
The Dishonesty of Sin

Radio Message by Dwight Porter, D.D.

How many absolutely honest people do you know? They do not attempt to break the laws even if no one else knows. How many people pass you by when, as an obedient Christian, you drive according to the speed limit? "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers... Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." Romans 13:1,7.

What does it do for you to SHADE THE TRUTH just a bit? Will pride cause you to remain silent when you should speak against the sin before you? Will money affect your conduct? Can you become a bit deceptive or tell little white lies because of money you will make, save or loose? What does it take for you to become dishonest? One of the greatest dishonest acts exercised by most people is the act of shifting the blame for their actions. For instance, the speed limit is too low, therefore we have the right to drive faster. All dumb laws as are to be ignored! Since when? Not according to the Bible. All laws are to be observed and failure to do so means our lack of authority under God Himself. "For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God" Romans 13:1.

The shifting of personal blame is as old as Adam and Eve. This was their earliest exercise after refusing God's know authority. Do not forget that a God of Love and Grace gave clear directions with the alternatives prior to their course of action. It was not a mistaken impression that Adam and Eve received. They were in open rebellion against the declared will of God. No one understands the workings of sin until they have diligently studied the first three chapters of Genesis.

Accountability

The time of report has arrived. God visits his disobedient creation with the demand of an explanation, granting them an opportunity to repent by acknowledging personal responsibility for their death-producing actions. "Adam, where are thou?" Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" Gen. 3:9,11. Adam admitted his guilt but shifted the blame upon his companion. "She gave me of the tree, and I did eat" Gen. 3:12. His explanation not only involved his wife, but it also incriminated his creator. "THE WOMAN WHOM THOU GAYEST TO BE WITH ME"

It is now time for Eve to repent of her sin and cast herself upon God's mercy. Will she do it? Here is her shifting of the blame for action contrary to the known will of God. "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" Gen. 3:13. This blame shifting continues down to our day.

Three Such Families

This is the same of the fault finding crowd that attends every church. I have held meetings in many different churches and after being in the Pastorate for about 30 years, I have observed that every church has about three families that are critical of the Pastor and people in the church. It is interesting how these families get together to keep informed of latest happenings so they can become arrogant and proud, sitting together to berate the rest of the people in their church. Long ago I concluded that those who listen to such deplorable actions are as guilty as those who have the nerve to communicate such a spirit of contamination to others. Some churches have more than three families.

All criticism is the act of blaming someone else. Such exercise

enables them to tolerate their own guilt. If they are not willing to live up to the Truth the Pastor is preaching from the Bible (no other source of correction), they must find an accusation against the speaker for sufficient reason to walk away from his message. What dishonesty! Anyone, who has the nerve to straighten everybody else out, inflates their own ego. Their judgment of the faults of others makes their's less convicting. When a person desires to get out of a situation and wants to justify his own sad actions and smooth his conscience for personal inconsistency and lack of involvement, he goes to any extreme to find fault, criticize and shift the blame to someone else. How sad to see how few Christians recognize this action in today's churches. It is Adam and Eve all over again.

Constructive criticism is beneficial, but malicious criticism injures, weakens, and destroys the reputation and influence of the Pastor and the Church by calling attention to and magnifying their deficiencies or problems. Many times such criticism is without fact or truth. Years of experience have taught me that people who maliciously criticize are guilty of grievous sins in their own life. Their actions are a cover-up for their weaknesses. God warned us about such people. "An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good" Prov. 16:27-29

One of the current cop-outs for people departing from the position of honesty is to become "hurt." No other individual can hurt or bother you without your permission. You can control the response to everything coming your way. Your responsibility before God includes not only your action, but also your reactions. No one else will be blamed (in God's and man's sight) for your personal dishonesty. Your inside heart attitude will eventually become apparent to all. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" Matt. 12:34.

Within Churches

A popular place for dishonesty is within our churches. People give the impression that they love the Lord and their church. They claim to appreciate God's Word and yet miss the services where it is being taught. They do not carry their personal share of the financial load. If their church was as bad as they claim, they should find a perfect one and join it. No one else dare attend for then it too would be contaminated. Few people realize this sham. If the Pastor is to offend no one in his pulpit ministry, he must keep silent about rearing children properly, the break-up of so many homes, giving of money and the naming of sins, etc. (The Bible names them!) Biblical declarations are absolute and clearly declared. Many Christians are not measuring up to these standards, so they tolerate anything and anybody. For after all, they are not sure that the Power of the Holy Spirit in their lives is sufficient to equip them for obedience. Few people recognize those who disregard God's declared standards. What hypocrisy! God still "hates a lying tongue" and classifies "He that soweth discord among brethren" as an abomination" Prov. 6:17,19.

