
"You Dirty Cur."

Pain, surprise, and a mixture of pity and loathing are the emotional reaction of normal, decent boys when they hear companions apparently normal boast or make light of dark and disgraceful deeds, sometimes miscalled exploits. And because the question, "How can they do it?" is asked by people who have the normal sense of shame, it will perhaps be well to wander briefly into the shady paths of abnormal psychology to discover what leads them to do it.

There are three explanations (and they are explanations, mind, you, not excuses):

1. Degeneracy;
2. Immaturity, mental or moral or both;
3. Moral cowardice, working itself out in a defense mechanism.

With the first we need not concern ourselves. Most of you will meet with few degenerates, and you will instinctively shun them. Immaturity is more common, and moral immaturity arises not only from slow mental and emotional development, but also living in a pagan environment hostile to the growth of moral ideals. In these two classes, the degenerates and the immature, the sense of shame is not well developed.

In the third group there is a strong sense of shame, but its unfortunate victim is guilty of overdoing his attempt to talk down his own conscience. An excellent analysis of the situation was given a few years ago by a young man who came in to get help in overcoming his weaknesses. Here is what he said:

"I imagine that no one can hate that sort of conversation more than I do, and it is one of my chief sources of temptation -- and yet I indulge in it very frequently; in fact, I often start it. All the time that I am in it I am saying to myself: 'You dirty cur.' I know that others know of my weakness, so I like to brag of it as strength. Down in my heart I despise myself for my weakness and I loathe my sins, but I don't seem to have the will power to come out and declare my true feelings; so the harder my conscience rides me the more I brag."

You can help the poor victims of the second and third group. The immature kids must be taught caution; a good spanking will give them that. The cowards are cured by calling their bluff, by playing shame against cowardice. Look them in the eye and say: "Why don't you tell the truth?" If they have any spunk at all they will take offense at that, but it will cure them -- and if the cure doesn't work it is a sign that you have mistaken your man, and that he is a degenerate instead of simply a coward.

Bad Books.

A man who circulates a bad book is responsible for all the sinful thoughts, words and actions which result from his passing it on. The reading of a single bad book has been the starting point of many a life of sin; and when a sinner thus started has in turn corrupted others, and they others in their turn, the person who first put that book into his hands has piled up against the Day of Judgment a weary load of vice. Tear up everything of that kind that comes your way and you will earn the Blessing that comes to those who stop scandal.

PRAYERS: Howard Jeffers, Bernard Thompson, and Granger Weil ask prayers for their mothers who are ill, and Jos. Foley (of Vermont), for his father who is very low. A relative of another student is very ill. A deceased relative of Don McCue and a friend killed in an accident are recommended to your prayers. Four special intentions.