
Words of Truth

When You Wrong Your Own Soul

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The Lord had Solomon write the following: “*Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour*” (Proverbs 14:9). Some people delight in doing wrong (Proverbs 1:22). Some consider it a sport to be mischievous (Proverbs 10:23). There are those whom can work evil in their lives and act as though they have done nothing amiss (Proverbs 30:20). Such foolish thinking grows as people do things that are wrong and they face no immediate consequences for their actions. Those people become emboldened to continue to work evil works (Ecclesiastes 8:11). That is all stupid, right?

All of the things written above are things we generally know, understand, and we shake our heads at those people. It is easy to target those that do not consider the consequences of their actions and speak against them. Yet, we’d do well to turn that light of examination upon ourselves lest we find ourselves to be unforgiven hypocrites (Matthew 7:1-5 and Romans 2:1-29). We have to ask ourselves, and should regularly (II Corinthians 13:5), if we are taking our thoughts, actions, and the consequences for them seriously enough.

We must remind ourselves that sin is any violation of God’s word (I John 3:4). Sin is also any violation of our own scripturally guided consciences (Romans 14:23). Sin does include doing something that is lawfully right, but not expedient or edifying (I Corinthians 8:1-13 and I Corinthians 10:23-33). Spiritual death is the result of any sin (Romans 6:23 and Revelation 21:8). We must remind ourselves that it does not take us committing a multitude of sins to be lost (James 2:10-12).

The Lord has made it somewhat simple for us to live aright. He has given us [faithful Christians] a lot of freedom. His expectations are not unreasonably difficult (Matthew 11:28-30 and I John 5:2-3). We live under the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25). Therefore, we have to reach an understanding of God’s expectations that neither overly burdens ourselves nor underestimates what God expects of us.

Properly evaluating sin and the effect(s) that come from sin, includes being able to weigh the temporary pleasure that sinful behavior provides versus the consequences that comes from sin (Hebrews 11:24-26). Our proper understanding of God’s expectations, coupled with weighing the consequences should help us to understand something very important. Sin is harmful to us no matter how “fun” it may seem to be. Think about that!

You Are Hurting Yourself

When Solomon wrote about wisdom, which we know true wisdom is from God (I Corinthians 3:18-19 and James 3:13-18), he wrote the following: *“Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.... Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death” (Proverbs 1:20-31; 8:33-36).*

What keeps you from jumping off of a high roof to feel like you are flying? What keeps you from driving a vehicle off of a cliff to see what it would feel like? What keeps you from cutting off body parts that are itchy? What keeps you from touching a hot stove to see what burnt skin looks like? We know that if we do certain things those actions will result in painful injury. We realize that certain things bring harm upon us. Therefore, we avoid countless activities to protect ourselves.

The avoidance of sin is just as simple as not touching a hot stove. It will hurt, don't do it (Mark 9:42-48). Just like learning lessons like that in life, we have to learn lessons like that spiritually. Something might seem fun or beneficial in the flesh, but we have to weigh what harm that action might bring upon us. Like wisdom teaches us, to sin is to wrong your own soul. Sin is the equivalent of an attempted suicide (cf. James 1:13-16).

Conclusion

The world downplays sin. We often discuss how ignorant that is. Yet, it is easy to fall into the trap as Christians wherein you could downplay your own decisions and the spiritual impact those decisions will bring upon you. In addition, sinful choices impact others too in many ways. Take the time to evaluate your thoughts before they become harmful actions (Psalms 4:2-4)! Bring your thoughts into subjection to the will of God (II Corinthians 10:5).