

IT IS TIME TO STAND UP

April 12, 2015

The eighteenth century Irish statesman and author, Edmund Burke, said, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.” That statement holds as much meaning today as it did when it was originally spoken. Often we look at the happenings of the world and our own country and wonder how things could have gotten to this point. Abortion is as common as the cold, homosexuality has become a mark of growth and intelligence, drug and alcohol use is not only endorsed but expected, and over half of our nation’s population believes it is the responsibility of the government to support their habit of living!

How did we get to this point in our history? There is no mystery surrounding that question, good people did not take a stand when they should have. Most people want to live in accordance with, at least, the law of the land and take care of their families while living a peaceful life. The only problem with that way of thinking is that, as we sit peacefully in our homes, those that have an ulterior agenda are gaining a foothold in the culture of our nation. Those that oppose the righteousness of God will take the time to promote their agendas! The results of those actions are more than glaring in our land today. When good people sit idly by and do nothing, changes will certainly occur. It is not possible for hard working folks to stand for hours and days in picket lines, like those that condemn the work ethic and lifestyles of the hard workers of our country, because they have to be on the job every day! Therefore, the silent majority stays that way, but it is time to stand up for what is right and make godly decisions!

It is not the Christian response to say and do nothing when those around us engage in sinful behavior, especially within the church. Paul commanded those in Corinth to withdraw from the wicked one in their midst (1 Cor. 5), because of his committing adultery. They were just sitting, saying nothing, and Paul condemned them for that. He told them to do the godly thing and stand up for what was right, instead of simply allowing sin to continue. Several problems occur when one does not stand up for God and for what He expects from His creation.

First, when good people are not proactive, nothing good happens. If we are going to be truly good people we must do things that are good! The Lord said, “**But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil**” (Lk. 6:35). Paul admonished us saying, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). The whole purpose for our Lord’s coming to earth and giving Himself for us was so we could gain salvation and be “zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). When we worry more about the inconvenience that comes with taking a stand on the side of what is right, nothing good will happen and we will not have fulfilled the purposes of God!

Second, when good people do nothing, it helps the cause of the evil. Throughout the Scriptures, man has been commanded to abstain from things that are sinful and evil; however, that is not the only commandment that God gave. Through the pen of Paul, the Holy Spirit commanded, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather reprove them**” (Eph. 5:11; Emph. Mine). If we sit by saying and doing nothing when sin is happening right under our noses, we lend our support to it and will therefore be held accountable (Eph. 5:7). The Psalmist said, “When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers” (Psa. 50:18). When one sees

another participating in sin and refuses to rebuke or expose him, he is in essence lending his support to the sin. Paul wrote words condemning this practice when he said, “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (Rom. 1:32). There is no such thing as neutrality when it comes to doing right in the sight of God (Mt. 12:30).

Third, when good people do nothing, they cease to be good! The world has mistaken doing nothing bad for doing something good. In his general letter, Peter said, “Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it” (1 Pet. 3:11). It was James that wrote, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin” (Js. 4:17). It is never enough to simply do no wrong, because we are commanded to do good things in this life!

This past Sunday, about fifteen members of the Cordova church of Christ stood up against atheism and spread the truth of the Gospel in downtown Memphis. It was a glorious day for the Truth and those that helped to send forth the light of Jesus.

As a nation, we are reaping the results of good people not taking a stand for that which is right. When we sit by and allow the minority of unbelievers to take us down a road of condemnation and do nothing about it, we will answer for our silence when we stand before God on the Day of Judgment. It may be inconvenient at times to make our voices heard, but God never said that the life of a Christian would be an easy one!