior high school class admitted to having sexual relations.
- * A twelve year old boy was recently arrested for selling drugs in a grammar school.
- * Mothers are encouraging their unwed daughters to have abortions.

- * Ten boys, ranging in age from 9 to 14, were recently arrested as a "professional" burglary ring.
- * Many schools in America must have armed guards or policemen on duty to protect life and property.
- * Venereal disease (VD) is reaching epidemic proportions among the youth of America (the old, too).
- * Forty to fifty percent of students in some high schools have taken drugs.
- * One million divorces were granted in the USA in 1975.
- * Suicide is said to be responsible for more deaths in a year than traffic accidents.
- * Pornography is a multimillion dollar industry. Literature and movies are available on almost "every corner" in America's major cities.
- * Men are marrying men. Homosexuality is now looked upon with favor as the "third sex."
- * The sexual revolution is permeating society. Topless, bottomless and nude bars are main attractions on "Main Street USA."
- * The "pill" is opening the door for fornication and adultery. It is now "safe" to sin!
- * There is corruption in all levels of government. Gone is trust in the great American dream.

I will be the first to admit that all of this is depressing. And yet, we must not ignore it, or hope it will go away on its own. It won't! It's here, and we must face it and do something about it. Edmund Burke rightly said, "All that it takes for evil to triumph, is for good men to do nothing."

What is the solution? There are several. First, we must confront these sins against God head on. We must march into the dens of sin crying, "Repent!" We must let sinful man know that God will not tolerate his actions (Acts 17:30, 31). At the same time, we must let the sinner know there is hope for him. But only if, and when, he abandons his sins and brings forth fruits of repentance. I believe, however, the long range solution to the problem is to raise a generation of children that "know Jehovah." To do this, the home must function as God intended.

The home must assume her responsibility for training her members in morality and righteousness.

A lady stood crying as the judge read the sentence which sent her fifteen year old son to prison for five years. "Why?", she cried. "What went wrong, your Honor," she sobbed. "Who's responsible for this happening to my son?," she asked. "Lady," replied the judge, "you and your husband are responsible. You failed to train the boy in the way that he should go. The blame lies at your feet." How true! The home is responsible for preparing its members for a meaningful life in society.

In this lecture, therefore, I want to share the following facts concerning our responsibilities in the home for moral training.

Remarks About Responsibility

Webster defines responsibility as, "Condition, quality, fact, or instance of being responsible; obligation, accountability, dependability; a thing or person for whom one is responsible." Men throughout the annals of history have placed great importance on responsibility. I want to share a few quotes with you that will further impress upon our minds the necessity of fulfilling our God-given responsibilities:

- * Abraham Lincoln said, "You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today."
- * Another has said, "Responsibility without accountability brings no results."
- * Sir Josiah Stamp wrote in *The English Digest*, "It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we cannot dodge the consequences of dodging our responsibilities."
- * An unknown author wrote, "We measure ourselves by the responsibility we shoulder successfully."
- * Daniel Webster was once asked, "What is the most important thought you ever entertained?" He replied, after a moment's reflection, "The most important thought I ever had was my individual responsibility to God."

Each of these quotes inspires us to accept our responsibility. There is something about the word that excites us. It is imperative, therefore, that we really understand it.

A teenager answered an advertisement for a responsible boy. "What makes you think you're responsible?" asked the employer. "Oh, every job I have ever had so far," the young man answered, "whenever anything went wrong, the boss has always said to me, 'You're responsible!'" "

Let's not be like this young fellow, and be responsible for the wrong thing.

Bible Emphasis Upon Responsibility

It is to the Bible that we must turn for real instructions on responsibility in the home. God's Word places the father and mother responsible for training in the home. The father is the head and, therefore, must take the lead in the home. When he functions the home functions; when he fails the home fails. Some of the specific responsibilities of the father and husband are as follows:

First, he must leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife. This has been God's divine plan since the beginning (Gen. 2:24). "Oneness" is the foundation for a strong home. This "oneness" must be maintained through "thick and thin." It is a good influence for good; especially, as the children view it day by day.

Second, the husband must love the wife. Paul wrote, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). Love is the "glue" that holds the marriage and home together. The person who said, "The best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother," was right on target. None will deny the power of love for good within the home.

Third, the man is to be the "bread winner." After his sin in the Garden, Adam was told, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground . . ." (Gen. 3:19). This is why Paul later wrote, "But if any provide not for his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). Today, many husbands think that it is the wife's job to work and help make ends meet. Not so! It's his responsibility.

Fourth, he must be the head of the house. He wears the pants, not his wife. The ERA, however, would like to reverse

this formula set forth by God. But it still stands. After the fall God said to Eve, “. . . in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. 3:16). The apostle Paul also stresses this truth in Ephesians 5:23-31 and 1 Corinthians 11:3. The man *must* take the lead in the home.

Fifth, the father is responsible for training his children. In Ephesians 6:4 Paul wrote, “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” The emphasis in this verse is upon *education*. Fathers must see to it that their children are educated. While this may include the three “R’s,” and be a good proof-text for Christian education, it specifically deals with the fourth “R”—righteousness. A good pattern to follow in the home for educating our children in righteousness is Deuteronomy 6:6-9:

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gate.

Verse twelve of this chapter tells us why the word must be taught in such a fashion: “. . . beware lest thou forget the Lord.” This principle from the Old Testament is good advice for today (cf. Rom. 15:4). Teaching God’s Word is a must for moral integrity.

Many parents train their children to be everything but a servant of God. Some even think that they can turn this responsibility over to someone else. Thus, the church and other institutions are given the job of training Johnny and Susie in righteousness. This is wrong! While the church and Christian school may assist, it is not the total answer. The home is the key. The home is a “seminary.” A seminary is a “seed bed.” In this “seed bed,” which is the heart of family members (Lk. 8:11-15), righteousness and morality must be sown.

In the home morality *must* be taught from “A” to “Z”. Some of the major areas that must be stressed are as follows. In the home children must be taught to (1) respect the laws of the land. Paul’s teachings in Romans 12:18-13:8, must be obeyed and stressed. (2) They must be taught to be honest in every dealing with their fellow man. How many boys have grown up to become cheaters on their Income Tax because dad was? Scores! (3) They must be taught to be truthful at all cost. This is especially needed in the day of the “white lie.” (4) They must be taught that drinking, gambling, dancing, smoking, partying, drug abuse, and such like, *are wrong* (Gal. 5:19-21). (5) Purity of speech, dress and life habits must be taught and exemplified in the home. (6) Prayer and Bible study must occur on a daily basis. Christ must be the true “head of the house.” (7) Fairness and justice must be taught in the home, as well as demonstrated. I wonder how many little boys that have been encouraged by their fathers to watch out for policemen while they speed, will grow up to be law violators? (8) Respect for the rights and property of others must be stressed in the home. Our society is full of irresponsibility in this area. This is the case because people leave home with this attitude. Junior destroys property because he wasn’t taught not to. (9) Respect for all men, as beings created in the image of God, must be practiced and taught in the home. Men hate other men because they learned it at home. (10) Repentance and forgiveness must be practiced on a daily basis in the home. Many children have never heard their father admit that he was wrong, much less sinful, in any situation. Such conduct fosters parents being called hypocrites by their children. Let’s be honest with one another!

