

Attention!

Business Meeting: Next Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

**Upcoming Gospel Meeting:
October 23-26...Danny Linden
Reminder: Hand out meeting flyers**

Do Not Be Foolish

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Proverbs 1:7

September Birthdays

11 Marie Burruss 15 Marcos Perales 16 Jim Burruss
30 Dortha Gentry 30 Kurt Hoffman

October Birthdays

28 Allan Brown

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Do Not Be Foolish

By Jack Critchfield

In Ephesians 5:17, Paul tells the Ephesian brethren “*do not be foolish.*” The opposite of foolish is, of course, wise. True wisdom is the knowledge and understanding of God’s will and the application thereof. The will of God is found in His word. It is only through the Word of God that we have any knowledge of Him. Without this revealed knowledge of God, there is would be no true wisdom.

How Do We Gain Wisdom?

Paul exhorts the Ephesians (and us) to “*understand the will of God.*” To do this, one must study the Word of God. 2 Timothy 2:15 commands us to study the Word of God so that we may “*accurately handle the word of truth.*” John 17:7, teaches us that the Word of God is truth. Yes friends, truth does exist. It exists in the divine precepts of the Word of God.

In fact, Jesus Himself said we can know the truth (John 8:31-32).

The Bible can be understood by all men. The Calvinistic doctrine on the fallen state of man says that, since the fall, man is no longer in a state where he can understand the will of God. They teach that man can only come to an understanding of the Word of God through a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. However, the Bible refutes this doctrine.

In 2 Timothy 3:15 Paul says to Timothy, “*from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*” He had, from his childhood understood the Bible. He did not come to that understanding of the Old Testament scriptures by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, but by the instruction he received in the word from his mother and his grandmother, 2 Timothy 1:5.

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Website:
indiochurchofchrist.com

Preacher:
Jack Critchfield

Church of Christ
81-377 Ave 46
Indio, CA 92201
(760) 342-1859

(Address Service Requested)

We can know the truth through a diligent study of the Word of God. All humanity can know the truth and understand it alike. For we know, *"this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God"* (2 Peter 1:20-21). All men can have the same understanding of the Word of God that Paul had (Ephesians 3:4).

Finally, we must all understand the Bible alike because it is the only standard that will judge us in the last day (John 12:48-50).

The Lingering Consequences of Sin

John M. Buttrey II

It is a wonderful blessing to know that in Christ our sins have been forgiven (Acts 2:38; 1 John 1:7-9). However, the blessing of forgiveness, while taking away the eternal consequences of our sin, does nothing for the earthly consequences. One who is forgiven in Christ may still have to suffer a lifetime of very painful consequences for their sinful actions.

The consequences of sin can take a variety of different forms. It may be an unforgettable blemish on one's character. We often see this today in the world of professional sports. Because of a particular athlete's dishonest actions, an asterisk is attached to all his achievements. Even after public apologies, the wrong is never forgotten. Their act of cheating or lying follows them their whole life. What is true in sports is true in politics, entertainment, and every other walk of life.

The same was true for Israel's greatest earthly king. David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). Yet, whenever David's name is discussed today, very often his sin with Bathsheba is also mentioned. Some wonder, in light of his sin, how David could be called a man after God's own heart. We see this even in Scripture. When Rehoboam's son, Abijam became king in Judah, we find these words from the author of 1 Kings, who is writing years after the death of David: *"Because David did what was right in the sight of the Lord and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite."* 1 Kings 15:5 (Emphasis Mine)

Sin's consequences have a tendency to leave an unfortunate **"except"** in a person's life. It may be said of a man who was unfaithful in his marriage, that he was forgiven by wife, **except** she didn't want to continue in the marriage. At times, the consequences of sin might be physical in nature. A drug addict may come to Christ. However, he may have to deal with a lifetime of addiction struggles, due to his sin.

When we sin, rarely do we consider how our actions might impact others. Be assured, the consequences of a particular sin can affect many people for many years. Consider the sin of Jeroboam when he was made king over Israel. One of the first things the new king did was to set up altars in Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12:26-30). This affected the nation negatively for its entire lifespan! When the Assyrians came and conquered the northern kingdom, Scripture describes the reason for its downfall: *"When He had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel away from following the Lord and made them commit a great sin. **The sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them until the Lord removed Israel from His sight.**"* 2 Kings 17:21-23a (Emphasis Mine)

Many are the victims of one person's sin. Think of it this way: If as parents we speak negatively about the church, or demonstrate an inconsistency in attendance or Bible study, think how that will affect our children, and their children, and so on. Just as Israel walked in the ways of Jeroboam, eventually leading to their downfall, can we really expect any less for our children?

Because sin can have serious and long-lasting consequences, let us: *"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."* 1 Peter 5:8

The next time the devil tempts us and insists that we deserve whatever it is he has set before us, appealing to the lust of our flesh, eyes, and pride of life, ask yourself, "What does my family deserve?" More importantly, "What does the Lord deserve from me?" Think about the lingering consequences of sin.