

The Seat Belt Controversy

If you want to start a good, heated debate among a group of people, try raising the question of whether mandatory seat belt laws should be enacted requiring motorists to wear seat belts and enforcing stiff fines against those caught unbuckled. Generally, this is one subject on which everyone's got a pretty definite idea.

Those who favor the belting laws generally feel that if an individual doesn't have the sense to take good care of himself, then he should be forced to do so. These people, as a rule, wear belts. Often the view is taken by these individuals that if they were involved in an accident which resulted in the death of a person not wearing a belt in another car, they would carry a burden of guilt on their minds which they would not have if the other individual had taken proper care of himself, worn a belt and survived the accident. In other words, in this view, drivers have a moral responsibility toward each other to protect themselves and their passengers to the maximum degree. Many take the view that seat belt laws should be passed simply because they would save lives and reduce injuries. In the United States, safety experts are estimating that anywhere from 10,000 to 20,000 of the more than 55,000 people killed on the nation's highways could be saved if belts were used.

On the other side of the fence, the individualistic traits of the American people, which unquestionably have been one of our great strengths as a nation, come into play. Those opposing compulsion and fines to force use of seat belts express outrage over the invasion of privacy involved in legislation which would require them to wear belts in the privacy of their own automobiles. The feeling is that an individual is hurting no one but himself. If he chooses not to wear a belt, he should have that right.

Quite obviously, there will be no meeting of the minds between these two groups. The rugged individualists in our midst may, before too long, have an opportunity to find out if they have the courage and determination to stand by their convictions. In this safety-conscious age, federal pressure is mounting to force the individual states to pass mandatory seat belt laws. A Wall Street Journal article assessing the situation reports that the pressure is coming in the form of an "...implied threat to withhold some highway-aid money from the states if they don't act, and it may offer a generous dollar bonus if they do." The Journal article states that buckle-up bills

were introduced in 21 legislatures this year, and as a result of federal pressure, state officials "...who only two years ago could hardly care less, are keenly interested now."

The pressure for buckle-up legislation has come from many directions. It originated in the general atmosphere of consumer protection, which has increasingly made government responsible for the safety of the individual, regardless of whether that responsibility resulted in diminishing the individual citizen's personal freedom or options for action. In this atmosphere, there has been growing public awareness of the need for finding ways to improve highway safety. Auto makers have tended to get behind seat belt legislation as an alternative to the requirement that air bags be installed in automobiles. Problems associated with this safety device are considerable. Also, voluntary buckle-up campaigns have failed, and it is estimated that only about 20 percent of the nation's drivers currently use seat belts and only some 4 percent fasten shoulder harnesses, if they are available. What it all boils down to, really, is a matter of principle. How far should the government go in requiring that the individual do or not do certain things in the interest of his own safety or well-being? For instance, it is generally recognized that smoking is not healthful and probably contributes to the development of serious diseases in many individuals involving the heart, lungs and circulatory system. Should the government prohibit smoking? Should it prohibit the excessive use of alcohol? Should it outlaw auto racing or other dangerous sports events or require that overweight people go on diets, or perhaps that all of us should be compelled to take part in state-conducted exercise and body conditioning programs? More people die from bad habits of eating and smoking and physical laziness than anything else. Some contend that a precedent would be set by seat belt legislation which would give "Big Brother" another major access to impose his will upon our way of life as individuals.

Well, that's the story. If you have an opinion one way or the other, write your congressman or state legislator and let him know what you think. In this issue, as in any other, that is the best way to insure that the laws of the land bear some resemblance to what you would like to see them be. In the meanwhile, why not buckle up? It really is safer.

The Spirit of Labor Day

It seems as though it was only yesterday that our nation's schools let out for summer vacation, and families began summertime activities. But now the season's last three-day holiday--Labor Day weekend--is almost upon us, and youngsters will soon be returning to the classroom.

The good times of the Labor Day weekend for all America mark a time of change. Suddenly the Fall season is upon us and the pace quickens. Family attention shifts from plans for play to preparation for work. Youngsters will be trading in their water skis and swim fins for textbooks and

pencils, and parents will be exchanging their camping gear and barbecue sets for a renewed dedication to career or school--at least, that's the way it should be. In closing the book on Summer, we all should rededicate ourselves to earning the fruits of labor and study by which we hope to be better able to provide for the support of ourselves and loved ones while contributing to our country's well-being.

This rededication should be the real significance of Labor Day. It should lend greater enjoyment as well as meaning to this season's last chance for a Summer family outing.

"Grassroots Opinion"

MESA, ARIZ, TRIBUNE "See where a bit of a squeeze is developing in the matter of go-juice for chariots, clear across the nation. It'd be a good idea to start thinking in terms of saving gas whenever possible. Combine shopping trips, try walking if you're next door to a grocery, keep your

car tuned up to get the best gas mileage possible, establish gas-saving driving habits by avoiding jackrabbit starts and the like. Drive with the traffic flow on arterial streets where signals are synchronized. Might even try a bike sometimes."

