

Mixed Signals

The apostle Paul raised this question to the brethren at Corinth, *“For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?”* (1 Cor. 14:8). If the signal was not clearly sounded, chaos certainly would be the order of the day. Some would go charging into battle when they should be retreating and some would be retreating when they should be charging into battle.

The problem of “mixed signals” is not a new thing. Young parents are warned about sending “mixed signals” to their children. Moms and dads are advised to mean what they say. Children should learn that “no” means no and “yes” means yes. One parent should not undermine the other, both should support the decisions of the other. Don’t send “mixed signals” and have a confused child.

However, it seems that we are bent on sending “mixed signals”. Our government and the courts seem to be very good at doing this. Millions of dollars have been awarded to people from the tobacco companies because they began smoking and developed cancer or some disease and it is the tobacco companies fault because you enjoyed smoking for lo these many years. The lawyers and their clients have been going after gun manufacturers to hold them liable because some very mean person shot someone to death. The very mean person is not at fault, the gun maker is. What about knives and even cars? What about the lady who was on trial for killing her husband by backing over him in her Mercedes or BMW? By the way she said it was an accident. Yeah, right! She repeatedly backed over him; I can see how that would be accidental. Why weren’t the auto makers brought to trial? If she had not had a car, she wouldn’t have run over her husband? I think I remember that he had given her the car, it was his fault, why go to trial? Then we have poor McDonalds. They were accused of being responsible for fat people. The judge threw the case out. People, he said, were responsible for what they ate. What a revolutionary idea. Individual responsibility.

The Bible is teaching us (Ezek. 18) that we are responsible for our behavior and all those around us are telling us that what we do should be blamed on some one else. Adam tried this (Gen. 3:12) and it didn’t work for him. It won’t work for us. We need to speak the truth. Don’t send “mixed signals”.

Bill Dedmon
September 21, 2003
