

Some Enemies of the Family

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(Little Compromises that Cause Big Problems)

Song of Solomon 2:15 says, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Foxes sometime in search of food would enter into the grape orchards and devour the grapes and spoil the crop. However, the little foxes were too small to reach the grape bunches so they would chew on the vines and it would kill the whole vine. Instead of the farmer just losing his crop, he would lose his vine that was more disastrous. Spiritually, some things we do or allow that we might think are little or insignificant can also be disastrous for us. There is no place where this truth is illustrated best than in the family. Satan has perpetrated the rationalization that these "enemies" of the family will not damage spiritually and eternally.

President James A. Garfield once said: "The sanctity of marriage and the family relation make the corner-stone of our American society and civilization." A number of current conditions clearly suggest that that "corner-stone" is crumbling.

The Enemy of Abortion

About forty years ago some countries began allowing abortions to be performed legally. Then in 1973, abortion was legalized in the United States. In 1979, 55 million abortions were performed in the world. Millions of abortions are still performed each year worldwide and, according to man's laws, are legal!

Herod's killing of a few babies in Bethlehem is insignificant in comparison (Matt. 2:16-18). The Pharaoh who ordered the Hebrew male children slain to hold down the population is made to look like a modern-day ecology hero (Ex. 1:15-22).

Life begins at conception. If life does not begin then, when does it begin? Where is the evidence to show that life begins later? The baby's sex, race, hair color, etc., are decided at

conception. From twelve weeks after conception until birth the baby grows until exiting the womb, breathes air, and takes food by mouth.

The Bible teaches to kill an innocent human life on purpose is sin! (Gen. 9:6; Prov. 6:17). This is what abortion does!

A study of the Greek word *brephos* and the way it is translated tells us God's thinking about the unborn baby. In (Luke 1: 41-44) the Bible refers to John the Baptist as "the babe in her womb." In Luke 2:12,16, the word babe refers to Jesus in the manger. This same word is translated "newborn babes" (1 Peter 2:2), "childhood" (2 Timothy 3:15), "infants" (Luke 18:15), and "babies" (Acts 7:19). All of these from the same Greek word with the same meaning!

God shows His concern for people before they are born (Jer. 1:4,5; Psa. 139:13-16). God does not approve the taking of life just because of inconvenience. The right of life and death belongs to God (Job 1:21). We do not have the right to take away life.

The Enemy of Euthanasia

The meaning of euthanasia is good death, or happy death. It is the taking of a human life by another person to prevent further pain and suffering.

There are two basic types of euthanasia. (1) Voluntary. A patient is dying a slow, painful death. He asks for help to speed up the process. This is assisted suicide. (2) Involuntary. This is to cause the death of one who is not able to ask for help in dying. This would include little babies or those in a coma.

Those who believe in euthanasia say that if a person is not normal or does not have a productive life, he should be killed. But what is normal? Who has the right to say what is a productive life? There are many examples of people are not normal, but are living happy, useful lives. Deformed babies, old people, sick people, and mentally disturbed people are targets of euthanasia. When we take the decision for life or death out of the hands of God, and place it in the hands of imperfect people, many mistakes will be made! (Job 1:21).

The Netherlands has led the way in promoting the practice of euthanasia. Before 1973, euthanasia was illegal in the Netherlands. Since that time, doctors and nurses have been actively involved in killing people who were not ready to die. In 1990, nine percent (9%) of all deaths in the Netherlands were carried out by doctors. Half of these were cases where the patient was killed without his consent.

There are organizations which publish books to teach people how to kill themselves or others. In the United States, Jack Kevorkian has become famous by helping many people kill themselves.

The practice of euthanasia is wrong because it violates the principle that life is given by God. God does not approve of "hands that shed innocent blood" (Pro. 6:16,17). Life comes from God. It is God's decision to give life and to take it away (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Job 1:21). In the Bible, "shedding innocent blood" is called murder (1 John 3:15; Gen. 9:6).

