

When the Unacceptable Becomes Respectable

John Isaac Edwards

That which was unacceptable before God became respectable among the people of God as the blind, lame, and sick were offered in sacrifice unto God (Leviticus 22:20; Malachi 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” (Romans 1:24-32).

When There Are Those Who Try to Defend Social Drinking. Some agree that “drunkenness” is sin (Galatians 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 Timothy 3:8) allows a little wine. First of all, there are different kinds of Bible wine - some fermented (intoxicating) and some not. The context shows which is under consideration. Does “be not over much wicked” (Ecclesiastes 7:17) al-

low one to be a little wicked? If it is just the “excess of wine” (1 Peter 4:3) that is wrong, then would it be okay to be involved in a little “riot” (1 Peter 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 occurred to you that divorce, “from the beginning,” was “not so” (Matthew 19:3-8)? God’s marriage law, at the beginning, involved one man for one woman for life (Genesis 2:18-24). The teaching of the Lord allows only one reason for divorce and remarriage - fornication. To divorce and remarry for any other cause is to commit adultery! (Matthew 19:9; Romans 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” (Hebrews 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 comput-

er, 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 Timothy 6:10).

When Men and Women See Nothing Wrong with Dancing. Modern dancing comes under the class of lasciviousness” (Galatians 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 and run on! This is a sad commentary of our society. A reading of Genesis 3:7 & 21 will show that one may have on some clothes and still be naked as far as God is concerned! Hollywood has made it fashionable to parade around in vile raiment, 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 Timothy 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” (Jeremiah 6:15)?

When Fornication Seems Like a Rite of Passage. The Bible says, “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body....Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2). Among “the works of the flesh” is “fornication”, and Paul said, “...that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19, 21). “...let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints” (Ephesians 5:3). 1 Thessalonians 4:3 teaches, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.”

These things may be referred to as “Respectable Sins.” A thing may be acceptable and respectable among men, yet be unacceptable and detestable to God. May God help us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world” (Titus 2:12).

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