

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

"Let no man despise thy youth"—I. Timothy 4:12

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EDITORIAL

WHAT'S THE HARM?

The above question is asked very often. Without doubt, a few of the interrogators are serious, and have a right to demand reasons why the Church or Christian ethics prohibit certain things; on the other hand, one cannot help but observe that such a question frequently arises from a condition of heart which has already made compromise with the situation under inquiry. Where the mind has given consent to a proposed deed, it is very easy to rationalize one's position. For instance, a person who never attended the movies, might suddenly be tempted to go see the latest "good" picture. At first his conscience says a strong "No," but as he toys with the idea, he finds that the "no" becomes less emphatic, and soon he is in an affirmative state of mind. When this point has been reached, and no "Get thee behind me Satan" has been uttered, he is ready in his heart to buy his ticket, accompanied my loud protestations to his seered conscience of "What's the harm anyway?"

Now, without trying to stipulate what is harmful, and what is not, a few general principles might be helpful in determining the answer to our question.

First, it may safely be said that if any specific type of conduct provokes an interrogation as to its wholesomeness or consistency with Christian practice, then that deed is better left undone. There is a body of Christian truth the parts of which are consistent with each other. Any isolated part lacking coherence with the larger portion of truth is obviously a product of some system other than the Christian, and should be shunned.

Second, and this is really the positive side to the above principle, a close walk with God, and the constant approbation of the Holy Spirit on our conduct, will forever settle the question of "What's the harm?" One never finds the suspicion of wrong entering his mind when he is engaged in what he KNOWS is right. Did anyone ever feel condemned for standing by his church, doing good to others, spending time in prayer, or witnessing for Christ? A person on fire for God has plenty things to occupy his full time—things that will raise no doubts whatsoever. Why then stoop to meddle with the questionable?

Finally, the "What's the harm?" question can be answered by asking another: Will this contribute to my spiritual welfare? Of course one must develop intellectually as well as spiritually, thus entailing a set of values different from the spiritual. But even here, we would aver that whatever is acquired, physically, morally, or intellectually, at the expense of our spirituality is a dubious gain.

John Wesley in his younger days had some difficulties which would come under the "What's the harm?" category. The admirable advice of his mother, Mrs. Susannah Wesley, may well be adopted as a guide to conduct, and will answer fittingly the "What's the harm?" question: "Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or

takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind; that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

JOHN WESLEY ON LIQUOR

All who sell liquor in the common way, to any who will buy, are poisonous in general. They murder His Majesty's subjects by wholesale; neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these men? Who, then, would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them. The curse of God is in their gardens, their groves—a fire that burns to the nethermost hell. Blood, blood is there! The foundation, the floors, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood.

DID YOU KNOW THAT—

1. The victorious leader of the British 8th Army, Gen. Montgomery, is the son of a bishop, reads his Bible daily, and neither smokes, drinks, nor swears?
2. The English Channel was never known to be so smooth as when the British were forced to evacuate from Dunkirk?
3. Lieutenant General Sir William Dobbie, Governor General of Malta during its worst air raids, is an outstanding Christian, prays much; and due to his faith in God and prayers for his men, Malta was able to withstand successfully over two thousand air raids?

GOD WANTS MEN

The following is an excerpt from the introduction to Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret, by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor.

"Men are God's method. The church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men. . . . What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men—men of prayer.

"The training of the Twelve was the great, difficult, and enduring work of Christ . . . It is not great talents or great learning or great preachers that God needs, but men great in holiness, great in faith, great in love, great in fidelity, great for God—men always preaching by holy sermons in the pulpit by holy lives out of it. These can mould a generation for God."

CAN YOU ANSWER THESE?

1. What man threw stones at a king?
2. Who slew "a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow?"
3. What man "was as light of foot as a wild roe?"
4. Of what man was it said that he was "more honorable than his brethren?"
5. Who was known because he drove his chariot furiously?
6. What man built a gallows for another and was hanged on it himself?

Answers next issue.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS LAST ISSUE

The wolf, NOT the lion, and the lamb shall feed together.—Is. 65:25.

2. The Bible does not say how many wise men came to see Jesus.

3. According to James, the tongue "is an unruly evil," NOT an "unruly member."—James 3:8.

4. The LOVE of money is the root of all evil.—1 Tim. 6:10.

5. Adam was to eat bread by the sweat of his face, NOT his brow.—Gen. 3:19.

6. The statement, "Cleanliness is next to godliness," was made by John Wesley, and is NOT in the Bible.

GLEANINGS

Solitude is the ante-chamber of God; only one step more and you can be in His immediate presence.—Landor.

There is no sense in always telegraphing to Heaven for God to send a cargo of blessing, unless we are at the wharf to unload the vessel when it comes.—F. B. Meyer.

Prayer is the rope in the belfry; we pull it and it rings the bell up in heaven.—Christmas Evans.

Some people can talk Christianity by the yard, but they cannot walk it by the inch.—Blaisdell.

Faith never goes home with an empty basket.—Elijah P. Brown.

That which we do for ourselves is forgotten; that which we do for Christ is immortal.—Talmage.

A soldier lay dying in the hospital, in terrible agony. A visitor asked him, "What church are you of?" "Of the church of Christ," he replied. "I mean of what persuasion are you?" "Persuasion," said the dying man as his eyes looked heavenward, beaming with love for the Saviour—"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."—F. Whitfield.

BUILDING

Upon the wreckage of thy yesterday
Design thy structure of tomorrow. Lay
Strong corner-stones of purpose, and prepare
Great blocks of wisdom, cut from past despair.

Shape mighty pillars of resolve, to set
Deep in the tear-wet mortar of regret.
Believe in God—in thine own self believe,
All thou hast hoped for thou shalt yet achieve.
—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

FOR IT IS YOUR BOOK

Centuries before English was a language, the Bible was begun.

Historians, statesmen, poets and kings have contributed to it.

Brave men have defended it from destruction.