

THE OLD PATHS

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“Change Your Way Of Thinking”

Jarrod Jacobs

Romans 12:1-2 teaches us that we must not be “*conformed to this world, but transformed*” if we are to please God. Furthermore, this transformation comes as a result of the “*renewing of your mind.*” Put simply, if we are going to please God, we need to change our way of thinking. We need to stop thinking the worldly thoughts and following worldly schemes, and think like God thinks!

How can I think like God thinks? Some say this is impossible, but it is not. For example, I can think like others in my peer group. I think like them as I am around them and begin to adopt their way of thinking or reasoning. This is why Solomon warns against going with angry people (Prov. 22:24-25).

In like manner, if I wish to think like God thinks, then I need to spend time with Him. I need to spend time reading and studying His inspired word (Eph. 3:4; I Tim. 4:13, 16; II Tim. 2:15). The longer I spend time with God, learning how He thinks and reasons, the more I will think like Him, and have a “renewal” in my mind. Of course, once my mind changes, my life must follow (Phil. 4:8-9; Heb. 5:12-14)!

Are you ready for that kind of change? I hope so! Change your way of thinking to reflect God’s truth and see the blessings that come into your life as a result!

The Power Of Sin

Joel Raulerson

Sin is a powerful thing that has been underestimated for almost as long as men have been on earth. Many treat sin lightly. The attitude of many towards sin is that they can just pray and ask for forgiveness later. Tragically, many fail to realize the destructive power of sin. In

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reading the Bible, we see that there are a number of examples that show the destructive power of sin. One of my favorite examples that I think best illustrates the destructive power of sin is David's example in 2 Samuel 11-12. When we read about David's sin, we will learn three things that sin does to all men. What does sin do to us?

Sin Will Take You Farther Than You Want To Go.

David is known as a "man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22). He is the epitome of a righteous and God-fearing man. There are not many Bible figures that trusted and served God as much as David did. Yet, in 2 Samuel 11 when David decided to sleep with another man's wife, and he did not consider the consequences of his sin. Most would call this a "one night stand" in today's vernacular. This is a sin committed in "private" between two people and no one else has to know. This type of sin is committed often in today's society by those who give little or no thought to what the consequences might be. This shows us just how far our society has fallen morally!

After David and Bathsheba's sin, she becomes pregnant (2 Sam. 11:5). David then dedicated precious time and energy to cover up his sin with Uriah's wife (2 Sam. 11:6-13). When his attempts to get Uriah to sleep with his wife and cover everything up was unsuccessful, David has Uriah killed (2 Sam. 11:14-27). This is no different than the sins we commit today. We find something that distracts us for a few moments and appeals to our carnal desires. We may think, "Just this one time. No one will know." Yet, more often than not, we end up dealing with the consequences of our sin far longer than we first intended. We keep crossing and re-drawing that proverbial line in the sand over and over. Yet, sin takes us farther than we ever wanted to go and we continue to dig a deeper pit for ourselves.

Sin Will Keep You Longer Than You Want To Stay.

We can all be tempted to stop serving God. Everyone can face times of discouragement where giving into sin seems easier than persevering. During these moments of weakness is when Satan will tempt us even more and we will attempt to rationalize giving in to sin. I have seen this attitude in many and have struggled with this attitude myself. When the temptations of sin keep calling us back to our old way of life, we fool ourselves if we think this is only a temporary problem. Yet, just like David, we often find ourselves struggling with the same sin for much of our lives. This was just one night in David's life, yet, the sin he committed would

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follow David for the rest of his life. “Surely just the one night couldn’t cause that much trouble, would it?” This is the same rationale many use for just one drink, just one smoke, just one look, just one touch, etc. A sinful life starts with one step. A habit starts with one taste. Sadly, those sins can follow you for the rest of your life. They will keep you far longer than you ever wished to stay.

Sin Will Cost You More Than You Wish To Pay.

The underlying attitude of many toward sin is a flippant attitude toward repentance and forgiveness. Perhaps some reason, “It doesn’t cost all that much because Jesus paid the price for me. I have access to freedom through Him. As long as I have my sins forgiven before my life ends, I’ll be fine.” Yet, we fail to realize just how much our sins cost. We have no guarantee how much longer our lives will last (Prov. 27:1.) Sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2). If we want to say we are God’s children, we cannot make a practice of sinning (1 Jn. 3:4). The price of sin is not only the fact that we can lose our soul, but there is a myriad of physical consequences we will have to face as well. We also have to live with the consequences of our sins in this life as David did (2 Sam. 12:10-14). Can you imagine living the rest of your life knowing the consequences of a few minutes of sin cost the life of your child? Many today are paying an even heavier price. It is a heavier price because they spent much of their lives in sin and lost their families. Perhaps they lost their families physically because they put their focus on their jobs, drinking, drugs, pornography, etc. In focusing on sin, they paid the price of being ostracized from their families. Some pay an even greater price than that. It is a higher price because some people will see their loved ones, children, and friends following in the same sinful pattern they lived. If this person becomes a Christian later in life, then it’s even harder to teach their loved ones the truth. This is because the person lived as a bad example for so many years. Sin is not something to be trifled with. It will separate us from our God and Father (Isa. 59:1-2). The power it holds over our lives is far greater than we ever intended.

Now that we see what power sin has over us, do we recognize it in our lives? Sin takes us farther than we want to go, keeps us longer than we want to stay, and costs us more than we want to pay. Why would we ever want to trifle with something so powerful and costly? At the same time, the cure for sin is in Christ. His blood is more powerful than any sin man can commit. Therefore, let us turn to Him for cleansing from sin (Isa. 1:18-20; Rev. 1:5) If you would obey God, He can keep you from going farther

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than you want to go (Rom. 6:23). He will keep you in Heaven as long as you wish to stay (Jn. 14:2-4). Jesus paid a price that we could never pay (Col. 2:14). If this sounds appealing to you, why won't you obey God and be baptized to gain access to these blessings (Col. 2:11-14; Jn. 8:32, 36)?



Spotlight On A Bible Verse: Ephesians 1:22-23

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” These two verses remind us of the supremacy of Christ. He is head over all things (Matt. 28:18; Col. 1:18). God gave Christ this position, and we need to respect it (Eph. 1:20-21). At the same time, we see how the body (church) is the *“fulness of him that filleth all in all.”* This speaks of a special relationship wherein Christ is in us, but we also are in Him (Jn. 6:56, 15:4-7, 17:21; I Jn. 3:24; etc.!) This relationship is possible for those who are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27). No one can say that the church has little or no importance! Some want to tell us to emphasize Christ and not the church. How can we do this in light of passages like Ephesians 1:22-23? Christ stands supreme as the head over His church, and at the same time, the church is His body! We can be a part of it and enjoy the fellowship in Christ today when we submit to His plan of salvation (Acts 2:38, 47)!

– Jarrod Jacobs



“I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!”

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