The people busy caring for other people's business are weak caring for their own. What they find wrong with others is usually a reflection of their own weaknesses. God groups this sin along with murder, stealing and doing evil. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" I Peter 4:14.

God or Man

Reverence and Godly fear are almost beyond us. Many talk piously but do not practice the automatic consequences of such a position. The more we love God our hatred of sin will increase. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the

froward mouth, do I hate” Prov. 8:13. How many churches desire a minister to stand before them and fearlessly proclaim the whole counsel of God? Years ago I decided against this watered down easy-believeism that does not turn up sin by the roots. Put your convictions down on paper and see what it does to your popularity. A number of us preachers desire to be popular with God rather than man. I have often wondered why the ecummists, the Catholic churches and universities have not invited me to speak. Doesn’t everybody want to hear Biblical messages? The answer is already recorded for us in the Bible. If our message becomes popular with the world, we have trimmed it down to their satisfaction.

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every on~that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” John 3:19-21.

Born again (There are no other kind.) Christians are honest, and when sin has been exposed to them by the Holy Spirit, they will repent of it, confess before a Holy God and make restitution. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” I John 1:9.

Many sad things have happened to us. We classify anyone who has gone through a pre-established plan for conversion to be a genuine Christian. Multiplied thousands have been convinced by others that Heaven is their home when in reality the Holy Spirit has done nothing within their hearts. No Holy provision of God is going to be revealed to an unrepentant sinner. They have the blessing of the Pastor, church, and denomination, yet God says the greatest evidence is a changed life. An entire book of the bible is written for such exposure. I John 5:13, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; THAT YE MAY KNOW that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Legitimacy of Criticism

One action I was not prepared for, although born and reared in a Parsonage, was people who will listen to, observe without any distasteful reaction, and participate in fellowship with those who are not genuine. They are dishonest in their dealings and treat their supposed friends with criticism, jealousy and envy. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” Romans 16:17. Long tongues do not surprise me as much as the large sympathetic ears. Many are so spiritually undiscerning that they conclude criticism must have a legitimacy attached to it or such would not exist. Of course we should speak out about wrong doing where the Bible speaks. But ours is not the privilege of judging our brother. That is God’s responsibility.

“Let no man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord” I Cor. 4:1-4.

“Ye Shall Know Them”

The apostle Paul classified the judgment of others as A VERY SMALL THING. Many Christians hide behind the fact of our not being judges that they refuse to acknowledge that which is wrong, plainly stated so by the Bible. If we are to rebuke, correct, and instruct people through the teachings of the Bible, (II Tim. 3:16)

the reaction of the hearers is evident to all. Anyone studying their Bible, can plainly see the actions of people contrary to the Bible. We do not judge, WE KNOW THEM by their actions. This is plain Biblical teaching, but again few people equate daily conduct with God’s straight edge of the Word. “Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. “Wherefore by their fruits YE SHALL KNOW THEM” Matt. 7: 17, 18, 20.

Are you still reading? I probably lost some of you within the first three paragraphs. The crowd who will not live by the Book will not hear this message. God’s standards will never change. Every dishonest person, who claims much and possesses little, will answer to God. The Bible still remains true. Liars are classified with fearful, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, whore-mongers, sorcerers, and idolaters. All of them “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death” Rev. 21:8.

Going To Heaven?

By the way, will you be there? If you are, your walk and talk give evidence that you are already a citizen of that country. The greatest indication will be your obedience to the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY OF GOD. Everything He has told you to do (and not to do) is already written down in a book called the Bible. Are you reading and studying it? Your lack of knowledge will never be a satisfactory excuse to God; for He has provided His Holy Spirit to give you understanding as you study.(John 14:26, 16:13)

Heaven is ours because of the Grace of God; not due to any work on our part. We are called upon to exercise faith (God will provide it for an honest heart who acknowledges his person sin) in the faithful work of Jesus Christ in our eternal behalf. “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” Rom. 3:22.

God is an enemy to the unsaved person. His Holiness will never allow Him to shower anything upon that sinner but His wrath. “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. For it, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life” Romans 5:6, 7, 10

Always remember, God’s love that motivated His great plan of Salvation is in His Son. No one has access to the benefits of His Grace independent of complete confidence in the work of His Son on Calvary’s Cross. Why don’t you find a place of prayer, name your sin to God, rest upon the finished work of Christ on the Cross to pay the penalty for your sin: Believe God’s promises for that same Resurrection Power of Christ to come within you. The change will be evident to all of us. No longer will you live a lie and try to cover it up. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” II Cor. 5:17

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