It should be pointed out that the wife and mother has a great responsibility assigned to her in the home by God. Together, she and her husband mold the future of their home and children. She must, just as the husband and father, be faithful to her God-ordained role within the home. Someone has rightly said, trying to point out the influence of a mother, “The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world.” Another has said, “I am what I am, because of my mother.” The wife and mother’s influence upon the morality of the family members is

stressed in the following points. Notice some things that the wife and mother should be.

First, she must be in subjection to her husband. Peter wrote, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the behavior of the wives" (1 Pet. 3:1). A wife and mother who rebels against this divine injunction is teaching her children to be rebellious, too.

Second, she is to bear children, guide the home, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully (1 Tim. 5:14). Many children speak "reproachfully" because this is not the case in many homes.

Third, she must dress properly. Paul wrote, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but with good works" (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). Many girls dress immodestly because mom dresses immodestly. Mom dresses immodestly because "dad" (her husband) lets her.

Fourth, she is to be a marital partner, both physically and spiritually, to her husband (1 Cor. 7:1-5; Heb. 13:1-5).

Fifth, she must not be contentious. The wise man wrote, "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman" (Prov. 21:19). A contentious spirit is catching!

Sixth, she must not disgrace her husband (Prov. 12:4). This occurs when she fails to function in her God-ordained role as wife and mother.

Seventh, she must be a person who works on having a meek and quiet spirit (1 Pet. 3:4).

Eighth, she must be discreet, chaste, keeper at home, good, obedient to her husband, that the word of God be not blasphemed (Tit. 2:5).

If morality is properly taught in the home, mothers and fathers *must be* what God intended. No matter what they may say, or how loudly they may shout for respect and obedience, the child will be influenced by their actions, which in most cases, sad to say, is not in harmony with God's will. In dealing

with their children, many parents give in because they've given out. J. Edgar Hoover was on target when he said, "Only fair but stern action against delinquent parents and snarling young thugs can bring a halt to the present plague of lawlessness."

Discipline is the crying need of the hour in most American homes. Spare the rod when Junior is willful and disobedient—and when he grows up he'll probably carry one (or a knife or gun). Not only must morality be taught and demonstrated, it must also be enforced. The home is the place to begin! If we don't begin there, *failure* is the sure reward. Arnold J. Toynbee said, "Homes are the building blocks of civilization." This is true because the home is the chief school of human virtues. We must do our *home work*!

An Example Of Failure

"Failure" is one of the saddest words in the human vocabulary. It says that something was attempted, but was not achieved. In many cases, however, nothing was attempted; therefore, nothing was achieved. In some cases failure may not matter. But in the matter of proper moral training in the home, it does matter. Eternally so. A man may succeed in every area of endeavor, and if he fails in the home, he is a failure with a capital F. No man can be considered a success who has failed in his home. And no man can be considered a failure who has succeeded in his home.

Can you name the man, or one man, that was a failure relative to raising his children? I am asking for a Bible character. The first name that comes to my mind is Eli. Eli, the man who was a priest and judge in the nation of Israel. The man, above all men, who should have taught and prepared his children for a good, moral life in Jehovah's service. But he didn't. He failed.

Notice some of the sins Eli's sons committed, as recorded in 1 Samuel 2:12-25:

First, it is said that "they knew not the Lord" (2:12). How can we account for this? These men grew up in the home of a priest. A religious leader who represented the people to God. Evidently while he was busy teaching and helping others, he

neglected his own. What a tragedy. This, however, did not end with Eli. Preachers are doing it today. We must not neglect to teach our own.

Second, they violated God's law concerning sacrifices (2:15). In the Law it was taught (Lev. 3:3-5, 16) that God must receive His portion of the offering, first. But the sons of Eli violated the law and took the first for themselves. Again, how sad for the priest's children to "worship" God in error. Eli had failed to bring them up in the way that they should go.

Third, they hated the offerings ordained by God (2:17). This helps us to understand why they disobeyed the law. They didn't love the things of the Lord. One, as a general rule, would assume that the children of Eli would grow to have the same disposition as their father. But they didn't. And children are no different today. Parents, therefore, must teach and exemplify a love for God and His Word. This, as stated before, is the basis of morality.

Fourth, they were guilty of immorality. Specifically, the sin of fornication. In verse 22 we read, "Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." How sad for a father who stands for purity and morality to hear such a report concerning his sons. One is made to wonder what the old man was thinking when he asked, "Why do ye such things?" Maybe deep within, he is also wondering why he let them grow into such immorality. I know I would be, if it happened to my children.

Fifth, they had an evil influence upon God's people. No man is an island. What we do has an effect upon others. Eli said to his sons, "Nay my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress" (2:24). All of us have heard the little joke about the preacher's children being so bad because they play with the members' children. The opposite may be true, too. Eli's neglect had consequences beyond the destruction of his sons. It reached a nation.

Sixth, they rejected the counsel of their father. "Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them" (2:25). I doubt if this was

the first time they had rejected the voice of their father. Somewhere along the way the habit was begun. Somewhere along the way Eli let them get away with rejecting his counsel. Now he is reaping the rewards of it.

In 1 Samuel 2:27-36 we have the prediction by God that Eli's sons would reap what they had sown (cf. Gal. 6:5-8; Num. 32:23). Later in 1 Samuel 3:13 we read why God is sending such a harsh judgment upon the house of Eli. Notice the following words, as God speaks to Samuel concerning Eli's house: "For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity *which he knoweth*; because his sons made themselves vile, *and he restrained them not*." Let's read that last statement again, "*And he restrained them not*." Eli failed! He was responsible before God for the morality of his sons, but he neglected it. The priest and judge failed his sons. The spiritual leader of others failed his sons. The man who was busy for God was too busy for his sons. The man with the answers did not take time to hear the questions of his sons. The man with an eye for the things of God did not see his own sons slipping into sin. The man who challenged others to live by the law failed to obey it himself.

Eli has many successors. They are rich and poor; educated and uneducated; religious and nonreligious; concerned and unconcerned. May God help us to learn a lesson from Eli. We would do well to remember, or read, the account in 1 Samuel often. It may be a good idea to print a little card with the words—"*Remember Eli!*"—and place it in a location where we can read it daily.

Conclusion

In this lesson we have tried to stress the importance and necessity for moral training in the home. We have seen that the Bible places the responsibility upon the shoulders of the mother and father for this training. It was especially emphasized that the father must take the lead. Because as a general rule, where he leads the family will follow. "One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters," said George Herbert.

As parents, grandparents, and children, we must all resolve to take a stand for morality. This stand must begin in the

home. From there it must permeate into every area of society. From there it must go forth into the church. From the home the battle must be launched to bring America back to righteousness. From the home mothers and fathers, children, and grandparents, must go forth saying, “. . . as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah” (Josh. 24:15). Because “righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34). As God and the world look into your home, “What have they seen in thine house?” (Isa. 39:4).

