

Biblical Warnings Regarding to Working Against God

Introduction

- A. The Bible clearly teaches that God is sovereign and all-powerful. He is in absolute control of all His creation. This can be a great comfort to the believer in that we have the promise that all things can be made to work together for our good (Romans 8:28).
- B. It is also clear in Scripture that God has chosen not to violate the personality and will of His people. In His wisdom He has made it possible for us to operate with our free will within His sovereignty. It is possible for the believer to sin against God! We are often warned not to work against Him.

How oft did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not His hand, nor the day when He delivered them from the enemy.
Psalm 78 :40-42.

I. The Warning Related to Priorities, Matt. 23:23; Luke 16:15.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. These ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone.

And He said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Observation: These verses remind us that it is possible to have religious goals that are wrong. We all have a tendency to overemphasize a minor truth to the denial of those that are more important. We are also shown here that our priorities can be downright sinful.

II. The Warning Related to Unbelief, Mark 6:5,6; Hebrews 11:6.

And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief

But without faith it is impossible to please Him

Observation: There are few things that please God more than faith. When we fail to trust Him and respond to Him we involve ourselves in serious sin. The Lord Jesus was limited by the unbelief of the people in His own home town of Nazareth.

III. The Warning Related to Pretense, Acts 5:3*

And Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

Observation: Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, agreed together to sell a piece of land and to pretend to give all the money to the Apostles for distribution among the poor. They were under no obligation to sell the land nor to bring the money to the Apostles. They chose to pretend. This is the practice of error. It is a most serious sin against God. He is absolute in Truth

IV. The Warning Related to Resisting God, Acts 7:51

Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do ye.

Observation: Stephen brings this serious accusation against his own countrymen. They had refused to recognize the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God. In essence their sin was a rejection of the revelation of God. This is a working against the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

V. The Warning Related to Grieving and Quenching the Holy Spirit, Eph. 4:30; I Thess. 5:19.

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Quench not the Spirit.

Observation: This is a sin similar to resisting the Holy Spirit but it lies more in the area of action. To grieve and quench the Holy Spirit is to engage in actions that are contradictory to what the Holy Spirit desires to develop in the believer. An illustration would be that of selfishness or despair or worry when the Holy Spirit seeks to enable us to live with love, joy and peace in our daily lives.

VI. The Warning Related to Disobedience, James 1:22-24.

But be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Observation: Self-deception is a most serious matter. That is what happens when we read the Bible and then do not put it into practice. Our failure to obey God is covered over by mental or verbal acceptance of the Scripture. There is no substitute for the practice of the Word of God. James reminds us that faith without works is dead (2:17).

VII. The Warning Related to Prayerlessness, James 4:2,3.

... Ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Observation: One of the greatest privileges ever afforded a Christian is that he can talk with God. When we fail to do so - or when we use this to ask selfishly - then we are sinning against God.

VIII. The Warning Related to Love, I John 3:16-18.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his heart of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Observation: To truly love one another we must do more than say the word. Love is essentially an action. The evidence that God loved us is that He "laid down His life for us. The first command and therefore the most important is that we love God. The second command is that we love one another (Matt. 22:37-39).

Conclusion: It is important that we do not judge ourselves by our conscience nor by our feelings. Only the Scripture is our final authority.