

"Right is right even if everyone is against it and wrong is wrong, even if everyone is for it." — William Penn

An enlisted man in the army went before a board of inquiry when he applied for officer candidate school. He was asked the question, "In times of war should moral codes be relaxed?" "Does not the stress of battle justify men in doing things that they would not do when at home under normal situations?" He knew that the men asking the questions had, in their own lives, relaxed their values. He also knew that his response would determine his eligibility to become an officer. He had to choose to stand up for what was right or to succumb to pressures to say what he thought the board wanted to hear. The enlisted man chose to say that there should not be any double standards anytime. This man thought the same way as another man, William Penn. He wrote, "Right is right even if everyone is against it, and wrong is wrong, even if everyone is for it." Everyone needs to decide for himself if he is going to live by this principle, or the sense of what is right, or not. Each person will decide one way or another.

Unfortunately many have chosen to give up their integrity and surrender to the ways of the common man. In business, many companies have chosen to put less product in the same size boxes hoping to make more money. Of course they put the weight on the box, but still deceive the public by using the same container. Even toilet paper companies have shortened the rolls in width but still sell the packages at the same price. Likewise, in the political arena, all candidates must decide whether or not they will stand by what they said they would do on the campaign trail, or give in to special interest groups, give in to pressures by powerful people, or simply decide to look out for themselves. So many times during elections, promises of listening to the people and representing the general public are made so they will get elected. Then once they are in office, things change. Those types of people have no moral discipline.

Each of us needs to decide whether or not we will keep the principle of what is right is right and wrong is wrong no matter what other people are doing. If we choose to have unquestionably integrity, then we will have success. This success may not be financial or prestigious but it will be real. We will have the peace that comes with maintaining our word and our honor. Others will trust us. And, we may influence others for good and perhaps inspire those around us to keep their integrity.

Tina Perrin (19 and older category)