
Words of Truth

Hiding Sin Under The Pretense Of Not Causing Some To Stumble

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Sometimes the title of an article isn't always easy to write. Sometimes a title of an article doesn't clarify the article very much. That is the case here. So, let me start by specifying what we will be studying in this article.

For the sake of illustration, let's say a pitiful preacher uses God's word to justify a sinner. Let's say, for some carnally minded reason, that preacher wants to make someone like Tupac Shakur (a thug rapper) look like a good guy (i.e. <http://www.bywhataauthority.com/Thug.mp3>). After this man preaches this sermon, the weak people worshipping in that congregation say nothing. A few weeks pass and some people (outside of that local congregation) listen to it, get concerned, and one contacts this pitiful preacher to address the matter. That pitiful preacher rejects correction, blows up, and adds sin to sin. The so-called "brethren" where this preacher is are notified of what has happened. They get involved.

The pitiful preacher refuses to repent of his sins, but continues to justify them. However, he realizes he has to do something about that Tupac sermon. He is too proud to admit it, in fact, he continues defending it. However, he must do something to make it appear like he is not being stubborn to his local followers. So, he writes a note in place of the link of that sermon that says this: "It is that the sermon I preached on this date (9-6-15) came across, at best, as not expedient, if not outright sinful, for at least 3 people. I will not go into all the details here. I have decided to remove the sermon so as to not cause anyone else to stumble and/or misconstrue the point. I regret any unintentional harm done. Scott Parker 9-22-15" (<http://www.bywhataauthority.com/9-6-15-Note.pdf>).

For further clarification, the part where this man says he removed the sermon as to not cause anyone else to stumble is a charge that the people with issue of that sermon are weaker brethren. In fact, that is the language used to describe weaker brethren in Romans 14:1-5:7 and I Corinthians 8:1-13. Let's say, as it the case with the illustration I am using, that these people offended are a billion times stronger in the faith than this pitiful preacher ever will or can be. How is this all right? In fact, isn't it all WRONG?

The Stumbling Block Excuse Is All Wrong

In the Scriptures mentioned above about the weaker brother, you found the context is in regard to liberties God has given man. For example, I can eat all meats (I Timothy 4:1-5) unless it will cause a weak brother to stumble. We see this principle in other Scriptures as well (I Corinthians 10:23-33). There is NO SCRIPTURE that allows a man to preach error and then say it was wrong because it caused someone to stumble. If it was the truth, there was nothing to repent of even if it caused someone to be offended (Matthew 15:1-14). If it was just something poorly stated, that is not the fault of the hearer. It is the preacher's job to speak

plainly (Nehemiah 8:8 and II Corinthians 3:12).

If you or I do something wrong we cannot just downplay it to a matter of erring judgment. When a sin(s) is committed, like Scott Parker's, you cannot act as though it was only wrong because others saw it that way. If we sin, which is to transgress God's will (I John 3:4), there is no blame shifting excuse that allows you or I to suffer less blame or consequences.

No Blame Shifting

Adam was instructed by God not to eat of the tree of knowledge (Genesis 2:15-17). Adam is later joined to his wife Eve (Genesis 2:18-25). The serpent in the garden beguiled Eve (II Corinthians 11:3) and she ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and gave it to Adam to eat of as well (Genesis 3:1-6). When God confronted Adam and Eve about this transgression (Genesis 3:7-11), we read this: *"And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return"* (Genesis 3:12-19).

From what you just read you see Adam blaming Eve and Eve turning the blame to the serpent. What God did was simple; He punished all three of them. Regardless of anyone else, if you or I sin we have to confess (Psalms 32:5, Proverbs 28:13, Daniel 9:5, and I John 1:8-10) and truly repent of that sin (II Chronicles 7:14, Ezekiel 14:6, Ezekiel 18:29-32, Matthew 3:8, Luke 13:1-5, Luke 19:1-10, Acts 26:18-20, Ephesians 5:1-17, and II Timothy 2:19).

Sin on my account is always my fault (James 1:13-16). No one else can be or should be blamed. Sin is a choice you make even if another person has influenced you for bad. No other person can make you sin. If a sinner entices me I am not supposed to go along with them (Proverbs 1:10 and I Peter 4:1-5).

Conclusion

If we sin we cannot look for some biblical principle by which to excuse or make lesser the sin that we commit. If I do something wrong, it may cause another to stumble, but the wrong I did still must be properly fixed. If we seek to somehow shift our wrong doing onto another person or persons, we are only adding sin to sin (cf. Isaiah 30:1). It is hard enough to get to heaven (I Peter 4:17-19). Do not make the journey more difficult, or even impossible, by seeking to justify your sins in any way.