



"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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"Whiskey Speech" orator Judge "Soggy" Sweat dies

*The Clarion Ledger, Saturday, February 24, 1996,
Jackson, MS, p. 3B.*

CORINTH - Noah S. "Soggy" Sweat, Jr., a former judge and lawyer whose 1952 "Whiskey Speech" became a monument to political double-talk, died Friday after a battle with Parkinson's disease.

Sweat, 73, died at a Corinth nursing home. His professional and political career included stints as a legislator, district attorney, and circuit court judge and college professor. Sweat will be remembered most for his "Whiskey Speech" delivered in the Mississippi House in 1952 when lawmakers were debating legalizing liquor.

Sweat's "Whiskey Speech"

Here's the famous "Whiskey Speech; then-Rep. N.S. "Soggy" Sweat Jr. delivered on April 4, 1952, at a banquet while the prohibition issue was before the Legislature.

"My friends, I had not intended to discuss this controversial subject at this particular time. However, I want you to know that I do not shun controversy. On the contrary, I will take a stand on any issue at any time, regardless of how fraught with controversy it might be. You have asked me how I feel about whiskey. All right, here is how I feel about whiskey.

If when you say whiskey you mean the devil's brew, the poison scourge, the bloody monster, that defiles innocence, dethrones reason, destroys the home, creates misery and poverty, yea, literally takes the bread from the mouths of little children; if you mean the evil drink that topples the Christian man and woman from the pinnacle of righteous, gracious living into the bottomless pit of degradation, and despair, and shame and helplessness, and hopelessness, then certainly I am against it.

"But; If when you say whiskey you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine, the ale that is consumed when good fellows get together, that puts a song in their hearts and laughter on their lips, and the warm glow of contentment in their eyes; if you mean Christmas cheer; if you mean the stimulating drink that

puts the spring in the old gentleman's step on a frosty, crispy morning; if you mean the drink which enables a man to magnify his joy, and his happiness, and to forget, if only for a little while, life's great tragedies, and heartaches, and sorrows; if you mean that drink, the sale of which pours into our treasuries untold millions of dollars, which are used to provide tender care for our little crippled children, our blind, our deaf, our dumb, our pitiful aged and infirm; to build highways and hospitals and schools, then certainly I am for it. This is my stand. I will not retreat from it. I will not compromise."

That sounds like a politician if I ever heard one. But I am sorry to say it sounds like many preachers I know when you ask these questions:

- Is baptism essential to salvation?
- Can a woman teach men?
- Is the Lord's Supper for the Lord's people on the Lord's day?
- What's your stand on social drinking?
- Does God hate divorce?
- Will you marry a believer to a non-Christian?
- Do I have to go to church?
- Is one church as good as another?
- Are denominations sinful?

I've had some brethren answer these questions that sound as clear as "Soggy Sweat" does on whiskey. Or Bud Abbott and Lou Costello's, "Who's on First?"

The Church ought to give a certain sound. I Corinthians 14:7-9, "7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? 8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? 9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."

This is not only true of tongues, but Bible Doctrine.