Biographical Sketch

FRED HOUSE

Brother Fred House is currently preaching for the church of Christ in Jasper, Tennessee. He attended David Lipscomb College and has been preaching for fourteen years. Brother House has taught Bible at the Madison Academy Christian School in Huntsville, Alabama. He has been the speaker on daily radio programs in the following cities: Sweetwater, Tenn., Leland, Miss., and Natchez, Miss. He presently speaks on a weekly radio program in Jasper, Tenn. Among his varied experiences as a preacher he has appeared as a panel member on the television program "Know Your Bible" in Anniston, Alabama. Also, he has helped to conduct youth camps for about four years.

He is married to the former Mildred Joy Meadow of Humphreys County, Tenn., and they have three children.

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The Sin Of Sodom

Fred D. House

It is a great privilege to be a member of the church of our Lord. The one that He gave His life for, as brought out in Acts 20:28, and to have the precious promises that come to us from Him, in His Divine and Holy Word. To know that we can have life eternal, if we obey those things that He has given us through the inspired Volume. To be able to go forth and proclaim the Good News of that gospel to mankind throughout the world, that they may know the truth, that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, and that they, too, can have the distinct privilege of being a member of that church for which He died and have the precious promises He has given through His Divine Word.

May we ever be busy proclaiming the Good News to all mankind, that they may be saved; and to the church, that it may be edified and grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

May we never, my brethren, grow tired of the Scriptures that we have heard in years past, that have been taught to us by those who have loved and defended the truth. May we still understand that the Bible is the message of God, that we are the light of the world, that we are a city that is set on a hill and cannot be hid. May we never grow tired of the truth that Paul proclaimed to the brethren at Corinth in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new."

Let us be actively engaged in teaching these simple truths to mankind everywhere, at all times.

My brethren, the New Testament church was aggressive. It was, and is, the pillar and ground of the truth, as stated by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:15. It waged a relentless warfare against every form of evil. Christ, its head, was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, as stated by John in 1 John 3:8. No truce or terms can be made with the enemy—we must fight the good fight of faith, as Paul stated in 1 Timothy 6:12. Yet, there are some in and many out of the church that would not know the truth if they met it in the middle of the street. They do not have sufficient convictions to argue about anything. In order for the church to stand, for truth to be seen and heard by all, we must be a people, of all people, who are militant. A vigorous and determined attack on the enemy of righteousness must be launched all along the line at all times.

I am afraid, my brethren, that those things which the Bible, God's Word, speaks out against, many are now saying you can overlook. A new, more permissive society is taking shape. We, as God's children, must fight the new permissiveness with our dying breath. Paul, in fact, commands it. He says in Romans 12:1, 2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

There have been many battles that have faced the church down through the years. Each time anything has faced us, in trying to destroy the truth, our brethren have stood up, with Bibles in hand and heart, and fought that problem. Years ago there was the question concerning music—our brethren met that with a "Thus saith the Lord." Then there were the "antis," who came along to disrupt the unity of the church and turn some aside from God and His way. Again, my brethren stood, with Bible in hand, and fought that great problem. May it be understood this day, my friends and brethren, that we are not out of the fighting business yet. We are to continue going with the truth in our heart and opposing error, and teach it to mankind everywhere.

This day we must fight the great fight against immorality that faces the church. God's Way must always be stood up for; in fact, the inspired writers of the New Testament emphasized this many times and in many places. Paul said in Ephesians 6:10, ". . . my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We must stand then, but we must be properly equipped to stand against the evils that the devil places before us. In Ephesians 6:14, he says, "Stand therefore . . ."

There has always been a marked difference between the righteous and the wicked in God's Word. No time in the past, today, or ever, shall God look and say, I cannot tell the difference between the righteous and the wicked, nor does it make any difference. There has always been, by the Word of God, a marked difference between the two.

When we talk about the sin of homosexuality, or the sin of Sodom, we speak of that which is sin, we speak of that which is shameful, we speak of that which is wicked and nowhere in the Bible does it ever come close to being categorized as righteousness. In Romans 1, Paul spoke, by the pen of inspiration, and said in verses 26 and 27, "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." In Romans 1:29, it says that they were "Being filled with all unrighteousness . . ." Then note verse 32, "Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

Speaking of unrighteousness, and that they have pleasure in it, note Paul's instructions and comments concerning the people at Thessalonica. In 2 Thessalonians 2:12, the writer says, "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." In this verse, then, we see a marked difference in righteousness and wickedness.

But in talking about the sin of Sodom, let's go back to Genesis, where you will recall, Lot had pitched his tent toward Sodom. Sodom has stood out all through the ages, as a representation of wickedness, never righteousness. It was revealed unto Abraham, from a messenger of God, that the Lord would destroy Sodom; and, knowing Lot was there, he asked the messenger of the Lord if He would spare them if fifty righteous could be found, and then forty, and then thirty, and then twenty, and finally ten. The word was, that if ten righteous could be found in Sodom, they would not be destroyed—ten righteous could not be found in that city. Yet, we find Abraham saying if there could be, and the Lord giving instructions if there were, they would not be destroyed. But what could be found were the wicked. Note what is said in Genesis 18:23, the marked difference between the two, "Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" It was God, my brethren, not man, that drew the distinction between the two. Today, we have those that say there is no difference, that the wicked and the righteous should be classified together, and that no difference should be made between the two. But God made a difference, and he is saying to us that we need to make a difference. Note what other passages of the Bible say concerning the righteous and the wicked.

First the righteous—it is stated that all the acts of God are labeled as righteous, not wicked. 1 Samuel 12:7 says, "Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord . . ." In Psalms 1:6, we read, "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." The ungodly shall perish, not the righteous! In Psalms 19:9, the Bible says, "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." In Psalms 119:160, it says, "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth forever;" but to make it plain, he said in Psalms 146:8, ". . . the Lord loveth the righteous."

Now let us note what the Bible says regarding the wicked. It is not stated the same way concerning the righteous; in fact, He said in Exodus 23:7, ". . . I will not justify the wicked."

Those who lived in Sodom, that could be found in abundance, were wicked people. For Abraham said, "Would you

destroy the righteous with the wicked, if ten righteous could be found?" My brethren, ten wicked could be found, but ten righteous were not there, and the Bible says that God ". . . will not justify the wicked" (Ex. 23:7). Those living in Sodom were practicing and living in the shame of the sin of homosexuality; and the Bible says, "they will be destroyed." In Psalms 7:11, "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day." In Psalms 119:155, the Bible says, "Salvation is far from the wicked . . ."—please take note of that verse, "Salvation is far from the wicked. . . ." In 1 Corinthians 5:13, Paul said, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." In Psalms 9:17, the Bible says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"—but there is an answer to those people that are classified as wicked and outside of Christ our Lord. The answer is found in Isaiah 55:7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Those, then, that are living in wickedness and not in righteousness, need to return unto the Lord, and unto the things that the Bible has instructed us to do. I believe with these passages of God's Divine Word placed before us, that we can see, in fact anyone who is blind in one eye and can't see out of the other can see, that it is shameful, that it is sinful, and therefore, will cause a person to be lost—but some will not see.

