

The Old Paths

Volume 12, Issue 28

September 11, 2005

“Accepting Our Responsibilities”

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We live in an age when people do not think they are responsible for their actions. When someone is an alcoholic, some say that that person has a “disease.” Right now, some very eager people are trying to find a “gay gene” in the systems of certain ones. In addition to the above, many are in favor of distributing birth control to high school children. Their stated purpose being to “protect” children from the consequences of their actions.

We have a great and terrible problem in this country, and we need to put a stop to it. God said, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:20). When we read words like this, we need to realize that each individual is personally responsible for his or her actions, period! Folks who search for ways to avoid the consequences of bad decisions, or those who merely wish to “rename” sin, are doing nothing to help solve the problem of sin, nor do such people negate the true consequences of sin!

Of course, the mind set of refusing our responsibilities is nothing new. In the garden of Eden, after Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, God asks them what they had done. Notice the answers that are given. Adam says, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat” (Gen. 3:12). When God looked to Eve, she said, “The serpent beguiled me,

and I did eat” (Gen. 3:13). Very simply, Adam and Eve refused to take responsibility for their sins by blaming others for what had happened! Certainly, this “blame game” continues to the present time. It is present everywhere.

Drinking Alcohol

In thinking about the examples given earlier, when we see someone who is drinking intoxicating drinks, we need to remember the words of Solomon when he said, “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder” (Prov. 23:29-32). We also need to remember what Peter wrote. “That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine (passed out drunk), revellings (wild drinking parties, drunken debauchery), banquetings (social drinking occasions, lit. “a drinking”), and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you” (I Pet. 2:2-4). Notice please God puts the drinking of alcohol in

the same category as “lasciviousness,” “lusts,” and “abominable idolatries.” For one to drink alcoholic drinks is to “run” with “excess of riot”! Does this sound like God was sanctioning these things? Does it sound like God considers a person’s lack of control “a disease”? Friends, these things are a sin in the sight of God, and we must not be partakers of these evil deeds (II Jn. 11).

Homosexuality

In noting man’s excuses for homosexuality, let us read what God has said concerning this act man has called a “lifestyle choice.” God said, “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination” (Lev. 18:22). Also, “If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them” (Lev. 20:13). Does this sound like God approved of these people’s actions, or merely considered it a part of their genetic make-up? In the New Testament we read, “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet” (Rom. 1:26-27). When God said that homosexuality is “that which is against nature,” we know that one could search for the rest of his life and not find the elusive “gay gene”! No friends, God did not make us this way! Paul also said that homosexuality was a sin that will keep one from Heaven (I Cor. 6:9-10). He said such acts belong

in the realm of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). This is not to say that a person who is a homosexual could not be saved. Clearly, the Corinthians had some that were homosexuals, but had since changed, and obeyed the word of God and were saved (I Cor. 6:11). The question is will such folks submit to the will of God and obey Him instead of selfish interests?

Today, we see people who do not want to live up to their responsibilities, nor accept the consequences of their ungodly living. So, they claim that those who teach God's truth are homophobes, or bigots who do not love them. What they need to realize is that the people who truly love them are the ones warning them of their sin and of the eternal consequences if they do not change!

"Safe" Fornication

Some advocate distributing birth control methods to unmarried teenagers. Is this not the epitome of not wanting to accept responsibility? Someone might say, "We want to supply these teenagers with birth control methods because they are too young to be a daddy or a mother." It is true that they are too young; and the way for them to avoid becoming a parent before they have a chance to grow up is to instill our children with the values given in the Bible! The Hebrew writer said, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). Both young and old need to realize that when they decide they are going to fulfill their sexual desires outside of marriage, they belong in the realm of whoremongers and adulterers. God in the very beginning, stated that the husband

and wife were to be "one flesh" and no one else (Gen. 2:24)! When people decide that they are going to live ungodly, they need to realize that there are consequences that they will have to endure, both physically and spiritually!

The Guilt Of Sin

Let me also say that if one dies in his sins, it is no one's fault but his own. In an age when the Bible is available in book form, computer disk, tapes, radio, TV, websites, etc., and especially in a country such as ours, with the freedom that we enjoy to openly read and study God's word, there is no excuse for one not knowing God's word! It is high time that we accepted our responsibilities and learn that God has a plan for us, and if we refuse to listen, it is our own fault. Paul said, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thess. 1:7-9). Further, we read in Acts 17:30-31, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he

will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Ignorance is no excuse for not obeying God's will.

What are you going to do? Will you accept your responsibilities? Will you stop looking to your mother and father and blaming them for your problems? Will you stop blaming the environment in which you live for the problems you must face?

Jesus said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24). Here Jesus states six times that obedience is an individual decision. Thus, it is not your parents' fault that you are not a Christian. It is not your parents' fault that you have sinned (Rom. 3:23). It is not your living conditions that keep you from obeying God. It is up to you. Accept your responsibilities and obey God by believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Jn. 8:24); repenting of your sins (Acts 17:30); confessing your faith (Matt. 10:32); and being baptized (Mk. 16:16). Accept your responsibilities and live faithfully to God (I Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10).

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