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Why Teach Young People Bad Habits?

YOU CAN'T drive out evil without replacing it with good. Conversely, when good is eliminated evil flows in to replace it.

By driving traditional moral and economic attitudes out of the public school system, social and political reformers find room to teach libertarianism, humanism, communism and socialism.

Arguments are made that it is the responsibility of the families to teach religion and morality at home, not in schools. It also is argued that pupils should be exposed to all of the vices and filth that they might encounter later in life.

Whether these exposures prepare youngsters to avoid such evils or lead them into temptation is a topic of much debate. For generations leading educators held that the proper role for schools was to teach positive ways of life. It was not considered necessary or desirable to teach young people how to acquire bad habits.

There can be no doubt that impressionable young minds are influenced in the direction they are led even if they may not follow instruc-

tions precisely. By their own beliefs and examples teachers impart attitudes as well as facts, methods and procedures.

The same is true of the educational system as a whole. Local school boards have little to say about what is taught. When officials in Washington, the state capitol or the courts declare that something may or may not be taught or practiced in the schools the ruling assumes aspects of confirmation or condemnation. Thus evil often takes on the appearance of a perverse public endorsement.

The Supreme Court of Oklahoma has ruled that gay activists have as much right to recognition as a respectable student group as any other body on the University of Oklahoma campus. The very homosexuality is given an implied endorsement by the state.

School prayer has been outlawed by the Supreme Court of the United States. Thereby the message may be derived by many students that praying is something that should not be done.

The distribution of Bibles and dis-

play of the Ten Commandments have been opposed by civil libertarians but literature that espouses atheism and humanism is not challenged on similar grounds.

The battle between evolutionists and creationists over the teaching of one or the other or both is basically a religious battle over the existence of God. Strangely, evolutionist scientists who demand that no restrictions be placed upon opportunities to discover the truth oppose the presentation of scientific evidence of creation.

Similarly, sex libertarians advocate sex education in the schools, which might be a good thing if properly presented, but they do not want morality to be considered. Instead, textbooks now used discuss marriage, communal living, lesbianism and fornication as if all were equally acceptable and desirable ways of life.

Fortunately, many teachers in our public school system still strive to motivate their pupils toward higher ideals and responsible citizenship, to be achieved through morality and integrity.