For instance, I would like to refer you to an article that appeared in the *Commercial Appeal*, Memphis, July 3, 1976. There is meeting in that city, a church for the homosexuals, which is called the Metropolitan Community Church (M.C.C.). A reporter went there one day and interviewed some of its members. He comments on it, and I quote, "Basically, the M.C.C. membership is composed of deeply religious Christians, who are seeking to worship and have fellowship with other homosexuals, the leader said. The sermon, that was delivered during the Thursday night service, was based on John 3:16. The male worship coordinator, who had received some theological training (but had not been ordained) read John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. . . ." The twenty-eight year old man continued to read the

passage and talk to the congregation about its meaning." You will notice that it says, ". . . God so loved the world. . . ." It does not say the homosexual, the male or the female world, it says the world; and we, brothers and sisters, are part of that world. Then the reporter interviewed and talked with one of the women there, and we continue to quote, "After the services, a lesbian, in her late forties, said during her interview that she had attended M.C.C. since it was organized six months ago. She said, 'I have gone to gay bars and entertained friends in my home, but this is the best thing that has happened to me. I belong to a church of Christ, where I teach Sunday School and participate in everything, but there has always been something missing. The Lord is such an important person in my life that I need a home where I can praise, and love, and honor Him freely. M.C.C. has helped bring me closer to the Lord by associating with people of my own identity. I can feel the presence of God here and I think my faith in God is stronger—I am a better member of the church of Christ because of it.' The woman said that homosexuality was labeled a sin during a sermon at her church of Christ recently. She said, 'I was embarrassed and hurt. I feel like I am a person and I am the way God made me. I am His creation and I do not understand how God's creation can be a sin, when I am only the way He made me.' "

In making comment concerning this interview, the man said that the membership was composed of "deeply religious Christians." May I say this day that there is not a one who holds membership in that organization who is deeply religious or Christlike. He read from John 3:16, saying that, ". . . God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. . . ." It is a fact, my friends, that God does love the world, and He loves those people there, that day and this day. He has never ceased to love sinful mankind, but He has never, at any time, loved the sinful things in which a man participates. God has always loved me, but He has never, at any time, loved the sinful things that I have done. It goes that way for all mankind at all times. God always loves them, but never at any time, does He love the sinful things that they do. It reminds me of a passage that we find in Matthew 13:15, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and

hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." This woman said in her interview that she "felt embarrassed and hurt" because of a sermon that her preacher preached at a church of Christ labeling homosexuality as a sin. I say, my friends, thank God for such a preacher and proclaimer of the truth! She said that there had "always been something missing in her life," and that something is the truth of God's Divine Word. Her comments bring to mind a passage in Matthew 15:12, 13, "Then came His disciples, and said unto Him, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But He answered and said, Every plant, which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."

Friends and brethren of mine, I ask the old question again—whatever happened to sin? Today, America is materially rich, but morally rotten. Our heads and hands have outrun our hearts—we have gained the world and lost our souls.

I saw a highway sign one time that read, "Dirt for Sale," and reflected that it should be hung over many bookracks, many homes and many, many hearts. The early church opposed sin in a manner that sounds almost unchristian to some today, but note what Jesus had to say about it in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Jesus was not afraid that someone would be offended, He spoke the truth of His Father. When they would not listen and even sought occasion to kill Him, He said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. . . ."

I am convinced that the sad state of the church today is due in great measure to many pulpits without freedom but with personal sin, fear of man, lack of convictions, and all of these can bind a preacher. Paul, surely, was in Nero's prison, but he was never Nero's prisoner. America is living in a sewer described best in Romans 1:26-32. The new morality and situation ethics are outward signs of moral cancer. There is a trend, today, to put a new robe on the prodigal son while he is still feeding the hogs, and others would put the ring on his finger

while he is still in the pig stench. Some would advocate bigger and better hog pens, they would kill the fatted calf for a generation that is still living on the husks that the hogs would eat. Are we, brethren, growing tired of old fashioned preaching? We are no longer, it seems, homesick for heaven. Nothing is going to happen until sin is exposed and sinners in the church, both high and low, are rebuked; and, if they will not repent, have fellowship withdrawn from them. Jesus Christ was the most disturbing person that one could find and read about—He was always offending someone. He offended the scribes and the Pharisees, His disciples, and His brothers; He called King Herod a fox and the religious leaders hypocrites, whited sepulchres and children of the devil. He kept the neighborhood in a turmoil, died, went back to heaven and sent His apostles out to keep up the disturbance. The early church was accused of being drunk. Paul was a world upsetter—he exceedingly troubled Philippi, created no small stir in Ephesus and, imprisoned, prayed down an earthquake. Christianity shook the world and it can again this day.

Where are the congregations, elders and preachers that will not only teach the love of Jesus, but will also cry out long and loud against sin—all sin? It seems nobody sins anymore, but that it is, many times, just labeled as being sick. Once, when one was a drunkard, he was in sin and known as a drunkard, but now, he is suffering from sickness or a disease. At one time, a homosexual person was avoided and considered a sinner in the worst way. Then, that changed from being a sin, to being sick; but now, even that has changed. They are not even recognized as being sick, they are considered a normal person, who expresses himself in a sexual manner different from most other people. They argue that one person may own a Ford and another a Chevrolet—they differ in opinion, but neither one stands condemned. One person may own and live in a brick house on a hill, and another in a wood frame house in the valley. They differ in opinion regarding the house one lives in, but neither one stands condemned, they argue. Now, they say, that there are just different ways in which you express your love for another and have relationships, one with another, but neither one stands condemned. I deny that from the bottom of my heart and from the authority of God's Word. I may have the

privilege and right to own both a Ford and a Chevrolet, and stand right in the sight of God. I may have enough resources to own the brick house on the hill and, at the same time, own the wood frame house in the valley, and still be right in the sight of God. God has not legislated on what kind of car I must drive or on what kind of home I must live in. But when I practice those things in the car or in the house that are strictly forbidden by God's Divine Word, that are spoken out against in the Bible by God, concerning that, I have sinned—it is no longer left up to a matter of opinion.

Homosexuality, the sin and shame therein, is brought out that way, by God in His Word. It never has been right, it is not right today and it never shall be right. We need to mark those who are committing such sins, stand up and preach against such, and avoid such. Note what the Word of God has to say: Leviticus 18:22, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is an abomination." Deuteronomy 23:17, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel." 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived . . . neither effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God." Matthew 19:4, 5, ". . . He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female. . . . For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife. . . ." My brethren, sin has always been present, we need not think that it will go away, and that in this age in which we live, with all of its intelligence and gadgets, that it will change one thing from being sinful into righteous. What has always been sin, is still sin to this day. And may we, like the apostles and prophets of old and the preachers that have gone before us, stand with a "Thus saith the Lord" and condemn it from the mountaintops. For sin will cause mankind to lose his soul forever and spend it in a place prepared for the devil and his angels.

May we, therefore, stand up and preach everywhere, of the horrors of hell and what will send mankind there. May we preach on the beauty of heaven, but may we have it understood that man cannot go to heaven carrying the world upon his back or leaving the Word of God. When we reach the portals of Glory

and hear our Lord say, "Well done," it will be because we have lived in accordance with His Divine Word. When we forsake that Divine Standard, we will hear Him then say, "Depart from Me, ye that worketh iniquity, I never knew you."

The parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 is one of the Lord's most famous parables. The parables we find in Luke 15 show how men become lost and how the hope of heaven is taken away, unless the lost is found, the wayward come home, and sin is repented of.

Some may be lost like the sheep, by and through their own ignorance, inattention and carelessness. Some are lost like the coin, through the thoughtlessness of others. Some are lost like the prodigal son in a far country. It makes little difference how men become lost—they are lost. The sheep was lost, the coin was lost, and the boy was lost.

That which God put in His sacred Volume about Sodom is a sin, that, it seems, had far outstripped common sinners. They had sunk to a wickedness of which shame prevents most people to speak of. Let every child of God be warned that there are some among us today who would have us reject the distinction between the children of God and the children of the devil.

The decision to be made by the church has been made clear by the Holy Scriptures. No homosexual person may be accepted into its fellowship, for they are classified as wicked people (Gen. 18:23), and it is stated plainly in Exodus 23:7 that, ". . . I will not justify the wicked."

May we then keep in mind that God's Word is what will face us in the day of judgment (Jno. 12:48); and, it is stated by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Here we have the instructions from God, in His Word, in righteousness. It does not lead us, it never has led us and it never will lead us in the ways of ungodliness and wickedness, but in the paths of righteousness.

May we, today and forever, follow after the Divine Word of God, then we will be Christlike and when we die we will go to Heaven.

Biographical Sketch

THOMAS F. EAVES

Thomas F. Eaves is a native of Chattanooga, Tennessee. He was a member of the East Chattanooga congregation where his father served as an elder many years before his death. He was graduated from High School in 1950, and entered the Air Force the same year. While stationed in the Philippine Islands, he preached for the congregation on Clark Air Force Base. After returning to the United States, he preached for the Augusta Road congregation in Greenville, South Carolina, while stationed at Donaldson Air Force Base. Upon his discharge from the service in 1954, he married the former Patricia Ann Kirby of Greenville, South Carolina, and entered Harding College in September 1954.

While in college he preached for the church in Bethesda, Arkansas. He received his B.A. in Bible from Harding, and in August of 1958 received his M.A. in Bible from the Harding Graduate School of Bible and Religion.

Upon graduation he moved to Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Canada, to preach for the North Weyburn church. After he returned from Canada, he preached for congregations in Jasper and Lenoir City, Tennessee. Moving to Huntsville, Texas, he served as director of the Bible Chair of the church of Christ on the campus of Sam Houston State University. He taught Bible and was Assistant Professor of Bible. He spent the first three months of 1970 in Karachi, Pakistan, teaching in the Karachi Training Institute. From November 1970 to July 1974 he preached for the College Avenue church of Christ in El Dorado, Arkansas.

Since July 1974, he has taught and served as dean in the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions in Knoxville, Tennessee.

He serves as staff writer for **The Christian Family Magazine** and **The World Evangelist**. He has held meetings in Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, Texas, and West Virginia. The Eaves have two children, Mary Lutricia, 16 years, and Tommy, age 13.

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Television's Influence On Christians

Thomas F. Eaves

Perhaps the greatest teacher of the present generation is the media of television. It teaches history and allows one to be present when history is being made. Through television man has walked on the moon with the astronauts, been present at the inauguration of Presidents, and participated in hundreds of other notable history making events. Some stations are educational in nature teaching English, Math, and other academic subjects.

Television is also an entertainer. Without leaving the home individuals can enjoy various entertaining programs, and can possess a ticket to every kind of sporting event whether in this country or half way around the world.

Television has opened to children and adults a world of beauty, activity, and travel. With a flip of a switch one can travel to different countries and even to locations in the United States that past generations never had the opportunity of visiting in a life time.

All in all television is an effective visual aid and a very effective teaching tool.

Influence Of Television On Our Society

Television, because it is an effective teacher and provides a wide area of entertainment, has made a tremendous impact on our society. It is estimated that more than 98 percent of the homes in America have at least one set and that in the average home a television is on more than forty hours a week.¹ In 1973 Americans invested over \$3.6 billion in new TV sets.²

When an average child graduates from High School he will have been in school for about 10,800 hours, but he will have watched TV for more than 20,000 hours.³ It is also estimated that between the ages of two and sixty that a person will view TV for approximately 3,000 days or 9 full years of life.⁴

The influence of television on Americans and the home has been dramatically brought out by a study conducted by a top educational psychologist.

After a series of general questions designed to put them at ease, 156 children, between the age of 4 and 6 were asked: "Which do you like better, TV or daddy? TV or Mommy?" Only 56% preferred their father to TV, while 80% liked their mother more than TV.

Television is upstaging daddy in the home. It's a definite and formidable rival for the affections of the child, and nearly half the fathers are loosing the battle to the TV set, said study coordinator Jung Bay Ra, Ph.D., of Longwood College in Farmville, Va. "The father-child attachment has never been as strong as the mother-child relationship in our culture. This study seems to show that frequent TV viewing and the child's emotional attachment to the set may be further weakening the father-child relationship." Dr. Ra concludes that many children like TV more than their fathers because TV is a more readily available companion and is more entertaining to be with. Also, many children feel more comfortable with TV than with their fathers, she said.⁵

Since television is in nearly every home in America, is watched many hours by all ages, and teaches and influences both young and old in many critical areas, parents should take a long close look at the programs which are viewed in their homes.

A Look Into The World Of Television

As Christians, our guideline for living is the Word of God. Paul states in Romans 12:1-2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." When any individual or media begins influencing society as much as television does, Christians should determine if the influence is for good or evil. That the trend of television programs is on the down swing is evident from the following fact.

The Federal Communications Commission has received substantial evidence that parents, the Congress, and others are deeply concerned. In 1972, the Commission received over 2,000 complaints about violent or sexually-oriented programs. In 1974, that volume had increased to nearly 25,000. Further, the Commission has received petitions to deny broadcast license renewals and petitions for rulemaking expressing the desire that the Commission take action with respect to televised violence.⁶

Let's look at some of the trends in television which are bringing objections to the FCC, Congress, Networks, and local TV stations.

Televiolence

One social scientist estimates that by the age of 14, the average child has witnessed 11,000 "murders" on television—not to mention thousands of "fights," "robberies," "muggings," "rapes," and "kidnappings."⁷ This violence does have a definite effect on the child.

Results of that one-year study by the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior, added support to the view that a steady stream of violence on television may have an adverse effect upon our society—and particularly on children. Continuing studies funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare during 1972-1974, as reported in the April 3-5, 1974 hearings before Senator Pastore's Subcommittee, gave further evidence of the harmful effects of televised violence on children.⁶

Don Johnson, president of the J. Walter Thompson Company (the nation's largest advertising agency), said that an analysis of existing scientific and social research on TV violence reveals the following areas where he believes "damage is caused."