The death of King Saul is an example of euthanasia (1 Samuel 31:1-6). Saul did not want the Philistines to find him alive. He knew they would torture him. He asked his armor bearer to kill him. When the armorbearer refused, Saul fell on his own sword and died. Saul committed suicide, but he did it in order to avoid suffering. He murdered himself and therefore was guilty of sin (Ex. 20:13).

Not all suffering is bad. Even though we may not always understand why we suffer, some good can come from it. The apostle Paul understood this (2 Cor. 12:7-10). He had a "thorn in the flesh" he asked God to remove, but was made to realize it was for his good. Job is also an excellent example of this point (Jas 5:11).

This whole issue of euthanasia has come about as a result of the cheapening of human life. Abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia are all results of the loss of respect for human life. When people understand and respect the sanctity of human life, they will not vote to end it.

In the Chinese family, grandfather was no longer able to bring in any income to the family. He had become a liability. So one day his son put him into a wheelbarrow and took him to the top of a mountain to leave him there to die. He took his young son with him.

After they had taken grandfather to the mountain and were on their way back down, the young son said to his father: "I am glad you took me with you so I will know where to take you when you are old."

God has given us the right to make choices in this life. Many in the world today no longer believe it makes any difference whether we live or die. God would have us to "choose life" (Deut. 30:19).

The Enemy of Homosexuality

Thomas F. Eaves Sr. forwarded me an email some years ago concerning the "Gay agenda." This document of the Devil clearly illustrates the threat to the family:

THE GOALS OF THE GAY MOVEMENT

The agenda of the gay movement is clearly outlined by Michael Swift in his article, "Gay Revolutionary" which was printed in the February 15-21, 1987 issue of the "Gay Community News."

"We shall sodomize your sons, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. We shall seduce them in your schools, in your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your locker rooms, in your sports arenas, in your seminaries, in your youth groups, in your movie theater bathrooms, in your army bunkhouses, in your truck stops, in your all-male clubs, in your houses of Congress, wherever men are with men together. Your sons will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and adore us.

All laws banning homosexual activity will be revoked. Instead, legislation shall be passed which engenders love between men.

All churches who condemn us will be closed. Our only gods are handsome young men."

We are talking about homosexuality (gay) - *Funk and Wagnall's* - "***Attracted by or in love with persons of the same sex.***" This involves males and females. It's not a new thing. We might think from the present state of things that this is a relatively new problem. But this is a very ancient problem

(Gen 19:1-6) And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face

toward the ground; And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him.

(Judg 19:22) Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.

(Rom 1:24-27) Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 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.

(1 Cor 6:9) 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.

What is God's attitude in regards to this matter? Please note the following verses of Scripture: (Lev 18:22) Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. (Lev 20:13) If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

In Genesis 19:12-14, the sin of homosexuality constituted physical death in the Old Testament. In the New Testament this sin clearly is punished by spiritual death (I Cor. 6:9). But Christians must have the attitude of Jesus - "Go and sin no more" (John 8:11).

The Enemy of Drunkenness

(Gal. 5:19-21) "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 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."

Most Bible students are aware that the NT condemns drunkenness; (I Cor.5: 11; 6:9-10).

What is a drunk? When many use the word drunk, they have in mind that one who has totally

lost control of physical and mental abilities--the dead drunk. But is this the person Paul has in mind in our text, or in I Cor.6: 9-10?

Paul used a specific Greek word to identify the individual under consideration and that word (methusos) means, "*One softened with drink.*" Eph.5: 18 "And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit." Paul again uses the same word but in another form (methusko). Literally: *To begin to be softened.* So, from the choice of words used by the inspired Paul, it is not only wrong to be softened with drink, but it is also wrong even to begin to be softened! (Young's Analytical Concordance, P. 275).

