

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

WHEN THE UNACCEPTABLE BECOMES RESPECTABLE

By John Edwards

That which was unacceptable before God became respectable among the people of God as the blind, the lame, and the sick were offered in sacrifice to God (Lev. 22:20; Mal. 1:6-8). There are a number of things today unacceptable to God which have become respectable among men. Consider some examples:

When Men Say Homosexuality Is Just Another Lifestyle. There was a time, in this country, when the sin of homosexuality was unacceptable with many, but the unacceptable has now become respectable. The Scriptures still teach that homosexuality is *“uncleanness,” “dishonour,” “vile affections,” “against nature,” “unseemly,” “error,” “not convenient,”* and *“that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them”* (Rom. 1:24-32).

When There Are Those Who Try To Defend Social Drinking. Some agree that *“drunkenness”* is sin (Gal. 5:21), but really cannot say there is anything wrong with a little drinking. It may be argued that *“not given to much wine”* (1 Tim. 3:8) allows a little wine. First of all, there are different kinds of Bible wine — some fermented or intoxicating and some not. The context shows which is under consideration. If *“not given to much wine”* allows a little wine, does *“be not over much wicked”* (Eccl. 7:17) allow one to be a little wicked? If it is just *“excess of wine”* (1 Pet. 4:3) that is wrong, then would it be okay to be involved in a little *“riot”* (1 Pet. 4:4)? The word *“banquetings,”* in 1 Peter 4:3, is *“drinking parties,”* which takes in social drinking. Proverbs 20:1 still says, *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”*

When People Divorce And Remarry For Every Cause. Has it ever occurred to you that divorce, from the beginning, was not so (Matt. 19:3-8)? God’s marriage law, from the beginning, involved one woman for one man for life (Gen. 2:18-24). The teaching of the Lord allows only one reason for divorce and remarriage — fornication. To divorce and remarry for any other Bible cause is to commit adultery (Matt. 19:9; Rom. 7:2-3)! May we get back to that which is respectable as the Bible says, *“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge”* (Heb. 13:4).

When Gambling Is Thought Of As A Good Thing. Some try to justify gambling on the thought of all the good it does for the community. Whether in a glitz-and-mortar casino, at a racetrack, through a state-operated lottery, raffling, booth at a county fair, office pool or home on the personal computer, gambling is a form of covetousness and greed. *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows”* (1 Tim. 6:10).

When Men And Women See Nothing Wrong With Dancing. Modern dancing comes under the class of *“lasciviousness”* (Gal. 5:19), *“wanton acts or manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females, etc.”* (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*). Anyone who would try to defend such a practice would have to have low ideals and be sapped of spirituality.

When Immodest Apparel Does Not Cause Us To Blush. About the only kind of blush many know anything about these days is the kind you buy in a bottle and rub on! This is a sad commentary on our society. A reading of Genesis 3:7 & 21 will show that one may have some covering and still be naked as far as God is concerned. Hollywood has made it fashionable to parade around in immodest apparel. Yet the Bible says, *“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 (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works”* (1 Tim. 2:9-10). Have we become like those in Jeremiah’s day, concerning whom it was said,

“Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush” (Jer. 6:15)?

A thing may be respectable among men, yet be unacceptable to God. May God help us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world (Titus 2:12). ■

SODOM MOVING TOWARD US

By Michael R. Baggett

When Lot left Abraham’s household, the Bible says, Lot **“Pitched his tent toward Sodom”** (Gen. 13:12). Lot saw the well-watered land and chose to move his family, servants, and cattle toward Sodom. Later, Lot would experience much trouble in his soul over the wickedness taking place in Sodom. Homosexuality and fornication were on every corner. One only can read the account found in Genesis Chapter Nineteen to grasp an understanding of the depravity of the people of Sodom. It was so bad that not even ten righteous people could be found out of the whole city (Gen. 18:32). Many sermons have been preached about Lot’s poor spiritual decision to pitch his tent toward Sodom. Have you ever thought about Sodom is moving toward us in these modern times?

Today, one need not move to Sodom or a wicked area to be exposed to homosexuality, sex outside of marriage, adultery, murder, deceit and lies. Sodom has not only moved toward us but has moved right in with us! I remember a good preacher friend of mine [Bobby Holmes] asking an audience years ago, “Would you allow two actors to come into your living room and act out an adulterous scene?” This question really challenges Christian’s thinking because, while we certainly would not allow this to happen in person, many do allow this to happen every single day they watch certain programs on network television! When I was a child, preachers warned about the evils of television, the one-eyed monster. Compared to now, television was quite tamed. Who would have ever thought that primetime network television would feature situations where young people co-habitat and where women are regularly represented in men's battle roles and where commercials feature two men in bed who tell each other they love each other? Sodom has moved toward us when children and teens (and adults) have access to any filthy scene, song or movie right on their phones! How many parents really supervise what their children do with their phones? The fact that these questions often anger parents and teens is a symptom of how low the moral barometer has fallen!

In 1964, scientist placed bullfrogs in a pan of water and gradually heated the water. The change in temperature was raised a degree or two at a time; over time the temperature got hot enough to kill the frogs without the frogs realizing they were in danger! Modern entertainment has developed into a process of brainwashing and moral conditioning. If frogs could slowly be boiled to death without being aware of it, children being exposed to homosexuality and adultery day-after-day can certainly be conditioned to think that nothing is wrong with these perversions! Evil company does corrupt good morals (1 Cor. 15:33).

What is put into the heart will certainly come out in our belief system, words and even actions. We must protect the hearts of children and our own hearts from the satanic influences bombarding us daily from television and cell phones, media and even certain songs. **“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life”** (Prov. 4:23). What goes in will find its way out. **“But the things that proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man”** (Matt. 15:18). Just like what goes up must come down, what goes in must come out!

David wrote in the Psalms: **“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes...”** (Psa. 101:3). David certainly did not know about television, movies, or internet, but the principle is true to form. Many people already struggle with the temptations to get drunk, get high on drugs, have affairs, steal and a host of immoral things. We must protect ourselves and children from Satan pushing us over the edge. Be very selective with what you allow your eyes to see and ears to hear! Paul the Apostle exhorts us: **“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh, to fulfill its lust”** (Rom. 13:14). It is high time we moved Sodom out of our living rooms. Take control of what you see and your children see daily. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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