1. "If the children are constantly given models of violent behavior, their behavior will probably turn violent."
2. "Incidents have been reported in which unstable adults have modeled crimes on television dramas."
3. "Excessive doses of violence tend to desensitize even stable adults. They become indifferent to the suffering of others."
4. "Heavy watching of TV violence contributes to the tide of paranoia that afflicts a major part of the population . . . caution is a useful emotion. Terror is not."⁸

Violence is not compatible with Christianity. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:18, "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." Also, to be able to carry out the evangelistic and benevolent work of the Kingdom (Mk. 16:16; Gal. 6:10), the Christian does not need to be desensitized or become indifferent to the needs of God's creatures. Christian parents need to be aware of the fact that many programs are violent in nature, have a harmful effect on their children and guard them from such influence.

Research has found that the most violent program (Fall 1976) on TV is "Quest," the NBC Network showed the most violent programs during the Fall 1976 season, and that Chevrolet sponsored the most prime time television violence.⁹ A more detailed survey appeared in the *National Enquirer*.

A leading consumer group has named the 10 sponsors that bring you the most TV violence—and concerned citizens are getting ready to organize a boycott of their products.

Tegrin Shampoo and Burger King sponsor the most violence according to the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting (NCCB)—followed by Clorox, Colgate-Palmolive, Gillette Hair Products, Breck Shampoo, Ford Motor Co., Johnson & Johnson, American Motors and Lysol Products.¹⁰

Because of objections, some companies are refusing to have their products connected with violence orientated programs.

But now a growing number of advertisers are taking steps to insure that when violence rips across the TV Screen, the commercial that follows will not be theirs.

The latest to announce such intentions have been Best Foods and Samsonite. They join a body of similarly motivated companies such as Proctor and Gamble, General Foods, McDonalds, Hunt-Wesson, Pfizer, Toyota, Ralston Purina, Clorox, Johnson & Johnson, Gillette, Bristol-Myers, Kraft and General Mills.¹¹

It is good to see that some who have been advertising on the more violent programs have changed their concept of what is acceptable television programing.

Television Propagates Immorality

A majority of television programs which are shown today have no redeeming value and trample underfoot the principles of God's Word concerning purity of living.

In one survey it was found that in one night's viewing (May 13, 1976) of prime time television the ten commandments were broken forty-four times.¹²

Not only do many TV programs feed the American people so called entertainment in which human beings are being raped, tortured, abused, but they also suggest ways of life to be acceptable which are contrary to God's way of holiness. The sin of adultery is not a sin according to TV writers; on the contrary, it is a normal way of life. Adultery is glorified in the "bed hopping," "mate swapping" soap operas which are viewed by approximately 20 million Americans each day. Brother Jack Exum asked,

What if you took "Ryan's Hope" and "All My Children," and sent them to "The Doctors" in "General Hospital."

Could they find in their "Search for Tomorrow," the "Guiding Light," or will the "Young and Restless," in "Another World" find "The Love of Life."

"As the World Turns," will those at "Somerset" find "The Edge of Night" or "One Life to Live" in "Days of Our Lives."¹³

The modern "Soaps" are very successful in presenting a perverted picture of family life, a picture which is directly opposed to God's way of life. This is not only true of "soap

operas" but detective programs as well like the May 13, 1976, segment of "The Streets of San Francisco" in which adultery was recommended as a solution to a woman's problems.

Perhaps the most insidious influence of TV is not presenting actions or activities as right or wrong or even questionable but in presenting sinful and ungodly acts as *an accepted way of life*. With its tremendous appeal and influence TV conditions the American people to accept adultery, drinking alcoholic beverages, homosexuality, cursing, and other forms of wickedness as the American Way of Life. On the May 13th showing of the two hour pilot for the Fall series of *Quest* the program glorified the drinking of alcoholic beverages, prostitution, and base language. On this program a prostitute procured a bed partner for the night as casually as one would say "Good morning," and also as if it were the accepted way of life. God's Word clearly states that no adulterers and fornicators can enter heaven (Rev. 21:8; Gal. 5:19-21).

Homosexuality is another reoccurring subject or theme in many television programs. Homosexual activists are especially pleased by what they regard as increasingly thoughtful treatment in major television programs.¹⁴ Specifically mentioned in the "thoughtful treatment of homosexual activities" were the ABC series "Family" which made its debut with a program concerning homosexuality, the show "Alice" and "The Nancy Walker Show" in which the star's male secretary is an open homosexual. The problem is not in treating the subject of homosexuality but treating it as a normal way of life instead of the sin it is (Rom. 1:26-27).

Television Emphasizes The Standards Of The World

Many television programs treat the use of impure language, immodesty, use of alcohol as just the average way of life. The Bible, which is the Christian's standard, teaches that the Christian's language should be pure (Matt. 12:34-37; Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:29) that it may give grace to them that hear. The Word of God also teaches that the Christian is to dress in modest apparel that purity of mind can be manifested through purity of life (1 Tim. 2:9; Gal. 5:19; Matt. 5:27-28).

The problem of alcohol in our society is at an epidemic stage. Americans now spend \$18 billion¹⁵ a year for alcoholic drinks with the following tragic results.

1. Alcohol is the number one health problem in the United States.
2. Alcohol is now associated with more drug-abuse deaths than any other legal or illegal drug according to DAWN (Drug Abuse Warning Network), a government monitoring system.¹⁶
3. Highway deaths have been rising steadily until nearly 60,000 Americans are now killed yearly. It has been shown that alcohol is involved in half of the highway fatalities.¹⁷
4. An economic cost to the nation of \$25 billion per year has been attributed to problem drinking and alcoholism.¹⁷

With this information at hand, television continues to portray only one side of the picture of alcohol—the respectable side. It is pictured as the “thing to do” and if a drunk appears in the story plot he is either a comic, or his actions are excused because he is under the influence. Never does it show the real tragedy which is found in the bottle. The Bible clearly indicates that the drunkard will have no part in the heavenly city unless he repents and serves God (Gal. 5:21; 1 Cor. 6:10).

These are a few of the areas which have gained the status of respectability on TV.

Christian's Relationship To TV

Parents should recognize the redeeming value of television. It is a media for education and entertainment. They should also be aware that the programs are not written by Christians nor are the majority written with the Christian way of life in mind. As one network official stated, “Our Broadcast Standards Department carefully examines each entertainment program at various states of production to insure that it meets generally accepted standards of taste and propriety.” However, we all know that the accepted standards of taste and propriety are not always in harmony with the Word of God. Realizing these facts Christian parents must assume the responsibility of screening the TV programs their children watch. The On/Off switch still remains the best control over what our children view, and

Christian parents should use it for the benefit of the spiritual well being of their children.

Join The Fight For Cleaner TV Programs

Several months ago concerned citizens began an effort to clean up television. This effort was directed toward the F.C.C., the major television networks, and government officials who were asked to assist in this worthy project. Most of the government leaders were sympathetic to the cause and promised support and encouragement. As far as the replies from the networks and the F.C.C., it was somewhat like the proverbial dog chasing its tail. The networks encouraged us to write the F.C.C., the F.C.C. suggested that we write the local TV stations, the local stations told us to write the major networks, so "around and around we go."

Two replies, however, are worthy of comment:

1. "If you don't like the program, turn it off."