The New Testament by its employment of these various terms, seems to imply that drunkenness is progressive and hence, a matter of degree. For example: In, I Peter 4:3, three terms are used to depict stages of drunkenness or conditions associated therewith. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lust, EXCESS OF WINE, REVELLINGS, BANQUETINGS, (CAROUSINGS), and abominable idolatries. (Emphasis GIH)

The apostle states that prior to their conversion some saints had walked in ... excess of wine, or winebibbings, revellings, banquetings, or carousings. Excess of wine (Winebibbings) [oinophlugiais] is a drunkenness that marks a step in advance of Methe. (R.C. Trench, Synonyms of the NT). This is the only place in New Testament for this word. Revellings (Komois) denotes the conduct that is concomitant and consequence of drunkenness. (Vine, III, 293). Banquetings, or carousings (potois) is a drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, not of necessity excessive... but giving opportunity for excess. (Trench, LXI).

Since there are degrees of drunkenness, degrees of intoxication, we must conclude that the difference between a social drinker and a drunkard is only a difference of degree, not a difference of kind! This sin of drunkenness is not limited to the dead drunk, the sin is when a person begins to put his conscience, his will powers and his self-control to sleep—when he begins to be softened. It is this softening, this dulling of the conscience and weakening of the

will power and losing of self-control that is sinful, and this is what happens first in the process of intoxication--long before the noticeable impairment.

Dr. Haven Emerson of Columbia University has said, "The higher qualities of the mind are the very first to be rubbed out by alcohol. The delicate capacities of intellectual decision and choice and the discretion and will power are those faculties which are first dulled and then wiped out by alcohol because they are least capable of withstanding its toxic effects" (The Problem: Alcohol-Narcotics, p.14). Dr. Ralph Overman, one-time chairman of the Special Training Division of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies has said: **"When you have drunk one drink, you are one drink drunk."**

There is only one way to keep from beginning to soften the mind, and that is by not drinking at all. When professing Christians begin to drink to relieve tensions, forget worries, or escape from reality. They are deliberately drinking to accomplish the very thing the Bible calls drunkenness *the dulling, or softening, of the mind* and yet they insist they are only "social drinkers." Drinking and drugging is truly an enemy of the home and family.

The Enemy of Pornography

It seems that over the last decade the American courts from the local municipal judge to the highest court in the land have had difficulty in defining pornography. The argument is if it is art as some proclaim, then it violates the right to freedom of speech and press to outlaw it. Of course it seems more and more that these pornography proponents are adding more and more filth to their definition of "art" up to and including the right to sell pictures of our children.

To the Christian the identification of what pornography is, is not hard. In Romans 1: 28-29, the Apostle Paul, describes those that did not want to have God in their minds, in fact Paul calls this mindset reprobate (depraved, perverted, base, corrupt, immoral). In verse 29 he further says that this mind is filled with such things as unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness. In Ephesians 5:4 he adds "filthiness.. foolish talking...jesting are not to be in the Christian heart. And Ephesians 4:29 commands us " Let no corrupt

communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister unto the hearers." I would dare to say that it is just not our mouths that we need worry about today! We have medias available to us Paul did not, that includes mass production of written articles, computer generated pictures and the information highway.

So can we biblically define "pornography"? Lets try - It is any media (spoken, written, picture or movie) which is designed to implicitly or explicitly present action or language in a way to expressly cause a reaction from the "hearers" to commit the sins (physically or emotionally) condemned in the Bible.

The Christian does not have to struggle, as the courts have, with the question that what is filthy to one person is not to another. Paul did not make this qualification! The sinfulness here is tied to the very nature of the media itself, not just in the mind of the viewer! So if the media itself is sinful and filthy, it is sinful and filthy for all! This therefore eliminates the rationalization of the conceited or naive individual who proclaims " Well it may affect others in a sexual way, but I can handle it." "God made man naked" etc. If these statements were true, Paul would not have universally condemned such communications.