**NOW IS
THE TIME . . .**

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
Telephone 394-6851



TO RECOGNIZE STAGE OF MATURITY

The silage making season is approaching for many livestock and dairy producers. Many acres of corn are headed for the silo and represent valuable feed nutrients. Cutting corn or sorghum at the proper stage of maturity is very important. The early dent stage for corn should be the goal and the dough stage for the sudan-sorghum mixtures. Too much moisture may still be in some crops at this stage of grain maturity. Corn made into silage prior to the dent stage may have higher protein content but the total feed value will be lower. Corn beyond the dent stage may be made into silage but some water may be needed to provide sufficient moisture. The making of most any crop into silage is one of the best methods of preserving maximum amounts of feed nutrients.

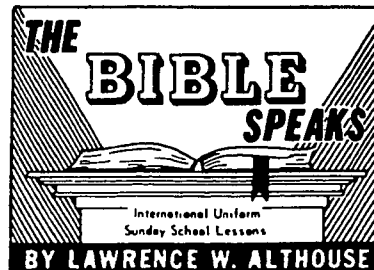
TO ADD PROTEIN TO CORN SILAGE

We are aware of many available additives that are represented to improve the feeding value of corn silage; some of these may have some merit under unusual conditions but it is doubtful if many of them actually improve the corn silage. However, one fact is certain and that is the need for more protein in corn silage. The adding of materials such as urea or anhydrous ammonia at the silo at filling time has considerable

merit; these forms of non-protein-nitrogen are cheaper than other kinds of protein and can be of great benefit if applied according to instructions. Also, it is very important that the cattle be introduced to this kind of silage very gradually in order to prevent toxic and digestive disorders.

TO MANAGE ALFALFA CAREFULLY

The fall management of alfalfa fields that are to be carried over for another year is very important; this includes fertilization, disease and insect control, and time of removal of final cutting. Needless to say the crop should be fertilized once or twice per season; insects should be controlled at all times. Diseases are hard to control but resistant strains should be considered. The final cutting this fall should be timed so that the root reserves are not drained from the plants. Research work indicates that any cutting made in September in this part of the state should be at least 50 percent of the plants in blossom and then not take the crop during the last half of September. If the plants are not 50 percent in bloom by the middle of September, then it is suggested that the grower wait until after a killing frost. Alfalfa is a very important crop considering the protein needs and prices; careful management is very important this fall.



WRONG COMPANY

Background Scripture: Matthew 12:43-45, Mark 2:13-17, Luke 15:11-32, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Galatians 5:25 through 6:5
Devotional Reading: James 1:22-27.

About six years ago my wife and I became involved in an ecumenical coffee house ministry in a nearby city. Beyond providing a good atmosphere for refreshment, "The Source," as our coffee house was called, served as a



Rev. Althouse

The "tax collectors and sinners"

Many of us were dismayed when the local council of churches refused support or recognition of this ministry on the grounds that the coffee house might be frequented by the "wrong kinds of people." The coffee house was located on the town's main street and there was a good possibility that it would be frequented by alcoholics, drug addicts, and people of unsavory character. To many of us, even worse than the refusal to support us, was the apparent outlook and attitude of many church people towards those who might be termed "the wrong company."

Actually, Jesus himself was on the receiving end of this kind of criticism. "Why does he eat with

tax collectors and sinners?" asked the scribes and pharisees (Mark 2:16). Nor is this an isolated reaction: Jesus was frequently criticized for his association with people whom the "righteous" regarded as sinful and unworthy of any contact whatsoever. People were frequently indignant that he would associate and even help prostitutes, drunkards, lepers, collaborators with the enemy, criminals, etc.

His reason for coming

They were no less shocked when he reminded them of the true nature of his mission (and theirs if they followed him): "Those who are well have no need for a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2:17). If these people were really so immoral, than they needed him all the more. Unlike the Old Testament religion, the heart of Christianity is not judgement, but redemption. The New Testament is no less concerned with human sin, but it is even more concerned for sinners. Christ came into the world to save sinners, to redeem people with stained lives, not simply to gather up and certify the righteous.

Unfortunately, many of us are too often afflicted with the unredeemptive attitude of Jonah. Jonah agreed to preach to the people of Nineveh and pronounce God's judgement upon them. He was surprised, however, to find that these godless people heeded his preaching and repented, thus saving the city and themselves. Jonah would have preferred for God to rain down fire and brimstone upon them and, angered by this turn of events, he sulked in steamy silence.

Too many people, like Jonah, would rather use the Gospel to "divide the sheep from the goats," to pronounce judgement upon sinners, and enjoy their divine punishment. But the purpose of the Gospel, as Jesus demonstrated so clearly, is to save and redeem those whom we frequently judge to be "the wrong company."