While this is true, still it will influence for evil those who do not turn it off, and this affects society in general—where we live. The Christian is not only to refrain from evil, but is to *actively stand* against evil!

2. "Programs are produced to meet the generally accepted standards of taste and propriety."

This statement probably reflects the policy of the major networks, but it also points out very vividly that they are interested in filling the current market and feel no sense of responsibility to upgrade the moral climate of our nation. By merely filling the current market they are contributing to and creating a greater market for the programs which glorify immoral standards of living.

New Direction In The Fight For Clean Television Programs

Since the responses from the F.C.C. and networks have given absolutely no satisfaction or intention of helping with the problem, a new effort is being directed toward the sponsors of unacceptable programs.

This approach has and will bring results. In the May 3, 1976, issue of *Newsweek*, it was pointed out that KARK in Little Rock, Arkansas (after showing six episodes of the Mary Hartman show), received 1,200 names on petitions and letters and another 1,000 telephone calls. The results: the program was dropped, General Foods, Colgate-Palmolive, Campbell Soup and a dozen other major corporations refused to let their commercials run on daytime airings of "Mary Hartman."

In a letter dated June 4, 1976, Sally McGraw, Director, Audience Services for NBC, stated, "With regard to program sponsorship, advertisers have no control over the content of NBC programs, and it would be unfair to hold them accountable for any program material with which you disagree or which you find displeasing."¹⁸ True, sponsors may have no control over what is put into the program—but—they do have control over what they pay for television commercials. If there are no sponsors for the objectionable programs, the writers and producers will change the content.

We Can Clean Up Television Programs

Ms. McGraw in the same letter mentioned above further stated, "Our Broadcast Standards Department carefully examines each entertainment program at various stages of production to insure that it meets the generally accepted standards of taste and propriety." Here is the key to the whole problem. Christians must let it be known that programs are not meeting the accepted moral standards. Remember, *better television begins with you!*

What Can Be Done?

1. Write networks and local television stations and object to those programs which glorify immorality.
2. Write the sponsors of these programs, make your objections known.
3. Boycott products of those who will not use their influence for better programs.
4. Organize others to join the fight for better television.
5. When wholesome programs are televised, write a letter of appreciation to the networks and sponsors.

6. For further information, sample letters, brochures, write:

Concerned Citizens For Television
P. O. Box 2026
Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742.

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The Christian And Tobacco

Thomas F. Eaves

RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHRISTIAN TO GOD

The relationship of the Christian to Jehovah God and His Son Jesus Christ is adequately and beautifully described in the New Testament by the Apostle Paul. In Romans 7:4 Paul states that the Christian is dead to the law through the body of Christ that "he should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead." Again in Titus 1:1 Paul gives us a definition of the Christian, "Paul a servant of God." The word servant is translated bondservant (ASV) and slave (RSV). The idea expressed in this passage is that one forsakes his will and willingly binds himself to another for the purpose of service. This is exactly what the Christian does. In a very real sense the Christian belongs to God, he has given himself, bound himself, to God for the purpose of doing His will. The same was true of Jesus Christ (Jno. 4:34; 5:30; 6:38) and Paul (Phil. 1:21). The bondservant concept indicates the servant-master relationship, and the marriage concept speaks of the intimate and loving relationship between the servant and his master. In these two relationships the Christian totally belongs to God and becomes a steward of time, talents, material blessings and his physical body.

THE CHRISTIAN'S BODY BELONGS TO GOD

By Design

The Christian's body belongs to God by design. In Psalms 100:3 the Psalmist reflects the truths of Genesis 1:26-28 when he wrote, "Know ye that Jehovah, he is God: It is he that hath made us and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Again he declares, "I will give thanks unto thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well" (Psa. 139:14). Paul declares this same truth in Acts 17:28, "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." Our parents with all their knowledge, ability, and desire for children could not make us out of available material. My father was a wood worker and worked many years for Jackson Manufacturing Company in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He could take a set of blue prints and materials which were available to him and build a piece of furniture he had never seen. However, with his knowledge and ability he could not make man. We are created by God, we are His by design.

By Purchase

The Christian's body belongs to God by purchase. In 1 Corinthians 6:19 the inspired writer informs us that "and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." Paul here refers to the fleshly body of man, the temple of the Holy Spirit which is to be used to glorify our creator.

The Christian belongs to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 1:18-19 the Word declares that members of the body of Christ have been purchased not with corruptible things but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.

The temple of God in the city of Jerusalem cost somewhere between two to five billion dollars. It took 30,000 Israelites and 150,000 Canaanites seven years to build, and its grandeur was known world-wide. However, the temple of our body cost more—the blood of the sinless Son of God.

By Dedication

The Christian's body belongs to God by dedication. When we became children of God we gave ourselves to him, we became His by choice. Paul writing to the Christians at Rome referred to them as a living sacrifice. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." This concept is further seen in Philippians 1:21 and Galatians 2:20 where the inspired writer says, "for me to live is Christ and to die is gain," and "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." When we give ourselves to God by our obedience to His will (Rom. 6:17-18) we become temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19) and our lives are to bring glory and honor to Him (Matt. 5:16). Our bodies are God's by: design, purchase, and dedication; therefore our use of them must be guided by His Word, the Bible.

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS BODY

The New Testament abounds with instructions concerning the Christian's relationship to his physical body. The things Christians engage in should glorify God. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). The Christian cannot engage in the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), and is to buffet his body and keep it in submission to God's will (1 Cor. 9:27).

The Christian's body belongs to God, is controlled by God and cannot be brought under the control of any other power, whether it be a man, desire, or habit. "All things are lawful for me; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor. 5:12). Habits which control individual Christians and hinder the work or influence of the church are sin (1 Cor. 3:16-17), and habits which hinder, destroy the influence and physical bodies of Christians are sin (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

TOBACCO

When Columbus and other explorers discovered and explored America they found the natives using tobacco much as it is being used today. It was generally thought that tobacco possessed some medical properties, and that was the chief reason for its introduction and use in Europe. Tobacco was introduced into Europe between 1556 and 1565 and soon the tobacco culture spread practically into all the world. In 1613 John Rolfe sent the first shipment of Virginia tobacco from Jamestown to England.

From the beginning tobacco has had many valuable uses.

Chemical Products from tobacco are numerous. Some of them, such as nicotine sulfate, are extremely important in controlling insect pest.¹

Until the price of tobacco increased it was used in an insecticide which was marketed under the name of Black Leaf Forty. Nicotine, which is contained in tobacco, is also used as a poison. Many of you will remember the interview on the Johnny Carson Show between Mr. Carson and a deep-sea diver. The diver explained that sometimes they had to kill sharks and that the poison they used killed them in about 8 seconds. When Mr. Carson asked, "What poison is that?" the diver replied, "Nicotine." Although the word was "beeped" out, it was later identified. Tobacco has also been used in dog repellents such as "Dog-Gone." The use of tobacco, however, is not limited to products and areas which are useful to man, its consumption by man affects the lives, health, and happiness of many, many individuals.

