The fruits of contentment

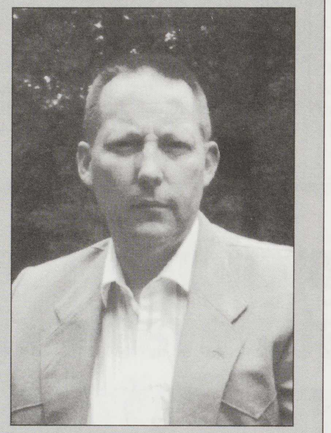
by Jack Ferrell

I really wasn't certain that my presence at the commissioners' meeting would make any difference, but I went anyway. The proposed legislation for alcohol sales to be permitted in our county had almost passed by unnoticed. An obscure notice in the local paper concerning the proposal was caught by one of our church members, and the alert was put out.

The amendment was soundly defeated because a small group of concerned Christians from the community took time to show up and protest. Perhaps a small victory, but not in vain. Though the issue will surely rise again, our law makers are fully aware of our feelings. I was glad I attended. We had won the battle, but the war is still to be fought.

Sitting in a comfortable church pew and listening to the pastor's message is what it's all about to many Christians today. While outside the world around us slides unchecked into the pits of immorality. After all, what can we do about it anyhow?

Pray, says the Spirit-filled child of God. Pray for God to bring it all under control, Jesus prayed. . . He prayed many times during His life for the strength to do God's will. He also acted on His prayer, in obedience to the will of God. Do we need to go beyond prayer and do more. . .to do something for God, instead of always asking God to do something for us?



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It doesn't matter what the issue is. Be it alcohol, abortion, school prayer, lotteries, or a multitude of misguided infractions against the very foundations of Christianity. What matters is what we as Christians do about the threat. In the words of Jesus, "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters" (NIV, Matthew 12:30).

In 1962, primarily through the efforts of one lone individual, school prayer was abolished. Look at the record since then. See what has happened to our school system, and our children within. Behavior infractions have escalated from running in the halls, to running in terror from assault, robbery, even rape within the walls. Drugs that kill and maim are prevalent, and permeate all levels of our educational facilities. Yet we ask, why can't many high school graduates read or write well enough to fill out a job application without help?

The list could go on and on. While the attitudes of a few teachers and administrators can be attributed to some extent, the moral climate prevalent within our society can be held largely responsible. That short prayer recited each morning before classes, just may have been the bonding agent for moral value.

Is God in His patient way warning us? Has He allowed this turmoil to continue, just to see how far we will allow it to progress before we take action on His behalf? Each of us must answer these questions in our own way. But keep in mind, God has a way of correcting apathy. We have abandoned our youth, His precious youth, by not reacting firmly to these and other issues.

A recent statistic shows that the majority of those polled believe in some unnamed superior being or in God. I can't help wondering who that "being" is. It surely can't be the same God of mercy and love, that encourages us through His word to spread His gospel of love and obedience. The same God that gave His only son to death so that we might have the right to believe and receive salvation. Have we forgotten that He rose again?

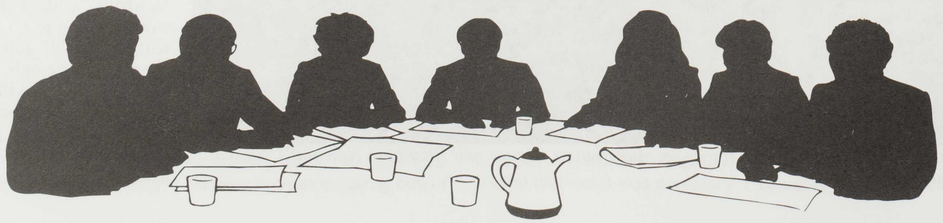
Can you imagine many thousands of anti-abortion protesters lining the streets, instead of the several hundred that usually show up. Or millions of parents nationwide, writing their elected representatives to protest the absence of school prayer. The jails couldn't hold them, nor would any responsible authority consider trying to overcome these numbers .

I don't mean to encourage civil disobedience, in particular violence, but even the church leadership can't seem to agree on what constitutes it. I personally believe that standing up for God's Word in the face of immoral laws is justified. Peter and the other apostles when persecuted for preaching in Jesus' name replied, "We must obey God rather than men" (NIV, Acts 5:28,29).

Anything in conflict with God's Word is false, immoral leadership. Christianity is not a passing fad, or a special interest group as some have expounded. This great country was founded on religious principals, and no one can take that away, unless we allow them to. We deserve what we've got because of our inactivity at the ballot box, as well as in the streets of this nation.

God's not going to do it all for us. We must learn to pray for His guidance, and take the first step on faith. God will do His part when we prove our sincerity. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Do you think God prepared in advance all this turmoil, so that we, as children of the gospel, could sit back and watch? ■



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