

## Dice and 'Spot' Cards

We both chuckled when I shared some of the *game rules* my mom had grown up with. Grandpa would not allow his kids to use dice, so they had to make their own spinner when moving game pieces around the Monopoly board. My mom and her siblings were also forbidden the use of 'spot' cards. (Those were cards with spots on them...spots in the shapes of Spades, Hearts, Clubs and Diamonds.) Of course, they could play Rook, a card game that displayed only numerical values on the cards. I explained to my friend, James, that Grandpa reasoned that dice and spot cards were used in gambling, a practice that was considered morally wrong.

In my childhood home Grandpa's rules did not apply. Mom and Dad knew that merely using dice or spot cards was not gambling; it was all simple entertainment. So, James and I chuckled more at the *naïve* thinking of my Grandfather and his generation.

Then, James paused and thoughtfully said, "You know..." (looking upward and tapped his chin with his forefinger), "You know, those folks were really serious about not sinning."

I was taken back by his statement. I had only thought of their behavior as uninformed and silly. I had never considered the possibility that they were consciously trying to avoid sin.

James went on to explain his understanding of that generation. He told me that they were very concerned with doing what was right and avoiding wrong. Their guiding principle came from scripture, 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

***Abstain from all appearance of evil. (KJV)***

Newer translations say: *abstain from every form of evil or reject every kind of evil.*

The point is that their generation was intent on following the scripture in order to practice moral living in their daily lives. Even though I personally see nothing wrong with using dice or playing with spot cards, I have grown to admire such an attitude toward godly living.

Moral tolerance, *soft* doctrine and benevolence are the fashion trends in today's 'Christian' community in the United States. Yet, godliness and purity have taken a back seat. Topics that stand under the banner of holiness and truth are too often thought to generate arguments, so they are avoided. The result is a religious environment that extends a generous hand to those with physical needs (though not as effectively as secular charitable organizations) while tolerating "every form of evil."

Consider our call to lives of purity and holiness :

***Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully. (Psalm 24:3-4)***

***You shall be holy, for I am holy. (1 Pet. 1:13)***

***For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. (1 Thes 4:7)***

***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. (Matthew 5:6)***

***He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:21)***

***He must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. (1 Pet 3:11)***

We must love and accept one another, but not at the expense of morality and holiness.

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