

Without Love

By Ronald L. Dart

I was shocked. One urban school district, in the first three months of school, had 19 reports of weapons confiscated and 42 assaults by kids. That's awful. But what is really bad is that this was *only in the first grade and kindergarten*. It would be bad enough if it was only in one school district. It isn't. It is common across the country.

According to Ronald Stephens, Director of the National School Safety Center, "violence is getting younger and younger" in the schools. At first, it was high schools that had to have special schools for disruptive youngsters. Then it was the intermediate schools. Now it is elementary schools that have to have special schools for unmanageable kids. Something really awful is going on among our youngest kids.

Why is this happening? A seasoned elementary school administrator in Miami, Karen Bentley, said something that was so piercingly simple. She said, "Kids aren't getting enough lap time." The words leaped off the page at me, because they pulled together a broad range of impressions I have been getting about troubled youth.

One teacher says simply that a lack of socialization at home is responsible for the wild behavior. What we are getting, she said, "is a kid whose body is six years old, but has the emotional response of a three year old. Imagine a child with the terrible twos in a six year old body."

It is true that aggressive behavior in children is absolutely linked to the violence in movies and on television. But that is only a part of the story, and not the most important part at that. Children are dying for a simple lack of lap time. Their lives are being ruined because they grow up without learning how to love and be loved. It isn't just the time they are spending watching television. Television could be a perfect, wonderful medium and the kids would still have

problems. It is not what they are getting. It is what they are NOT getting. Lap time. Time spent with mother's arms around them. Time spent playing with daddy. Time in

which they experience love and learn how to love.

What is it about love? I suppose evolutionary theory would connect it to sex, but if there is one thing that should be clear by now, it is that love and sex are two entirely different things. Sex does not explain love. It may explain initial attraction or it may not. But it does not explain love.

Maybe the reason human beings can love is because we are made in the image of God. But unlike God, we only have a finite capacity for love. We can only love so many people, I mean really love them. This may explain Solomon who could never find a

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Scripture Spotlight

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing."

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NKJV

The Ninth Commandment: Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness

By Ronald L. Dart

In recent memory, we the people of the United States have had an important lesson in civics and in the importance of the Ten Commandments at the same time. We have had the spectacle of some of the highest law enforcement officers in the land, going into court, putting their hands on the Bible, swearing to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and then lying through their teeth—people who should know better playing fast and loose with one of the most fundamental principles of liberty, truth in the courts.

The Ten Commandments

Now I have said that the last six of the Ten Commandments are the basis of all civil society. Honor your father and your mother, Thou shall not kill, Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor, and Thou shall not covet.

The first four commandments are the basis of all religious society. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make any graven image of the likeness of anything that is in heaven or on the earth. You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Now since the last six commandments depend on the first four commandments for their authority, they are bound together in the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments.

Our Civil Liberties

Our civil liberties are based on the truth that they are granted by a Creator, as was written in the Declaration of Independence, “We do hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”

When we have finally lost that truth, the truth that our rights flow from a Creator, we are lost as a people. Our rights, our civil liberties are based on a legal system that in turn is based on the Ten Commandments.

The very foundation of our legal system is truth. If people can come into court, swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and then lie, justice flies right out the window. It’s over!

The Biblical System

The Old Testament system was a little different from ours, but it was based on the same principle. Leviticus 5:1 says this, “If a person sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge to testify, regarding something he has seen or learned about, he will be held responsible.”

Now in our court system, we have to go out and find the witnesses. We have to bring them into court. We have to swear them in and question them. It is at that moment of swearing, in court, you get them there, you make them stand up, raise their right-hand, swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, it is at that moment that creates the crime of perjury if they lie. Once you cross that line, you swear and then you lie, you go to jail.

In the Biblical system, when the public charge to testify is proclaimed, you are guilty if you know something, and fail to speak up, saying, “Well, the prosecutor didn’t ask me that.” That will not work in the Biblical system, nor will the careful parsing of words and phrases to avoid telling the truth—it won’t work in the Biblical system.

Adjuration to Tell the Truth

When it all comes down to it, if you have heard this adjuration to tell the truth and you don’t come forward with the truth, you’re guilty of perjury.

The literal meaning, by the way, of this phrase in Leviticus 5:1 is, “If a person sins and hears the voice of adjuration, to adjure someone is to command them solemnly, under oath, as if under an oath or penalty of a curse.”

Now there is an interesting illustration of this in the New Testament. Jesus had been arrested, He had been brought before the high priest, and His accusers were there, trying to find witnesses to get Jesus put to death.

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You will find this in Matthew 26, “The chief priests, and the elders and all the Council sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death. But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace . . .” (Matthew 26:59-63).

Now up to this point, Jesus is completely within his rights in maintaining silence. But then the high priest says something that makes it all official. “. . . And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God” (Matthew 26:63).

