

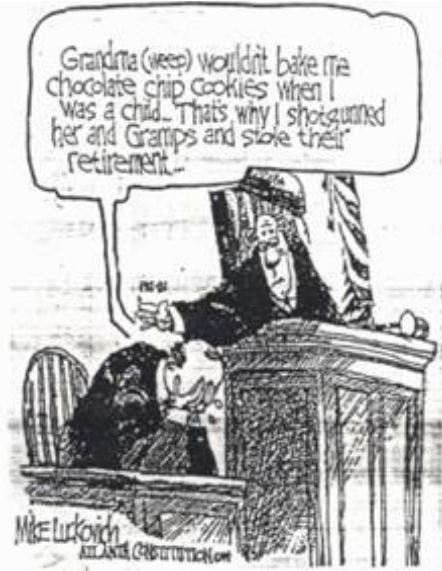
The Lakeview Lamp

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105

March 9, 2008

Personal Responsibility

Bob Hines



Wouldn't you agree that the cartoonist wanted us first to grin a bit at the exaggeration, but then think a bit about personal responsibility?

We once heard a preacher say, "It's getting awfully hard to find a sinner these days!" By that he did not mean that there were amazingly few sinners, since **Rom. 3:23** says "*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*" He meant that there were few who would admit it and take responsibility for it. When people do the wrong things, they say it is because of "pressure at work" or "our sick society" or "the way I was raised" or "spousal neglect" or "my physical situation" or a host of other things meaning "It's not my fault."

The Bible teaches that it is our responsibility. Now notice: it does not deny that these problems are very real and that they have an influence on us. There is never a denial of life's problems. But it goes on to say that we are still personally responsible for how we live, or if you prefer, how we react to these influences. We often are not responsible for what happens to us ("*time and chance happen to all*"

- **Eccl. 9:11**), but we are in charge of how we respond to whatever comes our way.

According to **James (1:3-4)**, it is possible for "*the trying of your faith*" to work patience or build endurance, while for others (**chapter 2**) faith does not grow and it dies (**:14-26**). One man's faith grows, another's dies...what is the difference? It is how we respond to life! One man with troubles stops coming to services. Another with similar problems comes even more than he did. What's the difference? God has given us the power to choose how we will live, and He tells us that we are responsible for that choice.

Christians and Changing Standards

Connie W. Adams

We don't go to the movies much anymore. The last few times we did, we were greatly disappointed and left feeling we had wasted our time and perhaps had contributed to a business which is helping to ruin the moral sensitivities of many who profess to love the Lord. It appears to me that the problem is akin to Isaiah's complaint against Israel in his day. He said, "*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*" (**Isa. 5:20**).

What has happened to us is that we have increased our tolerance level for that which *ought* to make us shudder and draw away in revulsion. We have learned to tune out obscenities, crudities and profanity. Instead, we look for the "artistic expression" in the music or the acting. This seems especially true of many in the younger generation. We have had younger friends to rave to us about certain movies which were listed as PG or PG-13 and have inquired about how much sex, profanity, or obscenity is in them, only to be met

with a sort of blank stare and either a lack of recall of any of that or else an admission that some of that was in them but that in spite of it “it was really a great movie.” We have walked out, sometimes before we had finished the popcorn. Other times, we read reviews of some of these which were enough to tell us we did not need to go.

When moral senses become dulled by overexposure to this sort of thing, then how can doctrinal soundness not be affected? If we can learn to just “tune out” all such wickedness in the interest of artistic expression, then what is to prevent “tuning out” some false teaching if the general material is well organized and presented in an appealing fashion? It is my conviction that this is already happening in a good many places.

Evil is not good, and good is not evil. Bitter is not sweet, and sweet is not bitter. I leave you with these passages to ponder:

- *“Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23).*
- *“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34).*
- *“The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord; but the words of the pure are pleasant words” (Prov. 15:26).*
- *“Oh generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt. 12:34).*
- *“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. 4:3).*

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!” – Psalm 105:1

News and Notes

Mary Burnett had another spell Thursday but is doing better now.

Frank Chumley died last Sunday and was buried Wednesday.

Sarah Fultz is having fainting episodes. To learn more go to www.caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn

Chris Gertsch has an updated apartment number from last week's:

549 East Main Street, Apt. C-28

Hendersonville, TN 37075

Terri Koss, Zachary Neighbours' mother, had serious intestinal problems last week that caused her organs to begin shutting down. She was doing better but had to have more surgery Friday. She still has several serious issues.

Savannah McCauley, 2 or 3 year old daughter of friends of the Nicholson's, had her right kidney and the malignant tumor on it removed Friday. All seemed to go well, but she still must undergo chemotherapy for a few weeks.

Cotton Read is still having breathing problems.

Nancy Read is still having pain in her eye. She goes back the 26th to get out the rest of her stitches, which are bothering her.

Ame White is having breathing problems.

Bill White has inflammation of the sinaitic (sp) nerve.

Out of town, Visiting: **Bonnie Brown** (sister's), **Fran Pickens** (daughter's).

New Reports from men we support: **Chad Lynn** (China), **Allen Malone** (Indonesia/Vietnam).

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).