

Wake Up!

I have never tried it, but I am told that if you drop a frog into hot water, he will jump out. However, if you were to place a frog in a kettle of cool water and gradually heat the water, the frog would stay put and perish in a boiling death. Perhaps you wonder how even a frog could be so stupid as to be unaware of his gradually changing surroundings. Are we any wiser?

When I was growing up, most Christian parents were terribly concerned about the immoral influence of Hollywood films. Those are the old movies that today are shown on TV and judged innocent and harmless - "family pictures." Now TV news, commercials and entertainment are saturated with lust and violence. Years ago people were saying, "If it gets any worse, I'm going to toss my TV set out." Has it gotten worse? Are we a bunch of slowly cooking frogs?

The lulled frog syndrome can also be witnessed in many churches. A few years ago many members were expressing concern about churches being diverted from their work. If what is now sponsored - from church ball teams to video game rooms, from secular education to homes for unwed mothers - if churches had introduced anything like this fifty years ago, members would have jumped clear into the next county. But these changes have been introduced gradually and with little awareness; and the people of God have been lulled to sleep. How grave is their danger!

"Awake you who sleep. Arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light. See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is," Ephesians 5:14-17.

- by **Marvin A. Noble**

Second Mile Religion

There are two classes of men: those who act only when circumstances force them to do something, and those who gladly volunteer to act regardless of circumstances. One says: "What do I have to do?" The other says: "What may I do?" One is always looking for a way out of his duties. The other is always looking for opportunities to do good.

We are not left to wonder which attitude pleases God. We are taught to look for opportunities to do good (Gal.6:10). Jesus favored the son who did his father's will rather than the one who merely "talked" obedience (Mt.21:28-32).

A man deserves no praise for engaging in only the barest minimum of service to God. What would you think of a father who measures the time he is to spend with his children down to the last second, and then, when their time is up, forbids them to "bother" him? Or what about a husband who refuses to give his wife one penny more than is absolutely necessary for living? Does such a man deserve commendation? Yet this attitude correctly describes many in their relationship to the Lord -- they are satisfied with doing only what they have to do, AND NOT ONE THING MORE!

Jesus taught, "*And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain*" (Mt. 5: 41). If Jesus commanded 'go the second mile' as the proper response to an unjust Roman law, how much more does He expect it from us who have His perfect law? When was the last time you went the second mile?

- by **Rick Duggin**

'I Don't Want My Kids To Be Different'

Although most Christians wouldn't say it in so many words, many parents seem to be very concerned about things that might make their kids look *'different'*. They are concerned about raising their children in strict, disciplined ways that might make them stand out in contrast to others. They mistakenly feel a need to have their kids *'blend in'* with kids at school, etc.

Well, let's see about that . . .

Statistics indicate that 13% of teens in America have had sex before their 15th birthday, and 70% have had intercourse before they reach 20¹. *'But, I don't want my kids to be different.'* Really!?! Are you sure about that?

6.5% of 8th graders, 17% of 10th graders, and 23% percent of 12th graders used marijuana in the past month, while 3.6% of 8th graders, 14.5% of 10th graders, and 28% of 12th graders

reported getting drunk in the past month². But you say, '*I don't want my kids to be different.*' Are you kidding!?!

35% of teenage boys and 26% of teenage girls admit to shoplifting. 83% say they have lied to their parents about something significant, and 64% admitted to cheating on tests³. Yet, you're still worried about your kids being '*different*'? How can that be!?!

Why are parents so worried about their children being viewed as '*normal*' in such a wicked, immoral world? NOW is the time to be teaching them, training them, and helping them to realize that pleasing God will require a way of life that is truly '*different*' – even '*weird*' – by the norms of the ungodly society that surrounds us. If you don't instruct them in their youth to "come out from among them and be separate" (2 Cor. 6:17), don't be surprised if they reach adulthood without a true and sacrificial love for God. Think!

1 Gutmacher Institute; 2 National Institute on Drug Abuse; 3 Josephson Institute

- by Greg Gwin