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Let Go

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Did you know that you can catch a small monkey by placing a banana in a box or jar with a small opening? A small monkey will reach inside the container and grab the banana. The banana will not allow him to remove his hand. He will not let go of the banana. He refused to do so, so he is trapped. To regain his freedom he only needs to let go of the banana and be free but he won't let go of his next meal.

It is easy see a couple of spiritual applications.

1. The Need to Let Go of Sin

Many remain trapped in sin because they refuse to let go of the sin that so easily ensnares them. That one vice that gets them every time. The sin is just to appealing, so easy to do again and again. But the wage of sin is death and if we refuse to let go of the sin, we will suffer eternal loss. The Hebrew writer says that the sin is weighing us down.

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us," Hebrews 12:1

Sin needs to be let go. It needs to be laid aside.

2. Bitterness and Anger

Many people are trapped in a whirlwind of emotions because they are bitter and angry. Someone has offended them; someone has sinned against them and they just can't let it go. They are trapped in constant thought and they are stuck and haunted by the past.

Paul said this to the Ephesians church.

"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." Ephesians 4:31

The Greek word Jesus used in Mathew 6:12, 14-15 for our word forgive is *aphiēmi*. It means to "send away" or to "let go". Now read the passage with that in mind.

"And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:14-15

Can't you just hear those around the monkey saying let go, just let go and be free. How sad when we are trapped in our own sin or in bitterness and anger.

Coram Deo

Colby Junkin

There has always been a battle between the flesh and spirit in the hearts of men. The flesh is often too weak to fight, and we succumb to the pressures of temptation. While there is no legitimate excuse, we seemingly always try to justify our mistakes. Adam blamed Eve and God for his rebellion against the Father's will. Jonah blamed God and His grace as an excuse for his anger and fleeing. Man will continue to be susceptible to sin, but that does not excuse us from striving to obtain the goal of

true discipleship. Our ultimate goal is to become imitators of God ([Ephesians 5:1](#)). Our greatest desire should be to walk in the footsteps of our Savior Jesus Christ, but sadly mankind continues to deceive themselves from fully giving everything in service to the Lord.

In our battle against sin, we have allowed ourselves to believe in a LIE! This lie originates from the “father of all lies,” who has mislead countless men and women to their doom. The lie is simple but has been effective throughout the years – “You can live however you wish physically, as long as you have been saved spiritually.” This lie may also go by the another pseudonym – “Once saved, always saved.” We may be the first to deny and teach against the premise of this Calvinistic doctrine, but have we been guilty of its influence?

If we are not careful the influence of this doctrine can easily infiltrate our hearts. It begins simply enough with us compartmentalizing our spiritual duties differently than our physical duties. We essentially make a separation between theology (our agreement to faith and God) and its practice (daily struggles with sin and faithfulness). When a disconnection is made between our spiritual and physical lives, this doctrine begins to sway our thinking concerning sin and its consequences. We begin to justify our sinfulness, because on Sundays and Wednesday nights we go to services and Bible studies. We also justify our wrong deeds by our good deeds, but this is right in the sight of God.

The apostle Paul wrote the brethren in Colosseae -

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all (3:5-11).

Our salvation in Jesus is not a license for further wickedness and depravity, but rather we are to consider ourselves dead to that manner of life. There is no excuse to remain in sin or its continued practice. The doctrine – that man can live by flesh and still serve God by his spirit – is simply wrong. The apostle Paul wrote concerning this to the Roman brethren – “*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts*” (13:14). Our lives are to be completely transformed by the grace of God. We cannot allow any disconnection between our spiritual and physical lives.

The apostle Paul would continue to encourage the brethren in Colosseae by giving them the purpose of this new life in Jesus. Paul wrote – “*Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father*” ([Colossians 3:17](#)). We do not live in sin, because our entire lives are given to carrying out the will of our Father. We do not justify sin, because our Father does not justify wrongdoing. While this may be elementary, we live every second “in the presence of God.” Every action, word, and even thought is being set “before the face of God.” This should motivate us to faithfully serve God both physically and spiritually.

The reformers of the 16th century coined a Latin phrase to emphasize the disciples’ need to serve God at all times. The Latin phrase was “*Coram Deo*,” which translated means “in the presence of God.” This phrase was used to encourage faithful disciples to draw near to God in times of trial and temptation. It was a phrase adapted seemingly from the very context of Colossians chapter three. The world may continue to believe in a lie concerning its spiritual and physical realities, but we need to understand that both are intimately intertwined. We will not make it to heaven without serving God faithfully everyday of our lives. Let us remember that every action will be judged and every thought will be revealed. Therefore, live with the understanding and knowledge that we are “in the presence of the Lord.” Singing River Bulletin 12/17/23