

The Deceitfulness Of Sin

Joe Slater

Think how long the list would be if you cataloged all the world's problems. One little word, however, summarizes them all: sin. Among the innumerable negative qualities of sin, Hebrews 3:13 warns us against its deceitfulness. "*Exhort one another daily . . . lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*"

Something deceitful gives a false impression. It may do so by statement, by appearance, or by influence. If we buy into that false impression, we become hardened; that is, we become obstinate and stubborn, unwilling to listen to God's instruction through His word. Such an attitude leads inevitably to "*falling away from the living God*" (Hebrews 3:12).

Sin deceives us by wearing the mask of a servant. It appeals to us as something we can use to better our situation. In Eden, Satan assured Eve that the forbidden fruit would serve her, making her wise like God (Genesis 3:5). Rather than serving her, however, sin became her master. It destroyed her fellowship with God and ruined her relationship with her husband. She lost her paradise home, and introduced a cycle of misery affecting all of humankind to this day.

Ancient Israel also fell for sin's servant mask. God had told them to destroy and drive out the pagans living in the Promised Land. Instead, God's people opted to make servants of some of them. But before long the Israelites themselves became the servants as they worshiped and served the idols. Eventually the Lord punished His wayward people by permitting the pagans to subjugate them.

Be not deceived! Sin will not serve you. Jesus said, "*Whoever commits sin is the slave of sin*" (John 8:34).

Rules of the Road

Without rules and regulations driving on today's roads would be chaotic and dangerous. Proper knowledge of them and adhering to them is important. But not everyone driving on the roads follows the rules. Either ignorantly or knowingly they disobey and become a danger to all other travelers.

KNOW THE RULES

Rules and regulations for traveling on Life's Road are found in the Scriptures. Knowledge of them is important. And it's essential to follow them. Be advised that not everyone on the road follows the rules. As such, they pose a danger because of their ignorance or disobedience.

FOLLOW THE RULES

Conduct yourself in a manner worthy of a Christian. Keep alert for bad "drivers." Understand that some may be under the influence of dangerous ideas and habits. And especially be aware of those who may need help.

"Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life" (Proverbs 4:13).

"Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity" (Colossians 4:5).

"You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Peter 3:17).

--Ron Adams (via *Bulletin Gold*)

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C H - - C H means nothing unless "U R" is in it!

Nothing Is Really Ours

God is the sovereign creator and owner of all things. He created all things, upholds all things, and gives all things.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

"The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1).

"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine," says the Lord of hosts (Haggai 2:8).

Of course we Christians belong to God not only because He made us and cares for us, but also because He redeemed us, and because we have voluntarily and gladly given ourselves to Him. *"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

We are stewards, or trustees, of what we have and what we are. There is a difference between ownership and possession. As between man and man, we may claim to own things; but as between man and God, we own nothing. God owns all things. We may use those things we possess temporarily, but ultimately all will be returned to God and an accounting must be rendered.

God has never given a deed to any of us for anything. *"We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"* (1 Timothy 6:7); hence we are not absolute owners of anything.

The doctrine of stewardship is taught from Genesis to Revelation. The words "steward" and "stewardship" may be found over twenty times in the King James Version of the Bible.

"Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2).

--Bobby Key (deceased) via Old Paths