The world today is being flooded with this material; it flows from the presses, movie industry and Internet continuously. The Christian who genuinely desire to do right should have little difficulty determining that they have no business reading novels of sex and sadism or attending X-rated movies and I would add most of the "R" rated ones too. The problem lies however in the books and movies that seem to be worthwhile, but would contain material that may give pause. I can think of PG-13 and PG movies that would in the biblical definition contain pornography. Here is where one should make some observations:

- 1) If there are obviously elements that would fall into the biblical description of pornography, this should prohibit the viewing of the material. We must not compromise on this moral principle! Too many Christians have made this compromise and are not giving any thought or discrimination to what they are involving themselves in.
- 2) We often see movies and books being billed as worthwhile, but most often the worthwhile parts are buried behind the objectionable portions of the book or film. The result is one pornographic scene after another awkwardly spliced together by some hypocritical moralistic plot and very thinly hidden behind an unconvincing message.

- 3) It may sometimes be observed that not every kind of material, which merits discrimination as to whether, we should view it or not is necessarily filthiness. This may be a true statement, but even a conservative appraisal of today's media would reveal that in the majority of cases this is exactly what it is. Publishers and the movie industry do not gross in the billions of dollars every year by producing educational or scientific material for our enjoyment. The bulk of the industry is designed to appeal to man's base desires of sex and violence.
- 4) Many people argue that adding the elements of sex, violence, nudity and profanity make the work realistic and gives the viewer an insight into these areas of life. This cannot be a valid argument because
 - (a) the works are rarely realistic in portrayal and never realistic in actuality. Sensationalism sells! These scenes are glamorized so as to appear sophisticated, exciting and enjoyable. The ruined and dissatisfied lives of people who really engage in such activity proves this to be a false picture. Few people want to see the real hurt, fear and emotions of a police officer who has just taken a life. Or the reaction of the young girl who upon returning home realizes what she has just surrendered - her virtue.
 - (b) So even if the scenes were realistic few Christians would have a legitimate reason for exposing themselves to it. Is it true that because something seems realistic we should seek it out, and not to do so is to hide ourselves from the truth? No, this is purely a false belief. An example of this would be that I have some very real garbage in my garbage can outside at this very moment waiting to be hauled off. This in no way prompts me to want to jump into the garbage can in order to enjoy a realistic experience with garbage. But I do not deprive myself of knowing garbage exists by not jumping in. All I need to know is what garbage is, how to avoid it, how to be rid of it and I do not need a detailed, intimate investigation of it to do that. Along those lines, Christians need no more acquaintance with nudity, illicit sex, violence and profanity than is necessary to avoid them, and they certainly do not need the vividly detailed representation of these sins found in the books and films to avoid them. For this reason Paul said in Romans 16:19 " For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil." We do not have to have an intimate working knowledge of sin to please God! For those relatively few Christians who may be working directly with those who engage in such activities in an attempt to help them quit them and who thus may need more detailed information, there are certainly more accurate and undistorted sources for study than popular movies and the magazine racks behind the counter.
- 5) We have those that state they can view such material and overlook the bad parts and pay attention only to those good acceptable parts, thereby causing no harm. Paul refutes this in 1 Cor. 15:33 "Be not deceived ; evil communications corrupt good manners." We are told here that it is difficult if not impossible to expose oneself to such media and remain unaffected. And lets be realistic, how can one do this? How can one sit through a 2 hour movie and not view 105 minutes of it, or omit 200 pages out of a 450 page novel? When do you close your eyes?
- 6) Some argue that these sinful activities are encountered to some degree everyday in our lives, so why should we avoid them in film or print? Well the difference is choice. I can not escape from encountering them in daily life in the world, but I can certainly escape from buying a book or going to a movie or partaking in an activity that actively seeks them out. The old saying goes " You can not keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from nesting in your hair."

What do these observations help us conclude? Christians should practice extreme care before involvement with media that they have reason to believe might contain those sinful elements that constitute pornography in the Biblical sense.

