

BE SURE YOUR SINS WILL FIND YOU OUT

Text: Numbers 32:33

INTRO: In context, the tribes of Reuben & Gad had asked Moses to permit them to settle on the east side of the Jordan. Moses relented, but made them promise to cross over the river & help their brethren drive out the Canaanites. Then Moses admonished them not to fail to keep their vow, for such sin would not go unpunished.

In reality, no sin can be ignored. Ideally, sin should be avoided by living in obedience to God's precepts, but when a person has sinned, that sin must be either pardoned or punished. Sin will not disappear by the passing of time. It cannot be successfully concealed from God. And even true repentance will seldom remove all its consequences. Be sure your sins will find you out.

I. SOME SINS MAY BRING US INTO THE COURTS OF LAW TO BE DEALT WITH BY CIVIL RULERS.

Agree with your adversary quickly while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, & you are thrown into prison. Assuredly I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. (MT 5:25-26).

A. Of course, this danger is sometimes avoided because many things that are sinful are not a violation of civil law. Abortion, private drunkenness, etc.

B. Many things that are violations of civil law are never dealt with by those in authority as they should be for various reasons.

1. The law breaker may never be detected, apprehended
2. He may be set free on some technicality.
3. Justice is sometimes perverted thru bribes, etc.

Samuel's sons were judges in Beersheba, but his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, & perverted justice. (1 Sam. 8:2-3).

C. Tho you may sin & escape the wrath of civil rulers, be sure your sins will find you out!

II. CHURCH MEMBERS WHO COMMIT CERTAIN SINS ARE SUBJECT TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE. **READ 1 COR 5:9-11.**

A. Of course, secret sins & private sins cannot be acted upon by the church, so not all sins are dealt with in this way.

B. Sometimes sins that should be matters for corrective church discipline are not properly attended to by the congregation. READ I CORINTHIANS 5:1-2.

C. But of course, this is not the end of the matter. Be sure your sins will find you out.

III. EVEN THOSE SINS WHICH ESCAPE THE WRATH OF CIVIL RULERS & THE WATCHFUL EYE OF SPIRITUAL LEADERS ARE USUALLY SUBJECT TO THE PRODDINGS OF THE CONSCIENCE OF THE SINNER HIMSELF.

Gentiles who do not have the law... show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness... accusing or else excusing them. (Romans 2:14-15).

For if you heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, & knows all things. (1 John 3:20).

A. Of course, our conscience will bother us only when we knowingly sin. The person who sins ignorantly is still a sinner but his conscience is clear. Acts 26:9; 23:1.

B. Also, a person can continue to violate his conscience till he becomes hardened & his conscience ceases to bother him. 1 Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:18-19.

C. But having side-stepped the conscience, one does not avoid the reality of sin. Be sure your sins will find you out.

IV. MANY SINS HAVE SERIOUS & FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES IN THIS WORLD EVEN THO THEY MAY GO UNNOTICED BY THE CHURCH, BY SOCIETY IN GENERAL & EVEN BY THE SINNER HIMSELF.

- A. Of course, some sins seemingly have no immediate and temporal consequences.
- B. On the other hand, many sins have consequences that even true repentance & forgiveness cannot remove. Truly, here is an area where your sins will find you out.
 - 1. Fornication. STD are at epidemic stages in modern society. Men & women are wrecking their own health, that of their sexual partners, & generations yet unborn by their sins of sexual immorality. STDs could be virtually stamped out in one generation if the sin of fornication were to cease.
 - 2. Drug abuse is destroying the minds & bodies of untold numbers of Americans, young & old.
 - 3. These sins can be forgiven if the sinner will repent & obey the gospel, but that forgiveness will not restore their mental & physical health.

V. THOSE SINS WHICH HAVE OTHERWISE GONE UNNOTICED, INDEED ALL UNFORGIVEN SINS MUST BE DEALT WITH BY GOD IN THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

READ REVELATION 20:11-15.

- A. We live in a period of grace while God gives us time to repent, 2 Peter 3:9.
- B. Sins properly dealt with by the sinner in this life will be forgiven & forgotten. MK 16:15-16; Acts 2:38.

For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness & their sins & their lawless deeds I will remember no more. (Heb. 8:12).

CONCLUSION: Your sins will not be ignored. Time will not erase them; secrecy will not conceal them. They must be faced & dealt with in this world OR they WILL be dealt with in the world to come. Be sure your sins will find you out.

La Porte, TX, September 13, 1981
Exton, PA, May 8, 1988
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