

The Price of Turning Away From Truth

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

2 Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Proverbs 1:32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

2 Kings 17:13-15 Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.

- I. This is not necessarily speaking of some unusual thing that will happen just before Jesus comes.
 - A. People have been turning away their ears from the truth since the beginning.
 - B. We have many, many accounts in the Bible of those who turned away from the truth and what happened to them after they did.
 - C. Absolutely hundreds of times the Bible tells us about people and kings and others who “turned away” or “hearkened not” or “refused to hearken” or “forsook the laws of God.”
 - D. It always ended in disaster and destruction because of the loss of God’s blessing and protection.
 - E. Turning away from the truth is actually the universal way that sinners make their choice for hell instead of God.
 1. Some do it early in their life and others do it later, but it is the same thing that every hell-bound sinner does that determines his eternal destiny.
 - F. But the context is talking about people that are acquainted with the truth of God and how they turn away from known truth about God, sin, holiness, and salvation.
 1. It appears to be talking about the cycle of life of a church.
 2. All local churches end up turning away from the truth sooner or later – “the time will come...” he said.
 - G. The context is an admonition to Timothy to keep on preaching the truth and be faithful regardless of the fact that people will turn away.
- II. Turning away from the truth begins with small and minor things and progresses to complete apostasy.
 - A. No one suddenly turns from basic truth and embraces lies instead.
 - B. It may appear that way to us sometimes, but that is because people are very good at projecting an outward image that is completely different that what is going on in their secret places.
 1. They project what they want people to think they are.

2. They project what they know people expect of them.
 3. But if the outside doesn't match the inside there will come a point where the inward will break out and it is sometimes a great shock to those around them.
- C. Turning away from truth is a gradual process that begins with small and seemingly minor things.
1. It begins with what we call "compromise" which means "To make concession for conciliation and peace."
 2. In other words, you move the boundaries and give up ground and surrender certain things in order to be at peace with the enemy.
- D. We should think critically and examine what we believe and not just be stubborn and blind and call that virtue and righteousness.
1. To change in our beliefs because of more light from the Word of God is growth in grace, but to give up our beliefs in order to make peace or obtain favor with people is compromise.
 2. And any true growth in grace will result in higher standards of holiness and a cleaner life, more separated from the world and its wickedness and ways.
 3. Growth in grace will not cause you to be at peace and gain favor with the world, but will make you more estranged from them.

John 15:18-19 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

1 John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

- E. Compromise begins most often with those things that mark the differences between the children of God and the children of this world.
1. Fashions and dress.
 2. Pastimes and entertainment.
 3. Earthly ambitions instead of heavenly ambitions. (laying up treasures)
- F. Having the world always before our eyes we develop desires to have what they have, do the things they do, go to the places they go, and experience the things they experience.
1. The imagination goes to work and a plan is developed to obtain our desires.
 2. In order to do fulfill these desires we must compromise on the things we know to be true about God and his truth and his people.
 3. That is where we turn away from hearing the truth.
- III. Once you have compromised in the smallest way the truth becomes offensive to you.
- A. From this point on you are on guard against anything that condemns your heart.
 - B. All these people who have this attitude of, "Don't you judge me!" are people who have turned away their ear from hearing the truth – without exception.
 - C. By rejecting the slightest truth you are in fact turning away from all truth.
 - D. Truth is truth and it cannot be carved up and taken in part.
 - E. You either believe the truth or you do not.
 - F. Accepting only part of the truth is to reject all truth.
 - G. This is the devil is an expert at deceiving people.
 - H. He uses the truth like an immunization – he always speaks a great deal of truth, but he mixes in the lie, ever so small, and destroys a soul.

- IV. Because compromising the truth turns us from all truth there are very severe consequences.
- A. When we step out from under the truth we lose the protection and the blessing of God.
 - B. When we cease to operate in truth we are operating in the realm of lies and deceit.
 - C. What we sow, we also reap, so we are lied to and deceived and preyed upon by other people who are not restrained or controlled by truth.
 - D. Our enemies come upon us and we have no defense protection.
 - E. Since we have left what is true we become confused and unsure of everything and we lose our way.
 - F. Those around us, our children, our spouse, our friends, and whoever our life influences are affected by our confusion and uncertainty and they follow us into confusion and darkness.

Zechariah 7:8-14 And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts: But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.