EFFECTS OF TOBACCO ON THE HUMAN BODY

Make-Up Of Cigarette Smoke

The instant the smoker inhales he takes into his body about twenty noxious vapors. "The gas phase of cigarette smoke, with the exception of air, is found to consist principally of excess nitrogen, hydrogen, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, low molecular weight saturated and unsaturated hydrocarbons, low molecular weight oxygenated substances and small

amounts of hydrogen cyanide and methyl chloride with carbon dioxide being the major of such constituents."²

Three highly toxic substances are inhaled in cigarette smoke according to recent research. These three substances are identified as: carbon monoxide, nicotine and cancer causing carcinogens.³

Tobacco companies admit in their advertising that harmful substances are present in their products. Each ad lists the tar and nicotine content averages for each cigarette. Because of these and other harmful substances in cigarette smoke, tobacco companies by law are required to print on the package and in their ads the warning, "The Surgeon General has determined that cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health."

What Happens When You Smoke?

Quite frankly when you smoke you are committing suicide. Only the amount of time as it relates to different individuals differs.

When you smoke you take into your lungs carbon monoxide which prevents the red blood cells from picking up enough oxygen to feed the body's tissues. This deadly gas also inhibits the red cells from giving up oxygen as fast as the tissue demands it.⁴ The seriousness of this problem is seen when you realize that in cigarette smoke carbon monoxide reaches concentrations 640 times the level considered safe in industrial plants. Heavy smoking produces blood concentrations of carbon monoxide as high as 15 percent, one-third the level of "acute poisoning."³ *When you smoke you are poisoning your body.*

Another element in cigarette smoke which has an adverse effect on the body is nicotine. Inhaled cigarette smoke releases nicotine into the blood stream with the speed of an injection. The impact on the heart and blood vessels is the same as sudden fear.

The continual jolt from nicotine drives the heart to perhaps twenty extra beats per minute. This may amount to ten million extra beats every year (adding an extra year of "living" in every 3½ years) straining the heart and pounding away at clogged blood vessels.⁵

If you begin smoking when you are eighteen and smoke 30 years, by the time you are 48 years old your heart will have beat the same as a man who is 56.5 years old. Not only does the smoker draw poison into his body, *he trades years of life for a habit.*

The Innocent Suffer Too

The smoker not only destroys his own health but also harms the physical well-being of those who suffer because of his habit.

Dr. James White of the University of California at San Diego campus conducted psychometer tests on those who breathe the cigarette smoke of someone who is smoking. He stated, "your heart speeds, your breath is blocked, your hands shake, and your working efficiency is lowered when you breathe someone elses cigarette smoke." (*Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 29, 1976).

In a Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's study of 441 nonsmokers they found that 70 percent of them exposed to sustained doses of cigarette smoke suffered eye irritations. Others suffered other ill effects. (*Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 29, 1976).

Statistics show that smoke from the burning end of a cigarette is potentially more harmful than the smoke inhaled by the smoker. Dr. Raymond Slavin of St. Louis University and the American Academy of Allergy states, "There is no question that nonsmoker can develop toxic levels of carbon monoxide in smoke filled rooms." (*Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 29, 1976).

The most tragic aspect of smoking is the damage inflicted on unborn children. The smoking woman who is carrying a child:

1. robs the baby of as much as 30% of oxygen feeding the baby's tissue.³

2. transmits nicotine directly to the fetus. Today, an alarming number of cases of high blood pressure and cardiac defects are being found in infants and children. Researchers believe that the decreased oxygen supply and increased oxygen demand as nicotine drives up the fetal heart rate may cause lasting cardiac damage.³

3. There is now persuasive evidence that cancer causing carcinogens enter the blood stream from cigarette smoke inhaled by the mother during pregnancy. (Cancer is the cause of more deaths between the ages of 1 and 15 than any other disease, and a number of cancers are present at birth.)^{3,6}

Pregnant women who smoke have a greater number of stillbirths than non-smoking women; and their babies are more likely to die within the first month. Their babies more often weigh less than 5½ pounds and are more susceptible to death and disease.⁷

Isn't it tragic that the innocent suffer because of the habit?

LET'S FACE FACTS

Dr. Thomas J. Mulvaney of the Harvard Medical School describes smoking as "the single greatest preventable health hazard in the world." According to Dr. Mulvaney 300,000 deaths per year in the United States can be attributed to smoking.⁸

Let's consider the cold facts of research and results of smoking.

1. Smokers suffer 70% more heart attacks than nonsmokers.⁷

2. Heavy smokers spend twice as much time in hospitals as nonsmokers.⁸

3. Smokers risk of dying from emphysema and chronic bronchitis is 6½ to 15 times that of a nonsmoker.⁷

4. As women who smoke reach the 40-49 year age group they are likely to be as prominently wrinkled as nonsmokers 20 years older.³

5. Male smokers (45-64 age group) have 10 times the normal risk of dying of mouth cancer; and larynx cancer is six times as frequent and esophageal cancer eleven times that of the non-smoker.⁷

6. "Thus the tar that smokers inhale—more than half a cup a year for an average, pack-a-day smoker—deposits its corrosive chemicals on the delicate lung linings, and in the bronchial tree, instead of being expelled. This, scientists believe, may be how chronic bronchitis, emphysema and lung cancer start."⁹

7. Each year more than 600,000 Americans die of coronary heart disease. Thirty percent can be directly attributed to cigarette smoking. Another half-million are devastated by cerebral strokes, which account for 200,000 additional deaths and often leave survivors permanently disabled.⁵

8. Lung cancer is very rare among nonsmokers but it is the second most frequent cause of death among cigarette smokers (after heart attacks and strokes) and is related directly to the number of cigarettes smoked.⁷

9. Dr. Benjamin Byrd states, "Cigarettes are the largest and most pervasive source of fatal lung cancer in the environment that has been identified so far." Approximately 70,000 U.S. citizens die yearly from lung cancer. (*The Tennessean*, Saturday, March 27, 1976).

These facts can only be ignored to the physical and spiritual destruction of the smoker.

SIDE EFFECTS

In addition to the health problem look at other facts concerning smoking.

1. "It is impossible to determine the exact number of smokers in the U.S. but in 1975 Americans smoked 603 billion cigarettes." (*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, May 25, 1976). This equals fifty billion packs. At 40c a pack this means that Americans offered in 1975 \$20 billion of blue smoke to the god of tobacco.

2. American smokers send nearly 40 tons of solid air pollution in form of smoke particles into the skies each day.⁸

3. Cigarette butts, wrappers of cigarettes smoked daily in the U.S. add up to about 1,760 tons of trash not counting cartons and shipping boxes.⁸

Truly tobacco is a serious problem in our society. Recognizing the seriousness of the problem of smoking the American Cancer Society will spend one million dollars and utilize two million volunteers in the first year of a new five year campaign against cigarette smoking.¹⁰

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO SMOKING?

The Christian, who belongs to God, is to be guided by the Word of God. Jesus Christ is to be magnified in our bodies (Phil. 1:20), we are not to cause others to stumble (1 Cor. 8:13), we are to live in such a way to bring glory and honor to our King and Savior (Matt. 5:16), and we are not to destroy our bodies which are the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19).

Brethren, a Christian cannot smoke without violating God's will. We are God's children, let us glorify God in our bodies.

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