
Words of Truth

Consider What You're Saying If You Say That Sinning Is Unavoidable

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In last week's article we addressed the question, is it impossible not to sin? In that article we saw, through the word of God, that our Lord demands that we cease from sin (John 8:1-11, Romans 6:1-2, I Corinthians 15:34, II Corinthians 7:1, and II Timothy 2:19). If you have not read that article, please do so as this article is a follow-up to that one. You can grab a copy of that article or even read it online (<http://www.wordsoftruth.net/wotvol13/wotbulletin06092013.html>).

When false doctrine is taught you have the presence of a false teacher among you, which is contrary to God's will (Romans 16:17-18, II John 9-11, and Revelation 2:14-16). Yet, there is more than just the problem of fellowship with a false teacher. When there are false teachers, people are going to be led astray. Notice what the Scriptures show us on this subject: *"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths... For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed... Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch... For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"* (Isaiah 3:12, Isaiah 9:16, Matthew 15:14, and Acts 20:29-30).

As we have just seen, when error is taught people are going to follow it and they are going to perish along with those false teachers. Those who teach that we cannot really expect to be able not to sin are giving a "sin license" to people. Ethan Longhenry says this on the Venice church of Christ website: "None of us are perfect; **we are all sinners** (Romans 3:23)... But we must also recognize that **we all still sin, and that our relationship with God is not dependent on our righteousness** but always upon His love, grace, and mercy" (<http://www.deverbovitae.com/outlines/reconnectacceptance.txt>). If that is true, what does that mean?

If We Cannot Help But Sin And God Is Okay With That...

Outside of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31 and Mark 3:28-29) there is not one sin greater than another in the Scriptures. Carnal fear, lacking faith, idolatry, and lying have the same eternal damnation as those who commit murder (Revelation 21:8). Those who commit fornication (unlawful sexual intercourse; i.e. homosexuality, premarital sex, bestiality, etc.) will not see heaven just as drunkards and thieves (I Corinthians 6:9-10). God says this: *"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty"* (James 2:10-12). Therefore, as we proceed further, understand that if one sin is okay all sins are okay.

The following statements are spoken as a fool, so to speak (II Corinthians 11:17ff.). If we are all bound to be sinners that means child molesters can be faithful brethren. If we are all bound to be sinners that means if a brother rapes one of the sisters in the congregation, we have to receive him in such a state (that's what Longhenry says). If we are all bound to be sinners that means when a congregation practices singing with mechanical instrumental music that congregation has to be received as faithful. Wait, wait, maybe I went too far there. We all know that this is the "cardinal sin" for churches of Christ (Said with extreme sarcasm as such is an effective means of making a point at times; I Kings 18:25-27 and Matthew 23:24). If we are all bound to be sinners that means when a brother steals all of the Lord's money from the treasury he is just acting like the rest of us. If we are all bound to be sinners that means if a sister shows up in a see through dress with no undergarments and all the men lust, we are just doing what God expects us to do. Since we are all sinners we can have poker Sunday and crack pipe Tuesday night since we cannot help it. If we are all bound to be sinners that means we should close the doors on Sunday to hit happy hour at the local bar for we are just sinners like everyone else. Hey, if we are all just sinners we can do whatever we want without fear.

I am sure that anyone who has a tenth of a spiritual mind can see the absurdity of all of the statements in the previous paragraph, for such things are sinful (Galatians 5:19-21). The conclusions of teaching that sin is okay are extreme. You cannot excuse some sins as lesser and others as greater. This is what is happening in churches of Christ as such supposed congregations have become safe havens for sinners. Moreover, when such things are taught, that puts restrictions on those congregations for teaching the real truth.

The Handcuffs Are On When One Is Teaching That We're All Sinners

When a man teaches that sin is normal amongst "Christians", that man has just restricted the ability for himself and those in fellowship with him to teach the Gospel. Teaching the truth is all about proclaiming that sinners need to repent (Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17, Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19, Acts 26:18-20, etc.). Yet, if you are a sinner yourself, God says you cannot teach others until you clean up your own life (Psalms 51:9-13, Matthew 7:1-5, Luke 6:41-42, and Romans 2:1-29). When one proclaims that they are sinning, the word of God says that person cannot bring forth good fruit (Matthew 7:16-20 and Luke 6:43-45). That would also mean that when a congregation has sinners who are not repenting of those sins, that congregation could not practice COMMANDED disciplinary action on others (Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:1-13, and II Thessalonians 3:6; 14-15). Brethren, we must remain sin free so that this congregation does not become restricted in teaching and practicing the truth! We cannot even fulfill Mark 16:15-16 if we are in sin.

Conclusion

It is difficult to be saved. Righteous people are scarcely [hardly; with difficulty] saved (I Peter 4:17-19). Knowing that, why would anyone encourage people to sin? This is what God says about those who excuse sin amongst His people: *"For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD"* (Jeremiah 8:11-12).