

Lesson #1 – The Principles Related to a Correct View of Sin

Introduction

- A. It is clear, in this world in which we live, that there are principles which determine our success. This is true in the various areas of science, philosophy, psychology, education, etc., as well as in the areas of the Christian's growth and fruitfulness. A knowledge of the will of God, and the practice of His Will by faith -- for His glory -- is an unbeatable combination.
- B. One of the most important set of **principles in the Bible is related to the study before us** - the truth about sin. If we do not understand these truths and live correctly in the light of them we will, to some degree, initiate and determine our own failure.
- C. It may be helpful to begin with an important statement which the Lord Jesus made regarding sin. Matthew 4:13-17

And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim.

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,

The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

- D. Observations on the background of this passage.

1. These verses describe the beginning of the ministry of our Savior. He had only recently received the anointing of the Holy Spirit at His baptism, and had endured successfully a period of severe testing by Satan.
2. The move of the Lord Jesus from Nazareth to Capernaum came as a fulfillment of prophecy. Matthew refers to Isaiah 9:1,2. It is rather significant that He did not establish His home at the center of Judaism -- in Jerusalem.
3. The scene before us, the beginning of the ministry of Jesus Christ the Son of God, fills us both with amazement and with questions.
 - a. That God Almighty, the Creator of all heaven and earth, would come to His creatures and preach to them - is an amazing event that stuns our imagination.
 - b. What would God ever say to us. - if He came to preach? That is a most important question. It would be well for us to take His words and meditate upon them forever!

I. Principle # 1 - The Seriousness of Sin - as Reflected in the Words "Darkness" and "Death".

- A. The people of Capernaum, and thus the whole human race, are described as living in "darkness" (the absence of truth and its resultant penalty of apostasy) and therefore under the "shadow of death" (the state of condemnation brought on by their choice of error).
- B. The meaning of these words "darkness" and "death" bring before us the seriousness of sin.
 - 1. As a human race we chose, in the Garden of Eden, to reject the truth God had revealed to us. As individuals we perpetuate the same sinful choice.
 - 2. These terms graphically portray the seriousness of our sin.
 - a. "Darkness" is more than an absence of light. It signifies the terrible control of evil and Satanic bondage. It is often used as synonymous with the ignorance which follows the rejection of divine truth. It is significant that when the Lord Jesus was arrested, following the betrayal of Judas, He referred to the concept before us.

. . . but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.
Luke 22:53
 - b. "Death" is the result of choosing to live in "darkness". Our most basic sin was the rejection of God's truth (Genesis 2:15-3:19). This "death" is much more than mere physical separation of soul and body at the end of life - it is in particular a spiritual separation from God Himself with all the terrible effects which characterize that state. If one dies without repentance for sin and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ then the ultimate consequences of that separation become the eternal judgment of that person. He enters into a state of "eternal death" or separation from God. (John 3:36)
 - 2. The Apostle Paul summarized the terrible effects of sin in the life of the sinner by use of the following words. Ephesians 4:18,19

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.
Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.
- C. While there are many reasons why sin should be looked upon with apprehension and deep concern there are two that stand out as the Bible is read.
 - 1. Sin is serious because it is an offense against the true and living God.
 - a. There is no sin which we can commit but what it is, in some major way, an act that is in contradiction to the very person of God and a striking out against Him.
 - b. Sin is a violation of the very essence of God. He is infinite and absolute in truth, love, and holiness. Sin does not partake of these qualities but of their opposites.

c. No wonder David prayed in Psalm 51:3,4,

For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.*

Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight

2. Sin is serious because of its very character and horrendous effects.

a. There is in sin an element of defilement - that is the pollution of sin.

All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.
Mark 7:23

b. There is in sin an element of alienation - that is the condemnation of sin.

. . . being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them Ephesians 4:18

c. There is in sin an element of weakness - that is the depravity of sin.

For when we were yet without strength Romans 5:6

d. There is in sin an element of death - that is the penalty of sin.

For the wages of sin is death Romans 6:23

e. There is in sin an element of perversion - that is the character of sin.

Who changed the truth of God into a lie Romans 1:25

f. There is in sin an element of lust - that is the bondage of sin.

. . . who . . . walk after their own ungodly lusts. Jude 18

g. There is in sin an element of judgment - that is the retribution of sin.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Hebrews 9:27

h. There is in sin an element of deception - that is the methodology of sin.

But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Hebrews 3:13

D. Summary: If we are to grow as believers - we must understand the seriousness of sin.

II. Principle # 2 - The Responsibility Regarding Sin - as Reflected in the Command to "Repent."

- A. Every member of the human race has the solemn responsibility to recognize the seriousness of sin and to repent for every manifestation of sin in their life.
- B. The significance of this responsibility is brought before us when we consider that this message of repentance was the constant emphasis in the ministry of Jesus Christ.
- C. The question has been raised as to what God would say to us if He would address the human race. The statement of the Lord Jesus is an answer to this question. Repentance is the divine declaration of what we must do with all forms of sinfulness.
- D. Observations regarding the commandment to "repent."

- 1. Repentance is a necessity, Luke 13:3.

I tell you, Nay, but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

- 2. Repentance is based on the revelation of God, Luke 24:46,47.

And He said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day,

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

- 3. Repentance is a decision of faith, Job 42:5,6.

I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

- 4. Repentance is inseparably related to action, Acts 26:20.

. . . that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

- 5. Repentance is a gift from God, Acts 5:31.

Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

- E. Summary: If we are to grow as believers - we must understand the seriousness of sin and repent of all its manifestations in our daily life.

Principle # 3 - The Provision Regarding Sin - as Reflected in the Person of the Savior.

- A. This message of Jesus Christ is a reminder that we may never separate the Lord Jesus Christ, the King, from the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. The Lord Jesus is the representative of the Kingdom, Matt. 12:28.

But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

2. The Lord Jesus is the Mediator of the Kingdom and through Him all the blessing of the Kingdom become a part of our life, Matt. 16:19.

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven

- B. The benefits associated with the Kingdom of Heaven explain the provision God has made in regard to sin.

1. The provision of spiritual life for our death, John 3:3.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

2. The provision of forgiveness for our guilt, Mark 2:10.

But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (Compare Daniel 7:13,14)

3. The provision of righteousness for our unrighteousness; of peace for our anxiety; and of joy for our despair, Romans 14:17.

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- C. The coming of the Kingdom, in the coning of the Lord Jesus Christ, is an explanation of God's provision concerning sin, Mark 11:9,10.

And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

- D. Summary: If we are to grow as believers - we must understand the seriousness of sin, repent of all its manifestations in our daily life, and honestly surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion:

- A. This Biblical response to the Lord Jesus Christ must be a response of faith. We must do what is right in spite of our emotional vulnerability to some form of sin.

- B. This Biblical response to the Lord Jesus Christ must be practical. No amount of words or the shedding of tears can be a valid substitute for simple decisions of trust that issue in action.

- C. Our spiritual growth is based upon these honest decisions of faith. Such a Biblical response opens the door so that God can become involved in our daily life. The result is spiritual progress.