Christians should ask themselves these questions PRIOR to engaging in a questionable practice

- 1) Would I be ashamed or afraid for anyone to know I was viewing the material in question? If ya' gotta hide it under the bed or in the closet it most likely should not be viewed.
- 2) Would you invite you parents, the elders or minister of my congregation to view it with me? If Christ could come, would you invite Him?
- 3) Would you damage your Christian influence if seen viewing this?
- 4) What would a new convert or prospective convert think if they saw me viewing this material?
- 5) How much do I stand to gain from viewing this material? Very often we would see that we would gain very little from this media beyond a few hours pleasure, when viewed in an honest light we most likely would conclude we would have gotten more pleasure from other recreation.
- 6) How much do I stand to lose from viewing this material in terms of my own spiritual welfare?
- 7) Do I have any doubts about whether I am doing right in viewing this material? Romans 14:23 " And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." So if you engage in this activity while still unsure if it is right, you sin already.

There is of course this sad thought: Any Christian who wants to view questionable material will rationalize their way into doing so by raising one of the objections we have already viewed or else by assuming the specific material they are considering does not fit this category. They usually take a smug satisfaction in considering themselves sophisticated enough to engage in this sinful behavior. In all actuality they are doing one or both of these two things: (1) Being naive and immature in their judgment as to what really constitutes worthwhile literature or (2) they are purposely disobeying the will of God.

The Enemy of Ignorance

This is perhaps the greatest enemy of them all. God tells Israel of the unearned prosperity that shall come to them. He says: "When thou shall have eaten and be full; then beware, lest thou forget the Lord thy God (Deut. 6:11-12)." The hope of the world is the Christ-centered, God-honoring home. Ignorance of God and His Word is the little taproot of every social ill that

plagues the families of the world. When parents attend worship together, and form the habit of sitting together as a family, it is a healthy condition. The children will never forget those hours with such parents.

The words of the prophet Hosea are still relevant: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:6). When no voice is raised in prayer, when the Bible is unread, and there is no interest in the spiritual welfare of the children, with pagan influences sweeping over us, then it is that we stand in jeopardy of our gravest peril.

Facts that are Plain

This permissive age has produced a generation that neither knows nor cares about Bible principles of morality. Chastity, the sanctity of marriage, and purity of heart almost seem to be relics of another age. Our young people are growing up under constant suggestions from the media and many of their friends that in moral matters "each can do their own thing." Many people of more mature years are also affected. Here are some plain Bible facts to be reemphasized for young and old.

FORNICATION IS SIN. This means every kind of illicit sexual activity. The Bible is plain. Those who practice fornication cannot go to Heaven (Gal. 5:19-21).

HOMOSEXUAL activities are contrary to nature and God (Rom. 1:27)- What is called "gay" will result in the damnation of Hell.

PORNOGRAPHY is a medium for lust and lascivious. This applies to suggestiveness, lewdness, nudity, etc., whether in printing, movies, or television. Jesus said, "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).

THINGS done in secret are never hidden. Actions too shameful to describe are sometimes done in secret (Eph. 5:12). Modern situations that provide privacy cause many to feel

their sins are secret. God sees it all (Prov. 15:3). Every secret thing will be brought into judgment (Eccl. 12:14).

LOVE is not an excuse for sin. A typical defense for illicit sex is, "We love each other." At best this is self-deception. Love involves honor. In the highest sense of love, one will not cause the one he/she loves to do that which will put him/her in danger of the fires of Hell. One should be honest enough to call things by their right names. It's not love; it's lust (Rom. 13:14)!

MARRIED love is God's plan for sexual fulfillment (Heb. 13:4). The duties and privileges of the marriage relationship are clear (I Cor. 7:3-5). Husbands and wives are required by law (God's law) to love each other (Eph. 5:25, 28; Col. 3:18-19). Couples who "fall out of love" are not following God's plan-

MARRIAGE is for life. No teaching of Christ is plainer than this (Matt. 13:3-9)! Regardless of what counselors, lawyers, or judges might say, one who causes the breakup of marriage for any cause except fornication sins against God. If one marries another (except when the mate put away was guilty of fornication) it is adultery.

Let us defeat these enemies of the family by diligently subscribing to all of God's Will. There never an excuse to surrender when Christ is the Captain of our Salvation (Heb. 2:10).