Now under that law, Jesus could no longer keep silent. He had evidence, He had testimony, there was something He knew that was relevant to the case and He had heard the voice of adjuration. Jesus was obliged to answer and He did, “Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64). Jesus never transgressed the law. He had to tell the truth, even if it meant His death.

The O.J. Simpson Murder Trial

Now the implications of this are pretty far-reaching. You may remember the O.J. Simpson murder trial. That case turned on a presumption in the jury’s mind, that a policeman had planted false evidence at Simpson’s home—the famous bloody glove. It is of course possible for the police to do that sort of thing, whether they really do or not is another matter, but what if they do? Are you comfortable with that?

The Biblical System

Now in the Biblical system there is a law about that. Well there is law in our system too. But here’s what the Bible says about it. “One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin and any sin that he sins.” So if we go to the court and we only have one witness against a man of what he has supposedly done, in the Biblical system, you can’t take him to trial.

“You can do it for any sin that he sins, at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses shall the matter be established.” Then there is this important consideration, “If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that is wrong, Then both men, between whom is the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days, And the judges shall make diligent inquisition . . .” (Deuteronomy 19:15-18).

False Testimony

Our system today grows directly out of the Biblical kind of a system and we have to be responsible, as citizens for involving ourselves in this process. So you get a grand jury together. The grand jury makes diligent inquisition and behold, “If the witness be found to be a false witness and has testified falsely against his brother.”

We don’t care if he is a police officer or anybody else. If he has brought false testimony into this trial. “Then shall you do to him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother, so you shall put the evil away from among you” (Deuteronomy 19:18-19).

Yes, it’s going to be harder to get a conviction. The laws are designed, not to protect the criminal, but to protect the innocent from unjust prosecution.

But for that to work in a society you really have to be tough on false witnesses. If the police officer in ancient Israel could be found to have planted false evidence that would have convicted a man of murder, he himself would have assumed the penalty due for the other man. In this case, if the penalty was death, the police officer would die.

Don’t Feel Sorry For a Liar

You know, I really think that expression, “So shall you put the evil away from among you” is pretty accurate. If you’re tough on liars in court, you will not have many of them.

It goes on to say in Deuteronomy 19:20-21, “Those that remain shall hear and fear and shall henceforth commit no more evil among you.” It is deterrence. You have to be tough. It goes on to say “Your eye shall not pity, life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”

However you take that, what it means is, don’t feel sorry for a liar in court. Hold his feet to the fire. If

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you don't, your entire legal system will collapse out from under you.

There have been times when people in this country have been truly worried about where our legal system is going.

Tell the Truth

There is an interesting law in Exodus 23:1-2, "Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness." In other words, don't try to cover up for this guy. If you're called into court, don't hedge, don't hem and haw, just tell the truth.

Don't pay any attention to the newspapers, don't worry about what the public says, when you're a witness or you're on the jury to adjudicate a matter—deal with the truth. Don't pay any attention to false reports. Don't help a wicked man. Don't follow the crowd.

When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd. This is precisely how the N.I.V. translates Exodus 23:1-3, "Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness. Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, And do not show favoritism to a poor man in his lawsuit."

Now that is really interesting and what it is talking about here is honesty in the courts, a devotion to the truth and a commitment to justice.

Don't Become an Accomplice

When you actually go into court and are not willing to testify about the thief, you become an accomplice. Failure to come forward with evidence of a crime makes you an accomplice. The failure to do this, in fact, is killing the Roman Catholic Church. They fail to turn the pedophile priests over to the authorities. These men have committed a crime, according to the laws of the state. Their superiors in the church, their bishops, know that they have done so, and instead of dealing with it, turn them over to the authorities, they have covered it up. They did what they had to do to try to preserve what they saw is the integrity of the church. In the process this has undermined the legal system in this country that grants them the freedom of worship that they enjoy.

Had the bishops gotten on this case from the start, a lot of mischief could've been avoided. If they had taken the first pedophile priest, the first priest that broke the law of the land in getting involved with a little boy and turned him over to the police, it would've sent a shiver of fear throughout the priesthood and it might not happen many more times after that. A lot of mischief could've been avoided.

Don't Lie About It

King Solomon said "Two things I have required of you, deny them not to me before I die. Remove far from me vanity and lies, give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me, Lest I be full, and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of the LORD my God in vain" (Proverbs 30:7-9).

Now what is interesting about that last line, what does taking the name of God in vain have to do stealing? "Lest I be poor," he said, "and steal and take the name of my God in vain." You see, if you steal, you are going to end up lying about it. If you commit adultery you are going to end up lying about it.

One sin leads to another and when it comes right down to it, lying seems to always stand at the end of the road in order to try to protect ourselves.

Your Iniquities Separate You From God

I still pray for my country, but it's getting harder to feel confident that I'm being heard. There is a passage in Isaiah that haunts me. It speaks straight to us, right where we are, right now.

"Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, his ear isn't heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Your hands are defiled with blood, your fingers with iniquity, your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perverseness" (Isaiah 59:1-3).

Now wait a minute, how can my hands be defiled with blood? I haven't killed anybody. No? You do know, don't you, that this is a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and we the people have allowed a climate of violence to pervade our society. It is not the freedoms we have that have brought the violence. It's the lies.

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Isaiah continues in verse 4, “Nobody calls for justice, nobody pleads for the truth. They trust in vanity and they speak lies.” They will not stick with the truth. Justice and the truth go together. “They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.” Verse seven, “Their feet run do evil, they make haste to shed innocent blood, their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity. Wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they don’t know, and there is no judgment in their goings, they have made them crooked paths. Therefore, judgment is far from us, neither does justice overtake us. We wait for light and behold obscurity. We wait for brightness and we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind. We grope as if we have no eyes. We stumble at noon as in the night. We are in desolate places like dead men. We look for judgment, but there is none. We look for salvation and it is a long way off” (Isaiah 59:4-11).

Protect the Truth

Why is there no judgment? Why can’t we find judgment? Why are we wandering around in the dark? Because we have not protected the truth in our legal system.

“Truth fails and he that departs from evil makes himself a prey. God looked at this and it displeased him, that there was no judgment. He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor” (Isaiah 59:15-16).

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” When the time comes for someone to stand in the gap, I hope you will be there, and will stand for the truth.

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woman. He had seven hundred wives and 300 concubines, but he still could not find the love of his life.

“Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account: Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found” (Ecclesiastes 7:27-28).

He couldn’t find one woman, because he tried to love a thousand. He could never love any one of his wives like Isaac loved Rebekah, like Abraham loved

Sarah. And poor David, great man that he was, never had that one woman he loved above all others, that one woman who alone could make him happy.

And here we have kids being taught all about sex in school. But is anyone teaching them about love? Even the admirable abstinence program isn’t enough. Only love is enough.

But the real tragedy is that the schools cannot teach kids about love. That is the job of the mommas and the papas. And if they don’t do it at the earliest time, it may never be done at all. Genetic research has learned that the human genome has a switch that enables language learning and that it is open very early and for a very short time. A kid who is not exposed to spoken language when that window is open will always have a problem with languages.

Suppose there is a window for learning about love that is open very early, but not for very long. To tell the truth, a lot of the social pathology we see right now is perfectly consistent with that possibility. When I think about these poor kids throwing tantrums at age six that one might expect in a terrible two, my heart aches. I can only imagine the fear, the anger, the confusion that besets that little heart and mind. These kids are in pain— deep, psychological pain. God only knows where some of these children will wind up—Jail? Drugs? Dead? It gives new meaning to the old question, “Have you hugged your kid today?”

The worst part about this is that a child who cannot learn to love his family, may find himself unable to love God either. It was Rollo May in *Love and Will* who said that when men lose the power to love, they substitute power over. I think that is what you see in uncontrollable kids. They are unable to love and they are trying to gain control of their environment. They can’t do this like an adult, so they get their way by screaming and violent behavior.

I know what I am saying is frightening, and it puts a horrific burden on parents. But then, you already knew this down in your heart, didn’t you? You already knew that children need love like they need mother’s milk. Maybe you thought it was just automatic that it required nothing special from you. But He who made us, made us so that we would need our mothers and our mothers would need us. And He made us to need fathers as we grow up, too.

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What we now see in our society is a growing absence of love. And the reason why the love is going away is because God is going away. When we start denying that we are created beings, made by God, when we declare that man is a product of natural laws and evolution, that what we call love is no more than sexual attraction, we end up denying the *possibility of love*.

Without love, our society will ultimately collapse. And without God, we will finally be without love. God help us to turn our families around while we still can.

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Trust God

By Mardy Cobb

“Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me. The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows. The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked. Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion. Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up: Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the LORD be upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD” (Psalm 129).

In our world, many times, those with money win. Those with connections get away with it. Those who lie and steal get what they want. These acts are wicked. But their victory is only for a little while. Their advantage is temporary. Wickedness hurts, but we don't have to let it defeat our inner self. We don't

have to submit to the commands of wickedness. Refusing to cooperate with greed and the manipulation of others is not easy, but it is the way of a Christian.

It is also the way of our Hero, Jesus Christ. He is present even now. We must remember that we are not alone. Remember the words of Jesus that close the Gospel of Matthew, “and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

Christ is willing to walk with us every day of our lives. God is the God who takes care of His own first. And eventually God will render all justice—just rewards, and just punishment. God misses nothing. His justice is perfect. His timing is exquisite. His method is penetrating. He can bring the proud to their knees—the greedy to emptiness—the powerful to helplessness. So in the end, money means nothing, the only connection that counts is with God, and those who lie and steal will pay with their lives.

Trust God. Our enemies will be put to shame.

Born to Win

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