

FIVE MINUTES WITH TOM MOOTY

Column Number 2132

"IS IT FUN, OR IS IT JOY?"

Everywhere you go, people are laughing! Everything has to be funny or it simply will not "go over"; isn't that true? Television comics will go to any lengths allowed by obscenity laws (which seem to be changing almost hourly) to make people laugh.

By the way, just to show my age a little bit; I can actually remember when Late Night Programming was actually - wait for it; wait for it - I can actually remember when Late Night Talk Shows were actually - funny!

It was a time of "Comic Relief", which was actually - good for us. It was actually therapeutic! But today, it seems that if we can somehow be "Don't worry, be happy" and collapse under a spasm of mirth and merriment, all the problems are instantly solved.

A woman grinds out an obscene dance and begins to tell filthy jokes and the whole place splits its side with laughter. Businessmen sit in the corner of a party with glasses in their hands telling how so-and-so lost their shirt in a deal and everyone rolls over laughing. Everything has to be funny.

Yes, America finds sin funny.

Now, before you write that letter, please understand; everyone needs to have fun. Christians can have more fun than anyone; but a person on the road to Hell has no right to laugh about it. If a person

really knows what is in store for "the wicked and all the nations that forget God" there is NO WAY he can have REAL ENJOYMENT.

Surely I have joy and happiness - even fun in this life; but I'm looking for a better time IN heaven, aren't you? You see, Christians can know their sins have been forgiven and forgotten as far as Eternity in Heaven is concerned; but in the meantime, I am going to enjoy the trip TO Heaven, aren't you?

What America needs to realize is that our forefathers used to bow their heads in repentance when sin was discovered; and trust God to forgive it away. But now, it seems the thing to do is try to laugh it all away.

We are not the first nation that has gone down the road to ruin laughing. Babylon tried it and wound up in a heap of trouble. Rome laughed itself into total destruction. Egypt had some of the rawest pornographic culture in vogue when Moses was educated there; now they are in shambles compared to their former status. France is no longer what she was; and, frankly, it would appear that we are trying the same thing!

There is an absence of real heartfelt sorrow for sin today. We need to recognize it for what it is; call it by name, and turn from it if we are to survive.

What is so funny about open places of sin and immorality? These are the very things that are tearing down the moral fiber of our great nation; and we laugh it all off and continue right on in our sinful ways.

God says; "The wicked shall be turned into Hell and all the nations that forget God" (Psalms 9:17). God says: "Be not deceived, God is not

mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that is what he shall reap" (Galatians 6:7).

Can anyone name one long-lasting and God-honoring good thing that sin has ever done for him?

No?

Well then, get smarted up and turn from it; and turn to God! He will never let you down.

Tom Mooty has served Newport's West End Baptist Church for a total of thirty three cumulative years. He has served as Secretary and Vice President of the Tennessee Baptist Pastor's Conference; and writes this column for The Newport Plain Talk's Wednesday and Weekend Editions. Please let the "Plain Talk" know your comments concerning this column.