

Misconceptions Of Sin

Introduction. The grandeur of man and woman in fellowship with God in Eden was soon spoiled by the entrance of the serpent who is described as subtle or crafty (Genesis 3:1). Jesus would later refer to him as "a liar and father of lies" (John 8:44). Satan's character reflects in his work, for sin itself is also described as "deceitful" (Hebrews 3:13). Our adversary would prefer to keep man in the dark about the true nature of sin. One who commits sin is a servant of sin (John 8:34). But the word of God casts a powerful light that no advantage be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11). Scripture exposes the following misconceptions that the devil has sought to deceive people with concerning sin.

I. ***"I Will Not Be Held Accountable For My Sin"***

- A. From Adam to Aaron, from King Saul to apostate Israel, from Pontius Pilate to today's secular psychology, there have been unceasing efforts to rationalize why we are not to be blamed for doing wrong: "I was born this way; my parents raised me wrong; circumstances made my choice difficult; my friends pressured me." To my knowledge, there is not a single occasion in all the Bible where man ever sought to circumvent responsibility for sin and found God sympathetic.
- B. On the contrary, we are told in the scriptures that we are indeed accountable for our sins (1 John 1:8-10). Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, tells us that we are held accountable for those sins because those who commit them will not "inherit the kingdom of God."

II. ***"What I See Is What I Will Get"***

- A. A news report one day was drawing attention to the deceptive tactics of con artists. One of their scams was to send out letters announcing "You have won a Power Sports Boat. Send \$300 for shipping and handling." While \$300 is not petty cash to most of us, it still is not bad for a Power Sports Boat. But what you got for that sum of money was a dinky inflatable raft with a motor that could barely stir cake batter.
- B. The Bible is trying to get the point across that Satan is the greatest con artist of all (2 Corinthians 11:13-14). He tells how you could be like God, but the next thing you know you are crouching in shame in the bushes. He promises a drug induced euphoria; he delivers addiction. He advertises sexual freedom,

but on opening the package you find disease, unwanted pregnancy, and broken homes. What you see in his advertisements is not what you will get. The Bible is designed to mature us spiritually that we might "discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:12-14). We must look beyond the alluring bait to the trap awaiting to snare us.

III. ***"It Will Be Just This One Time"***

- A. Those who ought to know better often justify doing wrong on the grounds that it's just this once. That rationalization ignores the fact that one sin leads to another; one needs another to prop it up. Jacob's sons permitted themselves to envy their brother Joseph (Genesis 37:11). Envy grew into hatred and led to the act of selling Joseph into slavery (Genesis 37:28). Compelled to cover their iniquity, they then conspired to deceive their father into believing that Joseph had been killed (vs. 31). They then acted cruelly toward their father allowing his heart to bear the painful scars of emotional loss over his "dead" son for many years. All this because of envy.
- B. An excellent way to see through Satan's deceptions is to contemplate what the "latter end" of our actions will be (Deuteronomy 32:28-29). Where will it lead? How will I end up if I follow this course? "Just this once" may entrap me in a web of transgressions I never intended to be part of.

IV. ***"Everyone Else Is Doing It"***

- A. Some people have never seen God's law as so absolute that it will not bend to the whims of the majority. When Aaron made the golden calf and King Saul spared the best of the flock, they both entered the same plea (Exodus 32:21-24; 1 Samuel 15:15). But Exodus 23:2 warned, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."
- B. Is it not strange how men and women who have been taught the truth for years on divorce and remarriage can be swayed to liberalize their positions in view of society's heavy divorce rate? Have we not watched as people (including preachers) have left the Lord's church for denominationalism primarily because they had difficulty believing that so many sincere people could be wrong? Has not the quality of shamefacedness in the Christian's dress been repeatedly violated by those whose justification was "it's the style everyone is wearing right now?" We misunderstand God's absolute authority when we think the prevalence of sin obligates Him to change the rules.

V. **"My Sin Will Go Unpunished"**

- A. A religious poll taken a few years back revealed what we might have already guessed. A fairly good percentage of people were convinced that hell existed, but almost no one thought they would go there. What may be the most prominent misconception about sin is also the oldest promoted by the devil. Genesis 3 shows that while Eve clearly understood God's law (vss. 2-3), the serpent's response blatantly disregards God's word and substitutes more comforting words (vs. 4).
- B. The liberal religionist tells us, "A loving God would not eternally reject His creation," but 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 states otherwise. The modernist wants us to know that the concepts of hell had their birth in primitive man's imagination, but the Son of the living God assures us that hell is no fable (Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 23:33). A false teacher proclaims that "a child of God cannot so sin as to be lost," but the Hebrew writer affirms that if we continue in sin, we will be judged and punished (Hebrews 10:26-31). The sinner wistfully hopes that God will overlook his sin, but it is not so (Acts 17:30-31). Hypocrisy functions best under this misconception, but God penetrates such reasoning (Numbers 32:23; Jeremiah 7:9-11). Even if no one else knows, God knows and will punish our sins (Romans 2:16).

Conclusion. With each misconception about sin, it comes down to a matter of who we chose to believe -- God, who cannot lie, or Satan, the father of lies. We desperately do not want our brethren and the rest of the world to be in the dark about sin. Do not be fooled by all the misconceptions of sin. Do not give our enemies the occasion to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12:14). Face the fact that we are all imperfect in the sight of God. We are here to allow you the chance to partake of the grace of God and be lifted up above the mire of sin (Romans 5:8-10; 2 Peter 2:22).