

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## *Old Hickory Church of Christ*

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## Three Things Sin Will Do

The Hebrew writer warned those to whom he wrote about the deceitfulness of sin when he said: “But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:13). Involvement in sin deceives its victims. It hardens the heart and can result in a heart that the gospel cannot or is very difficult to penetrate.

Just think of the alcoholic — there had to be the first drink. The drug addict — there had to be the first “hit.” And, the chronic gambler — there had to be the first bet! All victims of such sins were deceived by it. If you ask anyone who has been deceived by these sins, he would quickly admit (if he is honest) that he gave no thought to the consequences of his actions (Gen. 3:1-23). What will sin do?

**First — It Will Take You Farther Than You Wanted Or Intended to Go.** The first drink of alcohol, the first “high,” the first bet, is as far as many planned to go! But all who end up as chronic alcoholics, drug addicts, and chronic gamblers had to take

that first step. Involvement in one sin often leads to involvement in other sins and usually comes in a packaged deal (2 Sam. 11-12).

**Second — It Will Keep You Longer Than You Wanted to Stay.**

Those who fall victim are blinded by the pleasure of the first drink, the first high or the first win (Heb. 11:25). It gave them so much pleasure the first time that they are sucked into going after it again and again and again. Many think, “just one more time won’t hurt.” They only intended to drink alcohol to be social, or smoke marijuana socially or to place a bet just “once in a while,” then find themselves entangled and overcome by it (2 Pet. 2:20).

**Third — It Will Cost You More Than You Wanted to Pay.**

Many never consider the consequences of their sinful actions? How many alcoholics planned on killing an innocent person with a motor vehicle? How many drug addicts planned on contacting AIDS or stealing to support their habit? How many considered the physical pain, mental suffering, wrecked marriages, neglected children, broken homes and lives that are destroyed by their involvement in sin. And most importantly, how many consider the fact that their souls are at stake (Acts 5:1-10)?

**Conclusion**

Some might think “that this can’t happen to me . . . I’m a good Christian and I don’t take part in such!” But what about “Christians” who smoke or look at pornographic material, what about those who dabble in the lottery, what about those who dress immodestly not giving a thought that they can cause someone to lust, what about those who are involved in adultery

and fornication, religious error, etc. (see Gal. 5:19-21)? Can these take you farther than you wanted or intended to go, keep you longer than you wanted to stay, and cost you more than you wanted to pay? YES! And, they can cost you your soul! Heed the words of the Psalmist who wrote: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psa. 1:1, 2). Let us also heed the words of truth spoken by Solomon who wrote: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away" (Prov. 4:14, 15). Brethren, "Be not deceived" (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

- Glendol McClure, via Truth Magazine, June 1, 2000.

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## **One Sinner Destroys Much Good**

"Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroys much good" (Ecclesiastes 9:18). Here is a thought that each of us must consider. It tells us that a sinner wields a lot of influence, but it is the wrong kind and it is destructive! Notice that the text doesn't say that "many sinners destroy much good," but "one sinner destroys much good." Many times one sinner does more harm to the cause of good, than one righteous person does to a stampeding herd of ungodliness.

A preacher may be a very effective pulpiteer and he may have a firm grasp on the truth of scripture, but if he doesn't believe what

he preaches enough to live it, he is himself a sinner who destroys any good that he achieves (I Timothy 4:11-12).

An elder may have tremendous leadership skills coupled with a broad knowledge of God's word, but if he doesn't practice what he requires about honesty, controlling the tongue, moral purity, and all else, he isn't fit for the position of overseer. He will destroy any good that he accomplishes (I Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:7).

A Bible class teacher may be kind, knowledgeable, and very practical in his application of scripture, but if he is a gossip, quick tempered, listens to slander, and never asks forgiveness from those against whom he has sinned, any good that he accomplishes will be destroyed by his sins (Romans 2:19-24).

If people visit our assemblies, but they see people there who claim to be Christians that they know to be hypocrites, any good that is accomplished by the congregation will be destroyed (Hebrews 10:26-29).

We should promote good instead of destroying it. If our lives are not what God says they should be we are destroying the good that we or other saints seem to be achieving. We must repent of our sins and start anew. If there is sin in your life, stop it and turn to God. Then, and only then, the good that we and others are trying to do will not be destroyed.

- Ron Daly

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# The Obligation of the Redeemed

A wealthy man who was high bidder for a slave said to him, "I have paid \$300 for you in order to set you free. You have been redeemed." The grateful slave fell at the feet of his redeemer and declared, "I will serve you faithfully the rest of my life." This story vividly portrays what redemption from the slavery of sin should mean to a redeemed child of God.

In Tit. 2:14, we read that Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." This verse points out beautifully the obligation of the redeemed, and should inspire each of us to sing truthfully and with genuine joy, "I want to be a worker for the Lord."

The greatest need of Americans - and the world - today is to be made to realize that they are in bondage to sin (1 John 5:19). Our own America has become a vast moral disaster area. The greatest opportunity in the world today is that of making known by the church God's wonderful plan of salvation from sin. So, the best thing the church can do today is stop trying to "improve" on God's plan and "get in" on it. We do not need "better plans on file," we need "better Christians on fire."

We are living in a shallow society where "country club Christianity" makes it extremely difficult to establish (even sometimes, renew) true faith, worship and godly living. It appears that the devil is no longer persecuting Christianity in America, he is "professing" it. He is not fighting us, he is joining us in his

deceitful work (2 Cor. 2:11; Revelation 20:23). This serves to magnify the obligation of the redeemed.

What can the redeemed do when almost everyone we meet claims some sort of church connection? To meet the great challenge some of our brethren have come up with the idea that if we have enough members, money, methods and means we can win the world. Massive, globe-circling campaigns and other such tactics have started a more devastating fire in the Lord's church than Samson's three hundred foxes started among the Philistines (Judges 15:4,5).

God does not work that way. He is in the "remnant business" and always has been. It has always been the "few" that God could depend upon to do his will. Therefore, the obligation of the redeemed becomes a personal obligation for each child of God redeemed from sin as well as a collective one for the church (Mt. 25:21, 23, 31-46).

We who are redeemed from sin have the greatest message to tell that will ever be heard by the world. Let there be kindled within our hearts a bright, new flame of sacred love for the lost, and let us tune our lips to sing of His saving grace. The gospel of Christ is still the "power of God" to save the lost (Rom. 1:16).

- Kelton Whale

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**THIS WEEK'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: *"Is The World Out of Control?"* (Text: Psalms 2); Sunday evening: *Bi-monthly Singing!*

**GOSPEL MEETING 2015:** Our Gospel Meeting is scheduled for July 19-24, with Jerry Crolus, of Conway, AR, preaching. Please mark your calendar.