

You're Satisfied?

So what?

The rich man was satisfied, but God called him a fool and took his life and condemned his soul. (Luke 12:20)

The whole church at Laodicea was satisfied, but Jesus said they did not know that they were actually wretched, and miserable and poor and blind and naked (Revelation 3:16-22).

That's about how wrong a "satisfied" person can be.

Satisfied? Are you, now? The Pharisee that went into the temple to pray was satisfied with himself, and even glad he was not as the Publican (Luke 18:10-14). But Jesus said that the satisfied Pharisee was not justified like the sin-conscious Publican was!

The wise man warned: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12).

- by Jere E. Frost

Gopher Wood or Gopher Forest?

In seeking to impress upon the minds of individuals the importance of respecting the authority of God's word we use the example of God commanding Noah to build the ark of gopher wood. When God commanded Noah to build the ark of gopher wood we note (and correctly so) that Noah would be in rebellion to God if he used any other wood to build the ark. As simple as this illustration may be we still find many who ridicule this example.

Several years ago (November, 1976) F. L. Lemley wrote an article which appeared in "Integrity" magazine entitled "The Law of Exclusion," in which he rejects and ridicules the idea that when God authorizes a particular thing then anything other than that authorized would be displeasing to God. In an effort to prove his point he uses the example of Noah.

He says, "the assumption that gopher wood was a specific variety of wood cannot be proved" and "Some translate 'gopher wood' as 'resinous wood,' which is not a specific variety, but would include cypress, redwood, or other varieties." He goes on to say that one person had suggested that "it could mean wood from a nearby forest known as Gopher."

What Mr. Lemley fails to note is if what he says about "gopher wood" is true the example remains the same. If "gopher wood" simply means "resinous wood" then for Noah to obey God he could only use "resinous wood." To use non-resinous wood would be disobedience to God. Suppose "gopher wood" referred to wood from a forest by that name. Would that change the force of the argument? Certainly not! It would simply mean that Noah was to build the ark of wood from "Gopher Forest." Wood from any other source would not be acceptable.

Let "gopher wood" mean whatever you want it to mean, but the fact still remains that God told Noah to build the ark of "gopher wood" and had he built it of any other kind of wood he would have been in rebellion to God. We can't justify rebellion to God by making foolish quibbles.

- by James Hahn

You, Me, and The Bible

You may understand the Bible and I may misunderstand it.

I may understand it and you may misunderstand it.

We may both misunderstand it – but differently.

We may misunderstand it alike.

However, we cannot both understand it – but differently.

What kind of book would the Bible be if it said something to you that it didn't say to me?

- by Eugene Britnell

A Forgiving Heart

Can you forgive your brother one time? Maybe twice? Three strikes and you're out! NO! "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:3,4). Even seven times will not ultimately be enough. Peter said, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21,22). A genuine, forgiving heart is hard to attain, but we must strive for it. Think!

- by Greg Gwin

All Sins Are Not Equal

We understand that there is not a 'ranking system' for sins. By this we mean that no sin is worse than another in regards to the damning effect on the soul. One sin, any sin, for which there is no repentance/forgiveness leads to eternal loss. So, in this sense, all sins are equal.

However, this view of things is too simplistic. Some sins are worse than others in regards to the progression that follows. Some types of sin are likely to lead to other sins, and – while noting the eternal consequences of all sins – there are immediate 'this world' costs associated with particular sins. For instance, theft often leads to the sin of lying to cover up the initial wrong. Or, for example, viewing pornography almost always results in an addiction that leads to more immorality. Horrible and devastating things can result from these sorts of sin.

We grow weary of some (including some of our own brethren) who attempt to make arguments of 'moral equivalence' relative to some sins. We've heard them say: "Drinking alcohol is no different than overeating." Really!?! Have you known of anyone who abused or neglected their family, lost their job, or fell under the influence of evil people because they ate one too many donuts?

We offer no justification here for overeating. We understand that it is an issue that affects many of us. Certainly lots of Christians have health issues associated with this problem. But, seriously, if the best argument that can be offered in defense of drinking alcohol is: "I may drink a little, but you eat too much" – then we conclude that the drinking folks have no solid ground to stand on.

Bottom line, we should never try to justify one fault by pointing to a different fault in others. Paul said it this way: "We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12). Think!

- by Greg Gwin