

The Deceitful Nature of Sin

By David Phillips

Introduction

1. There are doctrines in the world that try to “dumb down” or dilute the true nature of sin and its effects on mankind.
2. God warns us of this type of attitude toward evil and instructs us to resist Satan and sin with intense determination so that we may not be deceived (Hebrews 3:12-14).
3. Certainly, the subject of sin and its affect on mankind is saddening and humbling. But faithful Christians can rejoice in the fact that God has given us this took by which we can overcome sin (Tit. 2:11, 12).

Discussion

I. How Sin Deceives, or How Deceitful is Sin? (Vs. 13)

- A. Sin contradicts the commandments of God.
 1. It denies the consequences that God has warned us of
 - a. Gen. 3:4: “You shall not surely die.”
 - b. Today – “There is no Hell,” or “How could a loving God send any person to hell?”
 2. 2 Cor. 11:3: Sin corrupts the simplicity that is in Christ turning clear bible principles into doubtful things. For example...
 - a. 2 Thess. 3:11: The Lord condemns all gossip and slander, but the world says “It’s not bad to talk about family,” or “its not gossip when it’s the truth.”
 - b. The scriptures teach that error and truth are determined by God’s word, but “religious” men of the world would have us believe that it is determined by the motives of each person.
 - c. God tells us that His word is truth, but men tell us that the imaginations of every person is truth to themselves.
 3. 2 Pet. 3:16: In this way men who are ignorant or unconcerned with Satan’s devices twist the scriptures to their own destruction.
- B. Sin deceives us by using false reasoning to justify itself.
 1. “The ends justify the means” or situation ethics.
 - a. Men tell us that even sinful things (such as lying, sexual immorality, etc.) are acceptable as long as they are done with noble reasons.
 - b. But Jesus tells us, “Whoever desires to save his life will loose it” (Matthew 16:24-28).
 2. “It’s not that bad,” or “God wouldn’t send a person to hell because of one little sin.”
 - a. Satan disguises his true nature in the appearance of an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).
 - b. In this same manner sin deceives those who practice it by seeming to be harmless, or even good at times.
 - c. Oddly enough, eating a piece of fruit doesn’t seem that bad, yet it was because of that innocent looking piece of fruit that sin entered the world and death through sin (Rom. 5:12).
 3. “I was sincere so it wasn’t sin,” or “I was just trying to help.”
 - a. Never in the scriptures was a man praise for changing something or doing something different because he was trying to help God.
 - b. Remember, Uzzah was just trying to help, but he still died (2 Sam. 6:1-8).

- c. Saul was just saving the good animals to sacrifice to the Lord, but he was still torn from the kingdom (2 Sam. 15:15-35).
 - 4. "I was born that way," or so the psychologists say.
 - a. "Homosexuality can't be a sin because science says that it's genetic thing."
 - b. "Alcoholism is inherent."
 - c. But God shows us that every sinful man is in that condition of his own free not, not on account of God and he will be judged for those evil deeds (Rom. 2:5ff).
 - 5. It causes us to think that everything in life should be comfortable for "me."
 - a. Zech. 10:2 – They comfort in vain.
 - b. Ps. 37:12 – "*Behold, these are the ungodly, who are always at ease.*"
- C. Heb. 11:25: Sin disguises itself as a passing pleasure, when in reality it is a fiery dart (Eph. 6:16).
 - 1. Gal. 6:3; 2 Cor. 11:13: It pretends to be something it is not.
 - 2. 2 Cor. 11:14: It entices by making itself into "*an angle of light.*" It deceives men.
 - 3. Deut. 13:1-3, 5: It acts as a lure by which Satan entices men away from God and His truth and leads them into Satan's snare.
- D. Sin makes us overconfident.
 - 1. Often sin can deceive us by making us think that we have a tighter grasp on it than we really do (1 Cor. 10:12).
 - 2. It causes us to trust in our own strength rather than the Lord's (Obadiah 3).
 - 3. At our most confident moment it overtakes us and drags us down.
 - 4. For this reason Israel was commanded fourteen times in the book of Deuteronomy along to "be careful" to observe God's law
 - a. This is not a matter to take lightly.
 - b. If we are going to overcome sin then we must be on our knees always prayer for strength, mercy and forgiveness and humility (1 Thess. 5:17; Luke 17:10).

II. Those Who Do Not Take Sin Seriously.

- A. In spite of God's instruction there are still many who fail to recognize the deceitfulness of sin and are therefore lost.
 - 1. Jer. 9:5-6: "*Through deceit they refuse to know Me.*"
 - 2. Obadiah 3: By their pride they are deceived.
 - 3. Isa. 47:10, 11: They trust in their wickedness by which they fail to recognize sin for what it really is and are thus deceived by it. It is like a wolf in sheep's clothing.
- B. Therefore those who do not flee from sin are fools (Prov. 14:16).
 - 1. They are self-confident
 - 2. These are the ones who see the roaring lion and rather than fleeing he stands and laughs. Much like the advertisement of a wildlife photographer standing before a pride of lions with a lion head over his.

III. Overcoming the Deceitfulness of Sin (Vs. 13, 14)

- A. James 4:7: Because of the deceptive and destructive nature of sin we are commanded to "*Resist the Devil.*" We have the ability to resist him with Christ's help.
 - 1. Christ was manifest to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8); because we are partakers of Christ (Heb. 3:14) we must strive for the same.
 - 2. For in Rom. 6 when we are baptized into Christ we are raised in the likeness of His resurrection whereby we can and must destroy the old man of sin and death.
 - 3. Thereby committing ourselves to resist sin (Prov. 16:1, 3)

4. By this gospel we are taught how to resist sin (2 Cor. 2:11)
 5. 1 John 3:8, 9; 2:1: We must, therefore, put our faith in the power of God, not in our own strength
- B. 2 Cor. 13:5: “*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith.*”
1. Part of examining ourselves means testing our response to the scriptures, or to rebuke.
 2. Those who have been deceived by sin will automatically deny their guilt when a brother brings something up to them, or they will mock and scoff at that brother.
 3. When a rebuke is brought to an honest and godly heart, he will consider the rebuke and change his ways as needed (Prov. 9:8-10). Consider the Psalmist (Ps. 139:23).
- C. Growing in Knowledge (2 Peter. 3:18).
1. God’s people were destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6).
 2. But when we seek understanding from Him we can learn to not sin against Him (Ps. 119:11).
 3. When we pray to the Lord He can give us wisdom to overcome such trials (James 1:3-5; 12-18).

Conclusion

1. If you are not a Christian, but feel that you are satisfied with where you are at in life, remember this.
2. Part of the deception of sin makes us confident with how we are now thus causing us to refuse to obey the command of the Lord to become better.
3. Remember what the Lord says, “*Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart as in the rebellion*” (Heb. 3:15).
4. The Lord is calling you to come out of your sins, which you can do only if you obey the gospel. Christ invites you, please do not harden your heart to His beckoning call (Matt. 11:28-30; Acts 2:38).

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Avondale church of Christ
1606 Glen Willow Rd., P.O. Box 421, Avondale, PA 19311
Phone: (610) 268-2088
Email: info@avondalechristians.com
Website: www.avondalechristians.com

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