

Too Late

Joe Slater

Sin has consequences both now and in eternity. God has always offered forgiveness to those who repent and seek His pardon on His terms. However, divine pardon doesn't entitle you to freedom from justice here and now.

For fourteen years I taught Bible classes in a prison. Inmates who obeyed the gospel sometimes thought they were thereby entitled to be released from prison. I told them the state isn't in the forgiving business, but God is. On the other hand, one might commit many crimes while never being caught, thus never going to prison. But make no mistake about it, he will face God in judgment.

Manasseh of Judah was arguably the worst king in either part of the Divided Kingdom. His record in Second Kings and Second Chronicles nauseates us, surpassing even the vileness of the ancient Canaanites! Every perversion from idolatry to occultism to child sacrifice characterized his reign.

Nevertheless, when Manasseh *"implored the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him,"* the Lord *"received his entreaty and heard his supplication"* (2 Chronicles 33:12-13).

Manasseh went on to correct many of his errors. He produced the fruit of repentance. All indication is we'll see Manasseh in Heaven! But as to the consequences in the here-and-now, it was too late. *"Nevertheless, the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him"* (2 Kings 23:26). The die was cast; Jerusalem would be destroyed!

Sin has lasting consequences, even when the sinner is forgiven. Heed the warning!

The Deadly Smartphone

I don't know that I will get confirmation during my lifetime, but I believe phones, tablets, and social media will lead more people to Hell than just about anything else in the current generation. Think about it:

*Parents are ignoring their children, letting devices babysit them.

*Children are becoming addicted to screens.

*Social media is affecting mental health in young people.

*Parents are not adequately monitoring children's online activity.

*Social media is rewiring the brain, and dopamine "hits" are being fueled by likes, comments, and retweets.

*Children are more comfortable with screens than they are with actual people.

*Social media is promoting the sexualization of teens.

*Real friendships are being neglected as people spend more and more time with virtual friends.

*Social media is shortening attention spans, changing the way young people think and learn.

*Algorithms are encouraging more and more use, while quietly leading users toward pornography.

*Work ethic is dying as individuals seek screen time over working.

*Parents aren't really training up their children anymore.

*Marriages are suffering because screens are prioritized over spouses.

All the while God's Word is being neglected. Branches (disciples) on the Vine (Jesus) are shriveling up, no longer producing fruit. And people stop attending worship because it's not entertaining enough.

--Brad Harrub (Focus Press)

Your Choice

In the Canadian Rockies is a stream called Divide Creek. At a point in its course the creek divides around a large boulder. Waters which flow to the left of the boulder rush on into Kicking Horse River and finally into the Pacific Ocean. Waters which travel to the right flow into the Bow River which courses into the Saskatchewan River, on into Lake Winnipeg, the Nelson River, Hudson Bay, and to the Atlantic Ocean. Once the waters divide at the rock, there is no turning back

How like life this is! Decisions are made daily. Life is a series of decisions. Some are very difficult, complicated, with far-reaching results. What we wouldn't give sometimes to have an opportunity to make a certain decision again. It behooves all of us to weigh our decisions carefully. Things of seemingly immediate value will not necessarily be of ultimate value. Always take the long-range view!

We choose our priorities and lifestyles. Should we not ask, "What sort of person do I want to be?" Every person must accept or reject the demands and offers of God. "Choices are the hinges of eternity." The option remains the same: *"Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve"* (Joshua 23:15).

--Charles V. Cash (via [Bulletin Gold](#))

Politics

One lesson that we Christians have not learned in the last 2000 years is that Jesus had no political control over the Roman Empire, yet He still changed the entire world. We keep trying to change the world the way the Roman Empire did instead of the way Jesus did.

--Benjamin Cremer (via Facebook)