

WHAT SHALL WE SAY?¹

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There's a real war going on. It's raging all around us. Its not that our country is involved in a physical war with another country, nor are we in another war between the states. The war that now rages has many battle grounds. It's a spiritual war. It's a philosophical war. And yet, it's a very practical war.

This is a spiritual war because it is a contest between good and evil, between righteousness and sin. This is a philosophical war because it is a contest between theism and humanism, between God's word and human judgment. This is a practical war because it is about human conduct in social and cultural practices.

On one side are those who want to kill their unborn babies. They want government to provide economic needs of its citizens. They want government to oversee family responsibilities such as the welfare and education of children, and to care for the elderly. And they want individuals to be freed from all sexual and moral restraints.

On the other side are those of us who contend that killing unborn babies is morally wrong. We think that families ought to provide for their own. We believe that the welfare and education of children is primarily the responsibility of families, as is also the welfare of their elderly. We hold that individuals must answer to society and to God for their sexual and moral conduct.

This is a war in which all Christians must be engaged in one way or another. Sad to say, however, many Christians seem to think this is a battle that does not concern them. By their lack of effort to change immoral social and cultural practices, many professed Christians seem to be saying that they feel no responsibility to stop abortion and drug abuse, to overturn easy divorce laws, to halt pornographic peddlers, to resist excessive taxation, etc.

Some say philosophy is not their thing, and that since this is a philosophical war, they'll not get involved. They apparently think that human conduct has nothing to do with human belief. That's foolish thinking!

Some say that Christians do have responsibilities in these areas, but that Christians are responsible only to teach, not to act. That also is foolish thinking. That's like saying to cold and hungry people, "he ye warmed and filled," but doing nothing to cloth and feed them. That's a useless and dead faith (James 2:14-26).

While Christians generally believe they must be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and a leavening influence in society, many apparently think this influence is generated only by being "unspotted from the world." Righteousness, however, demands action, not merely freedom from immoral contamination!

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What we need to see from Christian people in modern America is some righteous indignation! We need people like David who, when Goliath challenged Israel, exclaimed, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God" (1 Samuel 17:26)? We need men and women of faith and courage who manifest some anger against social sins in our culture. We ought to be furious with the ungodly who kill unborn babies, who corrupt the minds of youth with pornography, who legislate easy divorce laws which allow husbands and fathers to escape economic responsibilities for their wives and children, and who allow homosexuals and lesbians to gain easy respectability.

But while evil seems to prevail - growing worse and worse - many Christians sit, either unconcerned or quietly arguing among themselves whether Christians ought to get involved. I remember one very cold morning many years ago when I was a boy on the farm. My brothers and I had gone to the barn to milk the cows, and then to separate the cream from the milk in a hand cranked separator. As we were about to finish, I was sent to the house to get a kettle of hot water to wash various pieces of the cream separator. When I got to the house, I lingered to warm myself for several minutes because I was so cold, and the bellied wood stove was so warm. As I tarried, Dad walked in. He said, "Why are you standing around warming yourself while your brothers are standing in the cold waiting for you. And with that question, he hurriedly grabbed me by the arm and proceeded to warm the bottom of my britches in a manner that the stove had not. I left as quickly as I could. My brothers greeted me with the question, "What took you so long?" I could not give a satisfactory answer.

Nor can I think of a satisfactory reason why Christians should remain so apathetic and indifferent to increasing unrighteousness all around us. Maybe we need someone to grab us and hasten us to our task. I can think of no answer which Christians might give to satisfy the million and a half unborn babies who are killed every year because professing Christians do not rise up and put a stop to abortion. How shall we answer a third of America's children whose divorced parents have left them scarred for life when we could stiffen the marriage laws of this nation? What shall we say to those whose minds have been morally corrupted because we fail to resist pornography? Why should we think God will be pleased with us in the judgment day if we allow homosexuals and lesbians to continue degrading and demoralizing our society? I have no satisfactory answer, do you?