

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XVI

August 26, 2007

No. 34

## “But, Everybody Is Doing It”

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**P**ressure from our peers to think a certain way or do certain things is very strong when we are young. Fitting in with friends pulls strongly on the mind as one strives to find one’s identity in society. When facing moral decisions, a young person may reply to one’s caring parents’ godly direction with, “*but...everybody is doing it.*”

We must bring our children back to the “moral” aspect of our direction, as they seek to emphasize the “popular” aspect of a practice. God instructed his people, “*thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil...*” (Exodus 23:2). God wants us to focus on whether it is good or evil, not whether the multitude is practicing it as we contemplate our own decision.

Often, the multitude will not follow the right way of the Lord, which demands living according to God’s way by forsaking the lusts of the flesh, but will follow the less restrictive life of giving in to one’s lusts. Such is the “*broad*” way that leads to “*destruction*” and Jesus says, “*many are they that enter in thereby*” (Matthew 7:13). I am

sure one would not follow the multitude if “everybody” was jumping off some tall building to their own destruction. We need to see the same foolishness in play regarding decisions in our youth when we claim, “but, everybody is doing it.”

In considering moral issues, we must follow God’s wisdom, instead of man’s. “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death*” (Proverbs 14:12). The way may seem harmless in our eyes, but is lethal in reality. When young and inexperienced, we can be wise by fearing the Lord. “*Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding*” (Proverbs 3:5).

Is it true among the young that “everybody is smoking?” While a 2005 government survey says that 50% of seniors say they have at least tried smoking by the 12th. Grade, only 21.6 percent are presently smoking. No, not everybody is smoking, in fact, most (78.4 percent) are not! (2006 *Monitoring the Future*)

Is it true young people, that “everybody is drinking alco-

hol?” While surveys confirm that by the time one graduates from High School, 75 percent have had more than a few sips of alcohol, they also inform us that among those of age 12-17, 16.5 percent are currently drinking alcoholic drinks. No, not everybody is drinking. In fact, 83.5 percent of your age group are not currently drinking. College students who think that everybody is binge drinking, think again. A recent survey reveals that 18.8 percent are binge drinking. It appears that 81.2 percent are not binge drinking. (2005 SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health).

Is it true that “everybody is having premarital sex?” It is true that 46.8 percent of teenagers say they have had sexual relations, but that is not “everybody”. In fact it is not even a majority. The same survey reveals that 33.9 percent of the young people, age 12-17, are currently sexually active. This means that 66.1 percent of your peers are not sexually active. No, not everybody is doing it! (2005 *CDC Youth Risk Behavior*)

Very few generalities are literally true. But even if everybody is doing wrong, you joining in does not make it right.