

Responsibility for Sin

“No one is to say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.” James 1:13-15

“The person who sins will die. A son will not suffer the punishment for the father’s guilt, nor will a father suffer the punishment for the son’s guilt; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.” Ezekiel 18:20

“For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,” declares the Lord God. ‘Therefore, repent and live!’” Ezekiel 18:30

March Birthdays

28 Sandra Jones

Regular Meeting Times

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

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

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

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Indio Informer

Vol. 34 No. 10

March 5, 2023

My Sin is Always Before Me

(Psalms 51:3)

By Mike Johnson

The writer of Psalm 51 expresses great sorrow for his sins. Most agree that David is the author, and he wrote it after his sin with Bathsheba. In **2 Samuel 11-12**, we learn that David committed adultery, and then he committed murder trying to conceal what he had done. Confronted by Nathan, a prophet of God, he admitted his wrongdoing, and in the Psalm, he appeals to the mercy of God and asks for forgiveness.

In verse 3, after acknowledging his transgressions, he said, "... *my sin is always before me.*" David knew God granted his forgiveness, but he would not forget his awful deeds. He would always carry a picture in his mind of murder and adultery. Although forgiven, he still had to face earthly consequences for his sin.

Consider the apostle Paul who had persecuted Christians before becoming a Christian. God forgave him, but no doubt, his sins were always before him. Note what he said in **1 Timothy 1:13-15**, "*although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*" Like David, because of God's mercy, he received forgiveness. But clearly, he never forgot his past.

Consider the following story:

"Years ago, a father tried to teach his son how wrong sin was. Every time the boy did wrong, the father nailed a nail into the tree in the backyard. After several months, the boy was

brokenhearted over all the nails in the tree. He asked his father if he would take a nail out of the tree for every time he behaved. The dad agreed. Finally, the day came when the last nail was removed. The son thought he would be excited; instead, he became sad. Though all the nails were out, the scars and holes remained. Though a person becomes a Christian, the scars of sin remain." (**Author Unknown**)

Indeed, sin scars. It can even have long-lasting earthly consequences, which would be one reason to avoid it. One way to prevent these scars is by staying away from sin.

Although it may be difficult to forget our past, we must never forget that God loves us and will forgive us if we comply with his conditions. Further, we should never let the past hold us back from faithfully serving God. We learn from the past, but having received forgiveness, we press forward with joy and confidence. Note Paul's statement in **Philippians 3:13-14**, "*Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*"

Buyer's Remorse

By Bruce Evans

More likely than not, all have suffered "buyer's remorse". The excitement that accompanies getting something that is new. However shortly after making the purchase, there arises at first a little surge of regret which can build into an emotional tsunami of remorse. Questions arise internally, did I really need this? Is it worth the time and energy expended to scrimp and save to be able to purchase it? Remorse, which is defined as being, "a gnawing distress; self-reproach." Stated another way, "how could I have been so foolish?!"

Consider Esau for a moment. You don't think he felt "buyer's remorse" after his decision to sell his birthright in order to purchase a "single meal" as seen in Hebrews 12:15-17 (see also Genesis 27)? When he finally came to his senses, it was too late. Clearly, he suffered the pangs of that decision for the remainder of his days.

In the third chapter of Genesis, record is found of arguably the first case of "buyer's remorse". The dynamic centers around a "crafty" serpent, who concocts a ruse to entice Eve. The serpent said, "*Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it; lest you die.' And the serpent said to the woman, 'You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'.*" (Genesis 3:1-5).

Eve bought what the serpent was "selling", hook, line, and sinker. She then was able to influence Adam to partake. With one fell swoop, sin entered into the world. The consequences of their decision have far reaching ramifications. The remorse for their decision was on full display as seen expressed in verses seven and eight. The first thing they did was to hide from God, for indeed their eyes were opened. They knew they didn't become like God, far from it.

God inquired of Adam, "*Where are you?*" (Genesis 3:9) It is not as if Adam was really able to conceal self from God, but perhaps God wanting Adam to acknowledge where he stood in relation to God. Regardless, Adam, as well as Eve were called into account. Each sought to affix blame elsewhere, Adam had the temerity to ultimately fix the blame on God, because after all God had given him "the woman" (see Genesis 3:12)

Sin has consequences. "*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Romans 6:23). While there are indeed consequences, as evidenced in the noted passage. However, God out of His bountiful mercy, grace and love has provided a way to rectify the sins of mankind. The precious blood of His Son. "*Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!*" (2Corinthians 9:15).

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself up for me."

A life of celebration not remorse.